



Primary School

Policy for Whole School Worship

Date: 01 September 2016

Reviewed: October 2019

October 2021

October 2023

“Living, learning and sharing in a loving Christian family” (Acts 2, v 42-47)

Our school vision is lived out through our 7 Christian Values of Peace, Trust, Courage, Compassion, Friendship, Forgiveness and Truthfulness.

1. Fundamentals

(a) Christian emphasis

In this Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Collective worship is in conformity with the ethos statement and the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England as laid down in the Trust Deed.

The school’s ethos statement is:

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

In accordance with The School Standards and Framework Act, 1998, Section 69 (4) and Schedule 20, section 5, the Collective Worship provided in the school, in the absence of a Trust Deed, is in accordance with designation of the religious character of the school by the Secretary of State.

(b) Collective Worship contributes to the working out of our Ethos Statement through our Mission Statement and the aims and ethos of the school, and therefore to the Christian Education we provide. It also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the values of our school.

(c) Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils' education. As such we are concerned to resource it properly and ensure that it is of the highest standard. The worship and prayer life of the school is not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities will be taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum generally and at the end of (morning and afternoon) sessions as well as graces before lunch.

(d) The Church of England Heritage

Forms of worship within our denomination differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to our Trust Deeds. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian Church.

(e) Whatever the approaches, we expect that pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them. These would include:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- The nature of human beings as children of God, part of his creation and, though sinful, destined for eternal life;
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God;
- The central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity;
- The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance;
- The importance of prayer;
- The central symbols of Christianity;
- The cycle of the Church year.

(f) Links with the Parish of St Lawrence with St Paul

The school enjoys close links with our parish. Members of the parish, led by a member of clergy, present Open the Book every alternate Wednesday in school. The school holds worship in St Paul's Church on the last Friday of each month and friends and families join us for this service. Other, special services, are also held in St Paul's during the year such as the Year 6 Leavers' Service, Reception Nativity performance and so on. Some school staff are also active members of the parish and are members of the PCC. Staff who do not live in the parish attend Sunday services at St Paul's or St Lawrence's to celebrate Harvest or other special events. The Headteacher writes 'School News' for the parish magazine, 'The Log' on a monthly basis.

(g) Collective Worship and assembly.

The school meets together for Collective Worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, e.g. important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from Collective Worship and parents' rights to withdraw their children do not apply.

(h) Worship in the school, while reflecting our denomination, will take into account the levels of development of pupils.

(i) The provision of collective worship conforms to Diocesan policy.

(j) The relationship to Denominational Religious Education.

Worship and Religious Educations lessons are closely interconnected and serve to enhance each other. Children should be able to make connections between the knowledge gained in RE lessons and our Worship themes. Sometimes Worship themes are further developed in class lessons through other curriculum areas such as art.

2. Responsibility for the policy

(a) This policy was adopted by the Governing Body in September 2016 and is updated bi-annually. It was written (and reviewed) by the Worship Co-ordinator/Headteacher in consultation with staff.

(b) Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Worship Co-ordinator/Headteacher (Mrs Catherine Parkin).

3. Statement of broad aims

(a) To experience the awe and wonder of learning about God through prayer and worship.

(b) To understand how the love of Jesus can be shared in our school community and how we can follow in His ways.

(c) To understand that faith is living and is kept alive through the application of our Christian Values.

(d) To be familiar with the traditions and special times of the Christian church of which we are part.

4. Organisation and Delivery

More detailed guidance is given in Section 3 of the Wow folder, but you should indicate briefly

a) Collective Worship will take place according to the following rota:

Monday	Whole school Collective Worship	Led by the Headteacher, following termly themes based on the Church's year and the school's Christian Values but also responding to significant world events.	
Tuesday	Sung Worship/Hymn Practice	Led by Mr Nixon/Mrs Ingram	

Wednesday	Open the Book	Led by clergy and members of St Paul's Church	<i>Alternate weeks</i>
	Teacher/Class led Worship	Led by members of teaching staff on a rota basis.	
Thursday	Whole school Collective Worship	Led by the Headteacher, following termly themes based on the Church's year and the school's Christian Values but also responding to significant world events.	
Friday	Celebration Worship	Led by the Headteacher. Special Mention and Christian Value Awards presented.	
Last Friday of the month	School Worship in Church	Led by the Headteacher, following termly themes based on the Church's year and the school's Christian Values.	<i>Friends and family are welcome to join us.</i>

b) Collective Worship is led by a range of people as detailed in the table above. The School Worship Group are often involved in presenting and supporting worship and linking worship back into their classrooms.

c) The approximate length of Collective Worship is 20-25 minutes. This takes place at 11.05am every morning. Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfES regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussion and question and answer. Pupils may be read to or instructed or they may be asked to listen to readings or to think about and respond to a stimulus such as a work of art.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt. Frequently pupils are involved in leading worship or performing through dance, drama or music.

When any such activities occur, they may be counted as teaching time even though they take place within worship. It is appropriate that, in a Church school, worship and learning is seen as a

seamless whole even though, for the purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two."

d) Friends and families are invited to join worship the last Friday in every month at St Paul's Church at 9.15am.

e) An appropriate atmosphere for worship is built through the use of music, singing, and a calm and orderly entrance and exit to the hall. The hall is dominated by colourful artwork depicting our 7 Christian Values. This is referred to frequently during worship. A display board reflecting the current Christian Value for worship is added to over the term. This helps embed the children's learning. A worship table holds some of the frequently used prayers for the term as well as some interactive tasks and significant symbols.

All worship includes prayer and often moments of reflection and quiet contemplation.

f) Notices are usually given out at the beginning of our assembly. The start of Worship is signified by the words, 'The Lord be with you.' House points, attendance awards and similar are celebrated after the closing prayer during church worship.

g) School Worship in Church takes place on the last Friday of every month. It is led by the Headteacher with the help of pupils (often from the School Worship Group). A member of the clergy is present to lead the children in an action song and to give the final blessing.

h) The school strives to make Collective Worship as inclusive as possible to enable every child to take part. Many of the themes relating to our Christian Values can be accessed from a social/moral perspective rather than a religious one. Parents may however request that their child is withdrawn from worship if they prefer. Children who are not included in worship will be allowed to remain in class with a member of staff. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request; this right of withdrawal complies with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998

i) Any children who are withdrawn from Worship will remain in a classroom with a member of staff. Staff will cover this supervision on a rota basis.

j) Because of the importance placed on the worshipping life of the school, children will not be withdrawn for extra tuition, music lessons etc.

k) Children enter the school hall in an orderly manner for Worship and sit in their year groups facing the worship leader. Year 6 children sit on raised benches at the back of the hall. When collective worship is to take place in church, the children are to walk to church in their year groups and sit in their year groups within church. Reception Class are accompanied by some Year 6 helpers to assist them. All classes cross with Mrs Reid (School Crossing Patrol). Where parents, families and governors join us in church worship, they will be invited to sit at the back of the church or in the side aisles. Children will remain sitting with their class even if their parents are present.

5. Content and Approaches

(a) Collective Worship focuses on one of our Christian Values or a particular time/event in the Church Year (Harvest, Advent etc). All worship has a biblical/theological basis. Each

term, a theme will be explored in a way which explicitly links Christian teaching to our lives. Literature is also used to explore themes such as courage, friendship and trust.

As themes are revisited regularly this allows for previous learning to be embedded as well as extended in a 'spiral' model.

- (b) Whole school worships endeavour to put the school values into an everyday context using examples of courageous advocates from society as a whole and our local community. Over the course of two years, the children learn about each of our 7 school values and their grounding in theology and demonstrations of them in life. We also cover key events in the life of the church, world religious festivals and celebrations, and the Christian calendar.
- (c) A wide range of approaches are used in Collective Worship to keep it fresh and interesting, Visual aids are used regularly as is story-telling. Often some children will be actively involved in a rehearsed or improvised role. Music can be used to set the tone on entry and exit or hymns sung as part of our prayer. Open the Book uses drama to tell Bible stories.

6. Resources

- a) The appropriateness, coverage of and relevance of the resources for worship is reviewed regularly. Should new resources be required, these are purchased at the discretion of the headteacher. A wealth of material for Collective Worship is available online from Bible Reading Fellowship etc

7. Consultation, Management, Recording and Review

- (a) The Headteacher is the Collective Worship Lead. It is her role to liaise with clergy and staff about rotas for worship and themes for the coming term as well as meeting with the School Worship Group to decide their role in supporting worship.
- (b) Staff training for worship is accessed through the Diocese of Blackburn.
- (c) Worship planning is amended as changes occur and this is kept as a record of worship in school. Photographs of worship displays or special acts of worship are shared on our Facebook page or on the school website. The Headteacher provides a written summary of the themes and purpose of worship each month in the parish newsletter, 'The Log.'
- (e) Indicate the provision for:

The School Worship Group discuss/evaluate acts of worship each term with the Headteacher. The Headteacher updates governors each term on all matters concerned with worship, RE and the Christian ethos of the school.

The legal requirements for Collective Worship in our school

(a) Legal Basis

Collective Worship in Church Schools is governed by both the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts as well as by the Trust Deed of the School. The Collective Worship provided by the school must be

in accordance with the Trust Deed, or in accordance with the tradition before we became an Aided school.

(b) Daily Worship

Daily Collective Worship has to be provided for every pupil. This worship may take place in various groupings such as the whole school, separate Key Stage groups, year groups or house groups or in classes or tutor groups, but not faith groups. Worship may take place at any point in the school day.

(c) Worship in Church

Aided Schools.

Worship should normally take place on the school premises, but may take place in Church on special occasions.

(d) Parental rights of withdrawal

Parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship. The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.

(e) Complaints about the provision of Collective Worship

It is hoped that any complaint will be resolved informally by the Headteacher, in consultation with the Governors, and possibly with advice from the Diocese. However, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, then formal procedures come into play and the matter will be adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the Bishop of the Diocese.