



# Christian Ethos & Collective Worship Policy

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

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

Braywood CE First School  
Oakley Green, Windsor, Berkshire  
SL6 1UH  
[www.braywoodschool.co.uk](http://www.braywoodschool.co.uk)  
[office@braywoodfirstschool.co.uk](mailto:office@braywoodfirstschool.co.uk)

# Table of Contents

## 1. Introduction

- Aims
- Statutory Requirements

## 2. Key Contacts

## 3. Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

- Governors
- Headteacher
- Subject Leaders

## 4. Christian Distinctiveness

## 5. Teaching and Learning of Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural Education

## 6. Nature and Purpose of Acts of Worship

- Patterns of Daily Acts of Worship
- Content of Daily Acts of Worship
- Planning and Assessment

## 7. Moderation and Evaluation

## Introduction

*“Through the nurturing hands of od, we aspire 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.

*“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*

Every child’s social, cultural, spiritual, and moral growth is fostered through our Christian distinctiveness and children are taught the uniqueness and value of everyone at Braywood. Understanding and respecting each other, appreciating other’s values, religions, or cultures, we call ‘religious character’ which is a quality that is fostered at our school. Respecting and trying to learn more about God’s messages is part of a spiritual a journey that all children embark upon which in turn helps them understand more about themselves, their values and what they feel makes them feel complete.

### 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 character 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 character 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 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.

**More information can be found in our complementary policy pastoral care – wellbeing and happiness.**

## 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

Our vision drives the strategic direction of our school. We want children to aspire and achieve and leave Braywood with all the skills required to make a success of their next steps in education. We want them to love learning and be inspired to make a difference. To do this they are going to have to be confident in their own abilities, understand their emotions and be resilient in their outlook. We are a nurturing school, and we are compassionate towards each other and compassionate to ourselves. With all these skills, children should be able to strive towards their dreams.

Through our fundamental Christian values are fundamental to our Christian ethos and reflect the 12 standards that we feel stand for our school. Each class has two values which are progressively harder to understand as we move up the school. They form part of the classroom language and are shown in the children's reflection area. The children talk about these values, 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 values are

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

Each of these values are embedded into the longer vision statement to demonstrate how both our vision and values are intertwined to support an embedded set of beliefs that are important to the whole school community.

- *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. Children understanding of God is that he nurtures this growth.

***'From tiny acorns, mighty oak trees grow, watered and nurtured by Go's love''***

*Mission Statement*

## Social, Moral, Cultural and Spiritual Education

Through our broad, balanced and enriched curriculum SMSC values are 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.

This education can be found throughout a range of curriculum areas but the pillar that runs through this diverse area of learning is through our acts of worship. SMSC themes are built into our Collective worship times using the SEAL (social, emotional aspects of learning) and PSHE programme of work.

This programme covers a range of ambitions including:

- 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

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

### Aims

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers everyone in our school an opportunity to reflect on our values and vision in the context of our distinctly Christian school. Worship is an expression of how we approach life and at Braywood 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.

By law, Collective Worship must be provided for every child, every day and reflect the school's Trust deed. Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive, and inspirational.

The staff and governors of Braywood Church of England First School, in partnership with the Diocese of Oxford, believe that worship plays an essential part in the life of our school and of the teachings of Jesus and the Trinitarian theology. It contributes to the spiritual, social, moral, and cultural development of the child as well as reflecting the ethos of the school. Collective worship is a time where we nurture everyone's spiritual growth - a special moment that we can share together.

Collective worship is a time to feel uplifted through song, to be silent, to gain reassurance through pattern and routine and to feel part of the whole school. A time where we help foster the strength of character that children need to do the right thing and to be a courageous advocate for the right type of change. Collective worship also helps children think about the importance of faith in the lives of people today alongside the child's own cultural heritage.

## The Nature and Purpose of Collective Worship

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.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invite but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times on the important message shared in our worship.

Through the acts of worship, we aim to:

- Introduce children to the values of the Bible and the life of Jesus.
- Give children practical experience of prayer, stillness, reflection, singing 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.

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.

## 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
Tuesday	Themed assembly led by Year 4 and Headteacher
Wednesday	Themed assembly with whole school with a focus on singing and Yoga
Thursday	Themed assembly with Revd. Swift
Friday	Themed assembly with 'Open the book'.

The pattern of collective worship involves lighting the candle and entering the hall with calm music, sharing a general message and biblical connotations, singing a hymn, reflection and sharing a prayer and finally leading out to appropriate music. We follow the Christian calendar which is outlined in the Church House.

Revd. Ainsley takes an assembly every week with a notable biblical theme and Year 4 organise 'Open the Book' and generally lead worship alongside the adult.



## 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.

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. 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 carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders (including the children) plan the content and activities and themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way our vision is experienced in school through our Christian values and parables. Themes for collective worship are linked to whole school planning including the Christian timetable, SEAL 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 are 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)