



# Christian Ethos & Collective Worship Policy

*'From tiny acorns, mighty oak trees grow, watered  
and nurtured by God'*

*'For with God, nothing is impossible' Luke 1:37*

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## Introduction

*“At Braywood our aspiration is for all children to become confident, emotionally resilient and compassionate individuals who achieve personal success through strength of character and a love of learning”*

### Aims

The curriculum, in its fullest sense, firmly underpins the vision and mission statements of Braywood CE First School, from which a culture and ethos is generated that supports the learning and achievement of all involved in the community. The school is committed to ensuring that the curriculum has breadth, engagement and depth, in order that the needs of all children are provided for, whatever their gifts and talents.

At Braywood C of E School our desire is to develop quality acts of worship within the spirit and the letter of the 1988 Education Reform Act and in accordance with the principles and practice of the Church of England as laid down in the Trust Deed.

*“The most significant lessons in school have nothing to do with literacy or numeracy, but rather occur when the children learn about themselves, who they are, and where they fit into the great scheme of things!”*  
*Opening windows- Spiritual Development in the Primary School*

### Statutory Requirements

We believe that intelligence is multi-faceted, and children learn in different ways. The curriculum must support this through providing an exciting and stimulating learning environment to facilitate children’s acquisition of knowledge, skills and specific qualities which will help them to develop into an independent, responsible, considerate and confident member of the community. We aim to ensure that religious education and spiritual, moral, cultural and social development will permeate every aspect of the curriculum, so that it is explicit and implicit within the taught curriculum. In the daily life at Braywood, children are supported, through the curriculum, to understand more about religion and spirituality.

The curriculum aims to meet the needs of all children whatever their individual requirements. We cater for the needs of individual children of both sexes from all ethnic and social groups, including the most able and those who are experiencing learning difficulties. We treat children in a dignified way. We enrich our curriculum with opportunities such as trips, visitors, concerts, tournaments and competitions in order to foster individual student’s strengths and offer different role models or opportunities to learn.

In contrast to the policies for specific curriculum subjects, this policy relates to the whole life of the school and in particular to promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) through the example set by adults in the school; the quality of all relationships and the standards of daily collective worship.

The connection between good results in the curriculum and high standards in SMSC development is widely acknowledged. The SMSC aspects of education concentrate on the development of the pupil as an individual and as a personality, aiming to enrich and extend the human existence of each child in relation to the values, attitudes, beliefs and consequent behaviour acquired during school years.

## Key Contacts

Position	Subject leader with associated Governor
Headteacher	Susan Calvert
Spiritual leaders	Natasha Teeder & Joanne Kilner
RE & Collective Worship Foundation Governors	Ainsley Swift

## Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Church Foundation of the school is honoured and that the SMSC Development Policy promotes an ethos based on Christian principles and practice.
- Ensuring that the SMSC is put into practice and monitored by the appropriate governor
- Engaging an appropriate inspector to carry out the Section 23 Inspection of a Church School.

The Governing Body...

- Supports the use of appropriate teaching strategies by allocating resources effectively;
- Optimises use of the school buildings and premises to support successful teaching and learning;
- Monitors teaching strategies in the light of health and safety regulations;
- Monitors how effective teaching and learning strategies are in terms of raising pupil attainment;
- Makes sure that staff development and performance management policies promote good quality teaching;
- Monitors the effectiveness of school teaching and learning policies through the self-review processes. These include reports from subject leads and the annual Headteacher's report to Governors as well as a review of the in-service training sessions attended by our staff.

The Headteacher ...

- Plans with the Governing Body with teachers in all areas but especially Collective Worship
- Ensures that everyone attends collective worship
- Makes sure that the subject is imaginative, interesting and stimulating

RE Subject Leader should...

- Have accurate knowledge of the school's and pupils' strengths and weaknesses
- Be knowledgeable in their subject and have authority and influence
- Have clear expectations for raising and maintaining standards
- Possess a range of monitoring and evaluating procedures to improve teaching and learning
- Have well established systems for collecting, analysing and using assessment data
- Develop a shared vision and collaboration between staff
- Have ample opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning
- Have an understanding of the data, particularly to focus support and intervention on the pupils who need it most.
- Report back to the full Governing Body on their progress.

### Collective Worship Responsibility

Church schools must fulfil three main legal requirements for collective worship:

- Provide an act of worship for all pupils every day
- Ensure that collective worship is in accordance with the Trust Deed of the school
- Include a statement in the school prospectus that makes it clear that parents may withdraw their children from all or any part of collective worship

Worship may take place at any time during the school day. Acts of worship within a school term should be wholly of a Christian nature.

## Christian Distinctiveness.

Braywood is a Church of England Controlled School with Christian attitudes towards life. We consider it important to foster a personal, caring and happy environment.

We are committed to teaching and living the Christian way of life by providing quality education for every child and developing respect and consideration for all members of our community.

A Christian environment will enable pupils to become aware of and reflect upon their own experiences and those of others; and to discover meaning and value in such experiences that might reveal the love and presence of God.

Our aims are to enable children to develop their personal qualities and become:

- Responsible for themselves, to develop a sense of consideration for others and a love of self.
- Confident and competent both academically and socially;
- Able to distinguish between right and wrong;
- Able to articulate their own attitudes and values;
- Able to understand and be sensitive to the beliefs, values and ways of life of others, responding appropriately to injustice and prejudice;
- Caring, considerate and compassionate;
- Skilled in working collaboratively and independently;
- Able to reflect on their learning and plan for future development;
- Able to respond positively to challenges and problems.
- Able to help pupils to understand the world in which they live and
- Able to promote good relationships and respect between the home, the local community, the school and the church.

## Christian Values and Vision

Through our fundamental Christian values and our vision, an environment of mutual respect and nurturing community is fostered. This result in an overall ethos that reflects the Christian beliefs that are fundamental to all that we teach.

Our values are

**Forgiveness**  
Integrity  
Faith  
Love  
**Self-discipline**  
Courage  
Determination  
Ambition  
Friendship  
Family  
Respect

And they are not only embedded in everything that we do; each class hold two of these values. They talk about these values on a daily basis, their biblical quote relates to these values and the parable (a wisdom quote) that demonstrates their value is also talked about in the classroom.

## Our vision

*“At Braywood our aspiration is for all children to become confident, emotionally resilient and compassionate individuals who achieve personal success through strength of character and a love of learning”*

- To make Braywood a place of excellence. A place where all children can learn in a stimulating, entrepreneurial and challenging learning environment that motivates and inspires confident, independent and **ambitious** learners.
- To provide a broad, creative and balanced curriculum which gives children the **resilience** to acquire knowledge and practice essential basic skills - a strong foundation on which to build.
- To facilitate a safe, **forgiving and loving** environment based upon our Christian Values where **integrity** and compassionate behaviours ensure all children are safe and valued.
- To allow all children to develop their sense of **faith**, religious character and spirituality through the teaching of all religions (and none) regardless of their race, beliefs, gender or background.
- To teach our curriculum on the global stage so that children can appreciate and respect our diverse world and have the **courage** to take responsibility for our role within it –the strength and determination to make a difference.
- To understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and to encourage an interest, enjoyment and **respect** for our immediate environment and the world around us for a sustainable future.
- To promote the happiness, **self-discipline** and well-being of all through an inclusive, empathetic and nurturing environment where **families and friends** learn together.
- To celebrate personal achievement or talents and encourage an enthusiasm, strength of **determination** and enjoyment for lifelong learning, in order to achieve our dreams!

***‘Even though we are different, together we can make a masterpiece.’***

*Children’s motto*

All these values are built upon the image that children start at Braywood as a tiny acorn and as they grow in understanding and strength, they leave Braywood as a mighty oak. The roots provide stability and strength of character and the canopy are skills and knowledge. Understanding of God nurtures this growth.

***‘From tiny acorns, mighty oak trees grow, watered and nurtured by God’***

*Mission Statement*

## Social, Moral, Cultural and Spiritual Education

Through our broad, balanced and enriched curriculum SMSC values and taught every minute of the school day. All staff, including support staff, are involved in spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. These qualities should be evident in the way that children and adults interact throughout the school, in accordance with many other existing qualities.

Through our acts of worship, a very significant contribution can be made to the development of these areas for all our children for the reasons stated earlier in this document.

Reasons such as, that worship provides opportunities for the children to:

- Gain a sense of self-knowledge, vision or inspiration; a sense of awe and wonder
- Appreciate the values and attitudes upheld by the community
- Be encouraged to keep/maintain/develop a quest for truth and meaning
- Observe and encounter varieties of expressions of belief and commitment

One of the main aim of collective worship is to offer pupils opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Spiritual Development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence that are of enduring worth.

*Spiritual Development* is promoted by:

- The celebration of special achievements
- Guided reflection
- Consideration of a variety of beliefs, values and feelings
- Appreciation of aspects of life which have special meaning, and which contribute to a sense of awe and wonder

Moral Development refers to pupils' knowledge, understanding, intentions, attitudes and behaviour in relation to what is right or wrong.

*Moral Development* is promoted by:

- Consideration of moral codes found in school, in religions and in society
- Consideration of relationships
- Encouraging empathy by the consideration of moral issues from different perspectives

Social Development refers to pupils' progressive acquisition of the competences and qualities needed to play a full part in society. It is concerned with the skills and personal qualities for individuals to live and function effectively in society.

*Social Development* is promoted by:

- Coming together as a school / class group
- Bringing visitors into school from the community
- Sharing values and matters of concern

Cultural Development refers to pupils' increasing understanding and command of those beliefs, values, customs, knowledge and skills which, taken together, form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups.

*Cultural Development* is promoted by:

- Using music, art, drama, story and artifacts from a range of cultural backgrounds
- Exploring and celebrating aspects of religion and cultures

## Collective Worship

### The Nature and Purpose of Collective Worship

The staff and governors of Braywood Church of England First School, in partnership with the Diocese of Oxford, aim to enable children to develop as honest, caring and thoughtful members of both the school and wider communities. We believe that they should understand the difference between right and wrong and know that each person is a unique individual whose well-being is important to all.

We believe that worship plays an essential part in the life of our school since it contributes to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of the child as well as reflecting the ethos of the school. At Braywood collective worship is a time where the whole school share a special moment of spiritual togetherness every day.

Parents have a right to withdraw their pupils from all or parts of the acts of worship. However, the class teachers and/or Head teacher should discuss the matter sensitively with any parent who wishes to exercise their right to withdraw their child.

The children lead our Collective Worship and participation by the children is a strong feature. It focuses on how they feel and what they think; it is a forum for them to reflect. Pupils are encouraged to contribute, to feel part of the assembly and comments, however small, are valued and celebrated

Through the acts of worship, we aim to:

- Give children practical experience of prayer and promote the understanding of the nature of God.
- Demonstrate the Christian belief that God cares about the world, to appreciate that people differ, and everyone should be valued for their uniqueness and us.
- Strengthen the community spirit of the school, of belonging and sharing and to celebrate achievements of others within the school community.
- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural and mental development of the child and allow time to reflect on success and failure and to encourage expressions of determination to always do one's best.
- Prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life and share emotions such as love, joy, hope, friendship, fear tolerance, understanding, forgiveness and reverence.
- Give time to celebrate and give thanks for the beauty of life and living and reflect upon the value of our environment and its importance in our lives.
- Introduce children to the values of the Bible and the life of Jesus.

## Pattern of the daily act of worship

Collective worship takes place daily and all staff are expected to attend.

Monday	Celebration assembly with whole school at 9.30am
Tuesday	Themed assembly led by Year 4 and Headteacher at 9.30am
Wednesday	Themed assembly with whole school at 9.30am including Open the Book and Yoga
Thursday	Themed assembly with Revd. Swift at 9.30am
Friday	Themed assembly and Singing Hymns with whole school at 1.30pm

Revd. Ainsley takes an assembly every week with a notable biblical theme and Year 4 organise 'Open the Book', whilst Year 3 work with Revd Ainsley delivering the Eucharist.

## Content of Daily Acts of Worship

Collective worship takes place on every school day with the whole school and all staff are expected to attend in accordance with the Trust Deed. The law requires acts of worship should be of a Christian character.

Children will be involved in the opportunity to worship through prayers, hymns and songs, participation in role-play and through quiet reflection. Assemblies aim to be enjoyable, interactive and reflective and provide the children and adults with a special time to share together. Our Year 4 Collective Worship leaders help the staff lead collective worship by choosing the hymn, prayer and leading the 'Open the Book' sessions.

In our associated RE days/lessons other faiths and religious traditions will be explored in isolation or in relation to a Christian theme. Issues will be presented in a variety of ways through stories, poems, songs, role-play, artefacts, visitors, power-point presentations, interactive whiteboard activities as well as the sharing of children's and adult's achievements.

Other visitors are also invited to give pupils the opportunity to learn about different forms of Christian worship. The school holds a service in Church/School for Harvest Festival, Christmas, Easter and Leavers each year. In addition, the school regularly visit our church through our RE lessons

Once a month or every 6 weeks will be a Family Assembly to which parents are invited. Children will lead the assembly, communicate their latest thoughts or achievements and a Headteacher's award will be given to children in the Golden book. There is an aim to create a whole school spiritual moment where we all share common goals, prayers and positive themes of self-worth.

## Learning Expectations and Intended Outcomes

Education, celebration, praise and hope are essential features of our worship at Braywood. We aim to make children aware of what it means to be a community committed to serving and caring for each other, God and our environment. In so doing we hope to create an atmosphere in which pupils are invited rather than compelled to explore issues for themselves, reflect upon and learn from their own and others' experiences, develop sensitivity and a sense of wonder, awe and mystery for the world of which they are part.

At Braywood our place of worship 'Church House' is on consecrated grounds inside a cemetery. Children enter the hall respectfully, listening to the music; they feel this is the 'house of God'. The special 'thinking candle' is then lit. The school prayer is said regularly, as is the Lord's Prayer. Celebrations for achievements, opportunities for whole school communication and platforms for worship in all forms are evident in our assemblies.

Themes are planned alongside the children and incumbent to ensure that the tone reflects the Christian calendar and the needs of the children. Children in Year 4 take on a large responsibility for the organisation of our assemblies and follow the 'Lighting the Candle' scheme to support their learning. All children access these leadership opportunities.

In sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives, along with our common concerns, responsibilities and values, we affirm the equality of each individual, regardless of gender, creed (or lack of one), ethnicity, physical or mental ability. The staff and governors at Braywood are committed to ensuring that every child in the school will derive benefit from collective worship, whatever her or his ability. Every attempt is made, therefore, to ensure that materials used are appropriate to a range of abilities, aptitudes and interests.

## Planning and Assessment

Assemblies are planned and a record of our worship is maintained in our 'Worship File'. Themes for collective worship are linked to whole school planning including the Christian timetable, RE and PSHE. There is also a need for flexibility in order to respond to national and unexpected events where appropriate.

- Provision should be made for long, medium and short-term planning
- There should be clear policy which includes a statement of aims
- The appointment of a worship co-ordinator to oversee planning, monitoring and evaluation is essential
- Clarity and communication is needed between all the school staff, the clergy and any visiting speakers, with regard to the aims, planning and organisation of worship
- Children should be encouraged to take an active part in the planning process

### Assessment in Spiritual Development

- Becoming aware of God in one's own life and in the life of others
- Becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- Questioning and exploring the meaning of experience

### Assessment in Moral Development

- An understanding of moral principles which allow them to tell right from wrong?
- A respect for other people, truth, justice and property?
- An ability to stand moral ground in the face of peer pressure.

### Assessment in Social Development

- Observation of pupils' growing maturity and self-esteem
- The degree to which pupils employ socially acceptable behaviour
- Development of relationships in work and play
- The degree to which pupils appreciate what constitutes a healthy lifestyle

### Assessment in Cultural Development

- Response to stories, videos, artefacts
- Records of work, displays, photographic evidence
- Increased participation in cultural activities
- Attitudes expressed during cultural visits or relating to visitors

The class teacher through the daily life of the school evaluates all areas of SMSC. At Braywood assessments are being carried out daily, by all staff as we are constantly discussing the children at our school. In a small school the pupil's progress in these areas are noticed by all staff. A formal record of this will be found in the end of year report and in the three parent's evenings.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

What is the impact of Collective Worship? Evaluation strategies used by Staff and Governors for assessing the impact of collective worship are:

- Observation of the children's interest level and attentiveness;
- Feedback from pupils, parents and visitors;
- Observation of the children's general behaviour in and around school, and to one another;
- A focused visit by Foundation Governors.

The Worship Co-ordinator will ensure records and resources are maintained and will regularly monitor the content and quality of acts of collective worship.

Evaluation and review of Collective Worship is inextricably linked to our School Development Plan, the content of which is regularly discussed with all staff and governors. Information from our monitoring strategies are analysed in order to assess the quality and effectiveness of our assemblies and to inform future whole school improvements.

The Governors in consultation with the Headteacher are responsible for the collective act of worship within our school. The staff, head teacher and foundation governor will review progress alongside our original long term aims and feedback to governors on a regular basis.

(See our Behaviour for Learning and Equality and Diversity Policy for more information)