Speldhurst CE Primary School

Growing into all God wants us to be

Our school vision, *"Growing into all God wants us to be,"* is inspired by the parable of the mustard seed in **Matthew 13:31–32**:

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

We view our school as the field where these seeds are planted. Through the provision of the right conditions for growth, each pupil is encouraged to flourish and develop into the person God created them to be. As a staff team, we are committed to nurturing this growth by fostering an environment that supports spiritual, academic, and personal development, enabling every child to thrive.

Our daily acts of Collective Worship and wider school life reflect and reinforce our Christian values of honesty, forgiveness, stewardship, love, respect, and perseverance. These values are taught, modelled, and celebrated across all areas of school life, guiding pupils in how they learn, interact with others, and contribute positively to our community. In doing so, we seek to create a school where every individual is valued and supported to grow into all that God intends.

Policy for Collective Worship

As a Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Speldhurst School's Collective Worship policy follows the minimum standards for all schools as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act and is also in line with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England, as established for the school under its trust deeds. As a Church school, we know that God is at the centre of all that is best. Our Collective Worship helps to reaffirm our school vision of "Growing into all God wants us to be" and provides time and space to nurture the spiritual, moral, and personal growth of every child. Collective Worship is therefore a very important part of the life of our school, and this policy draws on the advice from the Diocese of Rochester's Board of Education. We use the Diocese of Rochester

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Collective Worship Framework as a basis for our Acts of Worship, and therefore Collective Worship is explicitly Christian, following the Church's year within an Anglican structure.

Aims of Collective Worship

Our Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils, as appropriate to their ages and aptitudes. For example:

- It helps pupils' **spiritual development** by teaching them about God and giving them the opportunity to worship Him together. It offers pupils the opportunity to hear about Him from the Bible, to develop their own relationship with Him through prayer and to reflect on themselves and their place in His world. It encourages silent reflection, helping children to recognise the spiritual dimension of life.
- It helps pupils' **moral development** by taking time to become aware of different life values, teaching respect for other faiths, while developing a common ethos and shared values based on Christian standards.
- It promotes pupils' **social development** by helping them feel part of a community and by reinforcing positive attitudes to others. Our worship will encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered.
- It helps pupils' **cultural development** by drawing on our Christian heritage through the Bible and other key writings and through religious festivals and practices. Pupils are also given the opportunity to experience and respond to appropriate music, literature and art.

Organisation of Collective Worship

It is the responsibility of the Worship Committee to arrange the programme for collective worship after consulting with the Headteacher. Worship is of a Christian character, in accordance with the denominational character of the school. The termly themes and individual assemblies are planned, using the termly planning provided by Rochester Diocese, with a mind to the ages and abilities of the children involved.

We provide an act of worship for all pupils every day, thus fulfilling our statutory duty, organised as follows;

Monday	Whole School	Headteacher
Tuesday	Whole School	Deputy/Assistant Head
Wednesday	Whole School	Singing Worship
Thursday	Whole School	Priest in Charge or Church Representative/Class Worship

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Friday	Whole School	Headteacher (to include celebration of Achievements)

Worship

The daily act of Collective Worship at Speldhurst School is worshipful, Christian, and denominational in nature. The Diocese of Rochester Collective Worship Framework supports this by providing a clear and consistent structure that ensures both regularity and familiarity for those leading and those participating in worship. This structure is well known to all who lead Collective Worship, including representatives from our local church who regularly assist in leading services.
The framework follows a four-part structure:

- Gather – We welcome our school community with music, liturgy (*"Jesus said, I am the light of the world"*), and the lighting of a candle.
- Engage – A message rooted in scripture is shared and questions to promote thought are regularly included.
- Respond – Pupils are invited to discuss, reflect, pray, or sing in response to the theme.
- Send – We recap the message of the Worship and encourage pupils to consider how they can apply it in their own lives. We close with liturgy (*"We go in peace, we go in joy, we go in love. Amen"*) and blow out our special candle.

As a Church School our Worship is planned to:

- Cover all major Christian Festivals.
- Draw on Bible teaching, particularly in the form of stories.
- Make links to the school's core values.
- Use the Lord's Prayer at least once a week.
- Be delivered in a variety of ways including music and song, story and discussion, a time for prayer and reflection.
- Allow pupils to play an active role in the planning and delivery of worship through the 'Leading Lights' programme.

By following the framework closely, a clear direction is provided for those who are less experienced in leading worship.

Christian

All acts of worship have a Bible story or Bible passage at their heart. Key ideas and key teaching from Christianity are always the focus. The intention is that the ideas should be developed with this in mind. Wherever possible links are made to the school's core values.

In a Church school, teachings and ideas from other faith traditions are best explored in RE or in a separate assembly rather than as part of an act of Christian worship. In this way, the celebrations and practices of everyone can be valued and shared appropriately.

Special Services and Church Links

We have the Priest in Charge or a visiting member of the local church to lead the worship weekly. Other speakers from local or national organisations are occasionally used to introduce pupils to the wider community. High Hopes also leads our worship once a term.

Special services are held in the church at the end of each term, allowing pupils to participate in a Harvest, Christmas, Easter and End of Year service. Parents and Governors are invited to join us in these services.

Teachers also have the right to withdraw, on ground of conscience, but it is hoped they will feel able to support the Christian ethos of the school and to participate in this important part of it.

Prayer Groups

Prayer groups take place for both adults and children. Adults meet with the clergy and members of the church community once a term while children have a weekly opportunity to attend 'Prayer Space'. Up to 30 pupils take this opportunity and members of the church community provide a range of activities to allow for both learning about the Christian faith and reflection.

Collective Worship Committee and Leading Lights

Pupils play an active role in planning worship. The Collective Worship Committee meet with the Headteacher and Priest in Charge on a termly basis to review worship within the school. 'Leading Lights' also allows pupils to plan and lead aspects of worship on a weekly basis, as well as having an input in the regular weekly worships.

All children get the opportunity to contribute to their classes worship, where each class will lead a whole school worship once a year on one of our Christian school values.

Participation in and withdrawal from Collective Worship

Although worship has such a central part in our school life, parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from this school activity. Before reaching a decision to exercise this right, however, parents would be encouraged to discuss the issue fully with the Headteacher. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Headteacher.

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Pupils who are withdrawn from school worship must be supervised at this time and will undertake a curriculum activity during this time.

Christian Giving and Courageous Advocacy

Our worships can be dedicated to finding out more about charitable organisations. This affords the opportunity for outside speakers to enrich our Worship experience and for our children to practice giving, which is a key Christian principle. Whenever possible, our worship lead will plan these worships to link to our Christian characteristic monthly themes.

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