



**'Learn to love and love to learn; in God's love each one will shine'**

**St. Andrew's Church of England (VC) Primary School**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **Rationale:**

At St. Andrew's Primary School it is our vision for every child in our school to have

- \* positive self-esteem through inner confidence and strength
- \* creativity of thought within a life-long passion for learning
- \* excellence, high personal achievement and the experience of success
- \* a set of values by which to live
- \* an enjoyment of childhood

.... All developed within a caring Christian environment.

St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. The importance and centrality of worship contribute powerfully to the spiritual development of all our pupils. The school encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

### **What is worship?**

At St. Andrew's C of E (VC) Primary School we believe that worship is:

- A recognition of God's worth – expressing praise and gratitude, awe and wonder, love and compassion
- An opportunity to seek God and respond to Him
- A celebration of God's love by believers
- A recognition of and response to the spiritual dimensions of human experience
- An invitation to participate, observe and respond to things of worth

Worship can be expressed by the use of a variety of media including music, songs and hymns, words and scripture, ritual, movement and drama, and stillness and reflection.

### **Aims:**

The aim of Collective Worship at St Andrew's C of E (VC) Primary School is to introduce pupils to worship in a manner appropriate to their age, aptitude and family background and drawing upon the riches of the Anglican and other Christian traditions. Collective Worship is collective not corporate - something we do together but embracing a great variety of faith commitment. For those who have already developed a growing Christian commitment, worship will be the natural outcome of belief and a place where their deepest thoughts and emotions can be expressed in communion with God. For others the experience of worship will be tentative and exploratory, whilst those without a religious commitment will begin to appreciate what worship means for others.

The aim of Collective Worship in our school is to:-

- Develop in every child the knowledge that God loves them for themselves, just as they are and always will.
- Develop an understanding in every child that God is always with them and there to walk alongside them through life if they want and ask Him to be .
- Enable them to listen to God and to respond to Him if they wish.
- Encourage respect and care for God's creation.
- Develop in our children an understanding of Christianity and to enable them to reflect upon Christian values and beliefs.

- Provide opportunities for pupils to worship God or to approach the threshold of worship by fostering in them an attitude characterised by feelings such as humility, awe, wonder, appreciation, thankfulness, respect, reverence and elation.
- Enable pupils to make use of silence as a time for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer.
- Allow children opportunities to experience and appreciate the use of symbolism and religious language to express feelings and belief.
- Contribute to children's spiritual, moral and cultural development by enabling pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues and the questions these raise in their lives and in the lives of others.
- Foster in the children an approach of enquiry and tolerance towards people of other faiths and those with no faith, by encouraging children's sharing and understanding of them.
- Acknowledge and respect difference and diversity.
- Acknowledge the things which have meaning, value and purpose for the pupils as individuals, as well as for the school and the wider community.
- Be inclusive, fostering a sense of community and unity in the school and in the community beyond it.
- Celebrate achievements, special occasions and special events in relation to individual pupils within school, to the school as a whole, or to the wider community and to
- Enable the children to bring serious events in their lives to God e.g. bereavement and moving-on

### **Legal Requirements for Collective Worship in Voluntary Schools**

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) requires Church Schools to fulfil three main legal requirements for Collective Worship, namely to:

- Provide an act of worship for all pupils every day
- Ensure that Collective Worship is in-keeping with the Trust Deed of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government and is consistent with the beliefs and practice of the Church of England.
- Include a statement in the Prospectus that makes it clear that parents may withdraw their children from all or part of Collective Worship. The statement reads as follows "As a Church of England school, our worship is an important part of school life together. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, but are invited to discuss concerns with the Headteacher before making any decision."
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Other religions will be treated with respect but will not provide the basis of worship.
- Worship may take place at any time during the school day.
- There may be a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils and should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises, although schools are may hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship rests with the Governors (particularly the Foundation Governors) in consultation with the Head Teacher.
- Withdrawal does not guarantee exclusion from the religious character of the school and the Governors hope that in choosing a church school parents are thereby committing themselves to their child's participation in the overall religious life of the school.
- Staff members retain the right to withdraw from Collective Worship (Education Act 1944).

### **Collective Worship and the Anglican tradition**

In seeking to provide acts of Collective Worship which are both distinctive and inclusive, we:

- Observe the major Christian Festivals and the cycles of the Anglican year: e.g. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost, and some saints days (such as St Andrew's day). There are also special services such as Harvest Festival, Christingle and End of Year.
- Use the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning.
- Reflect upon Christian symbols and their use in worship
- Light a candle to signify the presence of 'Jesus the light of the world'. The candle colour follows the liturgical seasons and, with the said responses, marks the beginning and end of the time of worship.

- Use traditional responses, prayers, and hymns to create a framework for worship within the school, alongside modern Christian songs and prayers. This seeks to link, as far as possible, the pupil's experience in school and church.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to discover the value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship.
- In-keeping with the Church of England's commitment to dialogue with other faiths, we welcome pupils of other faiths and celebrate shared values and beliefs.

### **The Style of Collective Worship**

#### **Collective Worship and Spiritual Development**

Opportunities for spiritual development are fostered across the whole curriculum. However, acts of Collective Worship provide particular opportunities for promoting the spiritual development of pupils through:

- The recognition that there is something more to life than the ordinary.
- Acknowledging the capacity of pupils to reach beyond the everyday experiences of life.
- The development of the inner life of each pupil.
- A search for meaning.
- A sense of values.
- A sense of the transcendent.
- Collective Worship will include stillness as well as words, stories, pictures and symbols, prayers and hymns, songs and music. There will be room for questions and answers – and sometimes the admission that there are no answers.
- There will be expressions of thankfulness, praise and joy. Feelings of sadness and loss will be included when appropriate.
- Collective Worship should allow ethical and moral questions to be explored.
- Every act of Collective Worship should have a clear beginning, shape and ending.

### **Values**

Acts of Collective Worship must be wholly of a Christian nature. Through our acts of worship children should come to a greater understanding of those principles, values and characteristics displayed by Jesus throughout His ministry and teaching and by His own example. Recognised by Christians as integral to their faith, these are nevertheless universally esteemed by people of any faith or none as values by which to live a good life. These Values provide all our children and indeed our whole school community, with a moral code by which to live and a firm foundation and standard against which to evaluate the experiences of life.

These Values include:

trust, unselfish love, respect for all and for self, care for others, tolerance, responsibility, kindness, happiness, unity, honesty, compassion, faith, commitment, courage, peace, truth, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, patience, hope, humility, risk, freedom and faith.

Values may be selected by staff as relevant to the school at the time; by parents as working with and supporting their home values; or occasionally by the children in response to particular need. Selecting one for each half term, on a two year programme, these Values become the focus and theme for our worship, whether clergy or school led and underpin all relationships (including behaviour management) in school.

### **Planning Collective Worship**

- The selected Values form the focus of each half term. These then form the foundation for the planning of Collective Worship as well as a significant element in PSHE teaching. EHV (Education for Human Values) materials, SEAL (Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning), Jumping Fish (Diocese of Gloucester) and other relevant materials are used to support this work.
- Collective Worship is planned on a termly basis by the Headteacher in collaboration with the Clergy Team and others (e.g. the Headteacher from our sister school, St. John's) involved in leading worship on a termly basis.
- The Headteacher will produce a termly Worship Plan including an indication of the subject focus of each Collective Worship experience.
- The Headteacher will produce a termly Values Lead Outline which links the weekly Values and Church Team Collective Worship with PSHE and Values' foci and tasks for the classroom, thus ensuring that the Values permeate every aspect and area of school life.

- When appropriate, Collective Worship will engage with any event, local, national or world, of which the children may be aware, and offer appropriate worship in response. There is room for spontaneity.
- The Vicar or a member of the local Clergy Team staff will lead Collective Worship on a regular basis, once a week, on a Wednesday. Whilst these Worship times may focus on themes such as prayer, the life of Jesus, and the Church's seasons, they will, at other times, teach a Biblical example of the Value that is currently the focus e.g. The Story of the Good Samaritan may be used to teach Compassion.
- Ministers from other Christian denominations will be encouraged to take Collective Worship as appropriate. From time to time it may be suitable for visitors representing charities, organisations or projects to lead, or contribute to Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship is non-curriculum time and should connect with, and reinforce, the curriculum but not be constrained by it.
- A record and brief evaluation of Collective Worship, action points arising from it and actions taken, is kept by the Headteacher who is the Collective Worship Co-ordinator.
- The right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. We plan the time so that there is variety in method and content, allowing opportunity for quiet and personal reflection and worship.
- Songs and hymns are selected by the School Council, with the Incumbent and/or the Collective Worship Coordinator, termly for the next term. The children select hymns, songs and music carefully to match the theme where possible – frequently as an outcome of deep and considered discussion.

Our Collective Worship follows a set pattern:

- Monday: Songs and Worship – a time when we consider carefully the words of the songs or hymns that will be used in Collective Worship for the week and make this into a worshipful experience by reflecting on and responding to those songs.
- Tuesday: A leading Values Assembly
- Wednesday: The church team of St. Andrew's Church, or other local Christian denomination lead worship linking the aspect of the Value for the week explicitly to the Bible.
- Thursday: Our 'Child of the Week' Collective Worship where children in every class who have demonstrated an improvement in attitude, work or behaviour or have specifically 'lived the value', are identified and praised by their teacher in front of the whole school family. We thank God for the gifts and talents that He gives us.
- Friday: Class Collective Worship (twice per year group/per term) which include a time of prayer or follow up Values Collective Worship.

The whole school joins in Collective Worship times at St Andrew's Church to celebrate the Church's main festivals including Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. We also celebrate Harvest and hold the End of Year Thanksgiving Service in St. Andrew's Church.

Parents and friends are invited to Class Collective Worship and also to our services in St. Andrew's Church during the year.

### **Worship in the Foundation Stage:**

Children in the Foundation Stage of our school (Nursery and Reception) will follow the school Worship Plan, but will hold their own age-appropriate Values Assembly on Tuesday mornings.

The member of the church team who is leading the whole-school Wednesday Collective Worship will be invited to spend time in the Foundation Stage, talking to the children informally as they carry out their Child Initiated Learning or gathering them to hear an age-appropriate version of the Bible story that has been delivered to the older children .

The Reception Class will hold their own Child of the Week Collective Worship on Thursdays and Class Collective Worship on Fridays when it is their turn.

On other Fridays, the Reception Class will hold a values-based Review of the Week.

This is in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Development Matters and forms a link between it and the whole-school Worship Plan and pattern.

### **Inclusiveness**

We aim to include all ages and all aptitudes and to make Collective Worship meaningful to all by using

- Singing and instrumental music.
- Visual stimuli such as artefacts, pictures or special objects.

- Stories, particularly those which enable pupils to come to terms with personal experiences through their capacity to promote self-reflection and understanding of the thoughts and feelings of others.
- Drama, mime dramatic readings and presentation of linked class work

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

When conducting self-evaluation, the following evidence is collected:

- Documentation e.g. policy, planning records and evaluations. Including evidence that opportunities are provided to encounter the traditions and tenets of the Anglican Church
- Governors may be involved with others in observing of acts of Collective Worship as part of routine monitoring activity  
Discussions with Foundation Governors, staff, pupils, and parents in the planning and practice of Collective Worship
- The Church Schools' Action Group will regularly review this policy, including the practices and practicalities of Collective Worship, particularly its relevance and accessibility to all stakeholders.
- Discussions with representatives of the local church community and where relevant Diocesan representatives.
- Collective Worship resources including budget allocation and expenditure

The Governing Body will receive a report once a year and the Collective Worship policy will be reviewed regularly by the Governing Body.

**Policy 'overseen and approved' by:** Governors' Curriculum and Ethos Committee

**Policy written:** February 2010

**To be reviewed:** February 2011

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**To be reviewed:** June 2012

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