



Emmanuel CE Middle School

Howe Lane, Verwood, Dorset, BH31 6JF

Email: [office@emmanuelmiddle.org](mailto:office@emmanuelmiddle.org) Tel: 01202 828100

[www.emmanuelmiddle.org](http://www.emmanuelmiddle.org)

Headteacher: Mr Rob Christopher, BSc (Hons) PGCE

Deputy Headteacher: Mr Alister Barker, BSc (Hons) PGCE

## Emmanuel Church of English Middle School Collective Worship Policy

Version	3.0
Date ratified	September 2025
Date issued	September 2025
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Owner	Headteacher
Applies to	All EMS Staff

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	September 2023	To update the collective worship info
2.0	September 2024	Update from WAT to Initio
3.0	September 2025	To update our approach to spirituality

### 1. Rationale

The School Collective Worship Policy reflects and reinforces the school's aims and ethos: "At Emmanuel we are inspired to go beyond our own limits". It aims to demonstrate the partnership between the conduct and content of school worship and the ethos of the whole school based on Christian values of excellence, endeavour and enjoyment, derived from core Biblical texts:





**Excellence:** The Apostle Paul, writing to the Colossians (chapter 3, verse 22 The Message.), says, ‘...don’t just do the minimum that will get you by. Do your best.’ To do our best is, in many senses, the highest form of worship because we are literally honouring God by giving the best of ourselves.

In wider society, excellence is also a benchmark of commitment and expectation that if nurtured in young people, can define how far they take their individual talents. As Ralph Marston put it, ‘Excellence is not a skill, it’s an attitude,’ which we take to mean that anyone can learn to expect the best of themselves and others.

**Endeavour:** The word doesn’t appear in most translations of the Bible, but it is central to many passages in its meaning. Paul wrote some great advice about the quantities of determination, perseverance and bravery which make up endeavour. For example, he said to the Corinthians (chapter 1, verse 26) ‘I don’t know about you, but I’m running hard for the finish line. I’m giving it everything I’ve got.’ James, who was Jesus’ brother, said to the church (Chapter 1 verse 3) ‘You know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything, because he knew first-hand that though things get tough, by keeping going, you get stronger.’

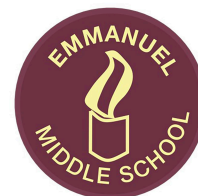
Vince Lombardi, the famed American Football coach, put it like this: ‘It’s Not Whether You Get Knocked Down, It’s Whether You Get Up.’!

**Enjoyment:** The Bible tells us that God wants us to have ‘life in all its fullness’ (John chapter 10 verse 10) and that the source of enjoyment is Heavenly Father (1 Timothy chapter 6 verse 17) ‘put [your] hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment’. It is very clear from all modern research, as well as common sense, that those who are happy in their work are generally able to be more productive and achieve work to a better standard.

As Oprah Winfrey puts it, ‘Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you, or as Einstein says, ‘Creativity is intelligence having fun’. Bear Grylls, Mala Yousafzai, Nick Vujicic and Emma Watson are all, in their very core, passionate about what they do. They also exude that sense of fun in life and work. They truly are role models for our vision ‘to do our best’ and ‘go beyond’.

### Trust Agreed Spiritual Statement

The development of Collective Worship at Emmanuel sits within the overall MAT commitment to nurture every individual, including spiritual development: ‘Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder,



asking questions and inspiration. It is being aware of something 'bigger' outside ourselves and our connectedness with others, the world and beyond.' The school adopts the 4-Window approach.

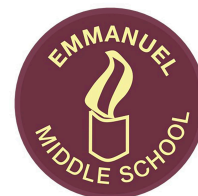
## **2. Collective Worship at Emmanuel**

At Emmanuel Middle School, we consider Collective worship to be a significant educational activity that both reflects and explores the school's distinctive Christian character and contributes to the academic achievement, personal development and well-being of all learners.

Worship at Emmanuel Middle School is a celebration intended to promote awe and wonder and a love of God. We aim to develop spiritual insights and beliefs, encourage concern for others locally and in the wider world, and to assist children in their own search for meaning and purpose in life. Collective Worship involves members of the school coming together, and we encourage everyone to take an active part. Worship at Emmanuel is broadly Christian in nature, in accordance with the trust deed of the school and in line with the 1988 Education Reform Act. We usually base our Worship on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church, including the elements of Christian worship such as prayers, hymns, Bible stories and readings. We conduct our acts of worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

Collective Worship at Emmanuel Middle School is expected to:

- Be inspirational and inclusive. It should engage all learners, and they should be able to talk about the impact it makes on their relationships and on life in the school.
- Regularly provide opportunities for pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world through the teachings of Jesus and the Bible, and develop understanding of the Trinity and relate these to the school's core Christian values.
- Provide an opportunity for children to worship God and celebrate each unique individual made in the image of God.
- Enable children to explore their own beliefs, allow reflection and response to fundamental questions of life and those things that are of concern and value to all.
- Encourage participation and response with opportunities to celebrate and give thanks for different achievements and special occasions, including festivals.
- Provide members of the school community with the opportunity to praise and reach out to God, experience stillness and quiet, respond to Christian language and symbolism and experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation, to experience and understand the



cycle of the church year.

- Develop in children a sense of community spirit, promote a common ethos with shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.
- Contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and foster a concern for the needs of others.
- Help children begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship, providing a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future.
- Help learners learn to think beyond themselves, by developing an awareness of issues in the wider world, and encourage them to be active and engaged in advocating concerns of justice, peace, care of creation and concern for the poor.
- Provide foundations for making wise decisions in the conduct of relationships and life choices.

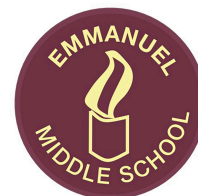
### **3. Legal Requirements**

The law requires the headteacher and Local School Committee of every school to provide a daily act of Collective Worship which is in line with the school's Trust Deed and foundation. It is a statutory requirement that a daily act of Collective Worship is offered to all children. Every child at Emmanuel has the opportunity to participate in such an act every day, and we expect all children to attend assemblies. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be withdrawn from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship. Staff retain the right to withdraw from worship should they so desire.

### **4. Planning/Evaluation of Collective Worship**

Specific time is set aside for this activity, and we recognise the importance of marking out the act of Collective Worship from other assembly activities. We seek to mark out this special time by lighting a candle and using a liturgical greeting. This also offers specific opportunities for reverence or veneration according to children's own beliefs and traditions.

Each person leading worship is expected to plan his or her act of worship with the same degree of thoroughness as any other aspect of their teaching. We encourage a 4-stage structure of planning, including 'gathering' 'engaging' 'responding', and 'sending'. Collective worship themes are planned termly, drawing from a wide range of resource



material gathered from diocesan resources and wider church and taking into account the major festivals of the Church's year.

A worship-planning group meets once a term, led by the worship coordinator. These meetings are an opportunity to review and evaluate the last term's Acts of Collective Worship and to plan themes for the next term. The views of pupils about collective worship are sought through the Collective Ambassador team. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in the planning, leading and monitoring of Collective worship.

Collective Worship is coordinated by Rob Christopher and Jenni Whiteman. Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of the Collective Worship leader and the Local School Committee link, Fiona Kusel. The Collective Worship leader, Jenni Whiteman, receives feedback from the school community and collects records from each member of staff at the end of every term.

Collective Worship is gathered in large books and kept in the school's Worship area.

## **5. Our Pattern of Collective Worship**

### Whole School Celebration/ Act of Worship

The school gathers for the whole school act of worship every Monday and Friday, where the weekly theme is introduced, explored, and reflections for the week are introduced. Staff and pupils may contribute music, drama and dance. This worship will normally provide opportunities for spiritual development.

### Praise Worship

From time to time, the school will gather for 'Praise' worship in which the achievements of pupils at the school are celebrated.

### Year Group / KS Worship is held weekly

These are taken by teachers from each year group. The acts of worship generally follow themes that are aligned with the school's weekly theme and values, but include a recognition of the church's year and make space for other national events. The content of these acts of worship can be varied but still includes a significant Christian input.



### Tutor/Class Teacher-led Reflections

Twice a week, pupils meet in tutor groups for this act of worship. The four windows of spirituality provide the focus and opportunity for the class to interact with key questions that promote deep thinking. Pupils may also contribute ideas for reflection.

### House worship

Once per half-term, the school meets as House groups. There is a main worship for the whole house, and the other worship takes place in year house groups. It follows the same four-window spirituality process.

## **6. Visitors**

Visitors should understand the educational aims of Collective Worship at the school and the need to avoid any proselytising. Attempts to persuade pupils to adopt a particular religious or non-religious belief are not appropriate. The Headteacher is consulted before a visiting speaker is confirmed. Visitors should not speak about raising money for any particular cause(s) without the prior permission of the Headteacher.

## **7. Staff and Community Involvement in Collective Worship**

The school actively seeks a wide range of inspirational individuals to address our children. All staff and pupils are given the opportunity of being involved in this programme every term.

Summary of Emmanuel Middle School's pattern of worship

Monday 2:40 pm – Headteacher or Visitor in hall for Whole School Worship

Tuesday 3 pm – KS2 and KS3 Class/Tutor Worship

Wednesday 3 pm – Reflection

Thursday 2:40 pm – KS3 and KS2 Class/Tutor Worship

Friday 2:40 pm – Deputy Headteacher in the Hall for Whole School Worship