



Banks St. Stephen's Church of England Primary School

"Belonging, Serving, Succeeding"

BSS Collective Worship Policy

Pupils, staff and parents of all faiths (or none) are welcome to worship. Worship at Banks St Stephen's CE Primary School is an expression of our distinctive Christian vision.

Vision for Banks St. Stephen's Church of England Primary School:

"We actively promote a sense of pride in belonging to the community of Banks. Leading by example, we seek opportunities to serve God by serving others. We are ambitious for each individual and determined to enable every member of the school community to flourish and succeed."

"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." *Philippians Ch4 v13*

Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other and that collective worship is an educational entitlement for all. In worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live. This worship occurs at various times of day and with a mixture of grouping of pupils. Through regular acts of worship, our school has the opportunity to offer thanksgiving and praise to God through a range of liturgical patterns.

Our worship has 3 underlying principles:

1. It is inclusive and contributes to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils
2. It is invitational and respects the dignity of all participants
3. It is inspiring and combines a range of experiences alongside

It is invitational

Acts of collective worship will:

- nurture and maintain the dignity of the image of God in everyone through working for social justice and encouraging pupils to consider the needs of others through charitable service and courageous advocacy;

- nurture reflection, stillness, meditation and prayer;
- provide pupils with age-appropriate opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives through music, images and words.
- provide a sense of occasion that is separate from the rest of the school day;
- foster an appreciation of the natural world and our shared responsibilities for maintaining it;
- develop clear partnerships between worship in the school and the wider community.

It is inclusive

Our understanding of Christianity is that it is an inclusive faith, which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels. Thus, we welcome children and staff of all faiths to our worship. Through their Christian character our acts of collective worship will:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, life styles and faiths which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe;
- be appropriate for every student to attend;
- focus on issues and experiences which are relevant to the pupils;
- foster active roles of pupils, parents and members of the local community – in preparation, participation and leadership.

It is inspiring

Our acts of collective worship provide wider opportunities to:

- promote wide ownership of our Christian vision;
- assist learners to have increased awareness and to reflect upon fundamental issues about life;
- enhance, complement and extend curricular work;
- develop learners' understanding of the Christian faith and Church (Anglican) practice through appropriate Biblical and liturgical content;
- encounter and explore Jesus' teachings and the trinitarian nature of Christian faith
- identify opportunities for Christian celebration that can be associated with other school events;
- Include appropriate references to and elements of other faiths and secular worldviews;
- Include opportunities to celebrate the academic, social, personal and wider achievements of pupils.

Planning Worship

- A range of people are involved in leading worship, including learners– for example, we have a “Worship Council”, sometimes called an Ethos Group;

- Timetabling of acts of worship includes the use of St Stephen's-in-the-Banks Church, the school hall, classrooms and outdoor locations – worship can additionally take place anywhere and at any time!
- Timetabling of acts of worship includes various groupings of pupils;
- Worship is planned in relationship to our distinctive Christian vision and our associated values;
- Worship is regularly evaluated by a range of members of the school community;
- Opportunities for worship/prayer throughout the day.

Our acts of worship are of a clearly Christian character, recognising the diversity of our community. Worship provides occasions for pupils to gather together in a variety of settings, where a positive tone and focus can be established. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on relevant Christian, moral and spiritual issues, drawn from a variety of sources, thereby enriching their experience of life.

Worship is an expression of our Christian vision and is a means of recognising and celebrating our associated values and achievements in their broadest sense. In worship all participants are recognised for their personal achievement, both within school and in the community. Pupils are awarded, in worship, with a range of rewards, thus placing achievement and effort in the Christian context of the school. Once a week we have "Celebration Assembly", giving an opportunity to celebrate achievement; for example, we award the Governors' Christian Values Trophy each week. This trophy is awarded to a child whose behaviour has exemplified the current half term's Christian value.

Collective worship will:

- be acceptable to the whole community, staff and children
- include a variety of elements at different times
- involve the students
- have a dedicated focus which signifies what is being reflected upon.
- provide a dedicated opportunity for students to reflect/respond to the input

Acts of worship often include ritual aspects; these are a means of enabling worship and include:

- stories and readings
- songs, hymns and music
- dance and drama
- prayer and meditations
- time to reflect in silence
- sacred/secular readings
- artefacts and natural materials
- children's contributions

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- 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 reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to request a meeting with the headteacher.

