

Darwen St James'
C of E Primary Academy



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

2024-25

Mission Statement

Nurture ambition through a living faith.

Vision Statement

Our academy delivers a purposeful curriculum through its living Christian faith. We nurture ambition in all of our learners in order for them to become positive citizens of tomorrow.

Bible Verse-

Let us not love through words or speech alone but with actions and truth.
John 3:18

School Aims

At Darwen St James' C of E Primary Academy children are central to all that we do, their education, well-being and development of the whole person.

The aims of the school are:

- To deliver high quality education in which a range of creative and stimulating experiences and activities are provided so that each child has the opportunity to develop their full potential.
- To promote and experience an understanding of Christian principles as a basis for developing the personal qualities relevant to a positive contribution to community life (both in and out of school).
- To nurture our children to develop emotionally and socially in order to help them enjoy and manage their lives to be effective learners, respectful, tolerant and responsible citizens.
- To create a high quality learning and working environment, promoting ownership by children and staff and developing senses of responsibility and pride.
- To create a high performing team of staff and governors with the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding in order to meet the demands of education in the 21st century.

Equal Opportunities

The Equal Opportunities Policy of Darwen St James' C of E Primary Academy is part of the ethos of our school and is supported by the Mission Statement and the policy for Equality. This policy helps to ensure that we do not discriminate against anyone (adult/child) on the grounds of race, gender, religion, nationality, national origins or any other protective characteristic.

Fundamentals

In this Church of England Academy, collective worship is in conformity with the ethos statement and the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England.

(a) The school's ethos statement is:

Recognising its historic foundations, 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 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.

(d) The Church of England

Forms of worship within our denomination differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the worldwide Christian church.

Whatever the approaches, we expect that children will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them.

(e) Worship at St James' is:

- A time to respond to God
- The heart of our learning

- A time to praise and thank God
- An acknowledgement of God's glory.

(f) St James' has links with the local parish church and also with local clergy.

(g) Collective worship and worship

The school meets together for collective worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, eg important notices and announcements. Such 'worship' 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 children.

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

Aims and Purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- To teach children how to worship
- Worship is to be open and accessible to all children

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in a worship. We expect everyone to take an active part in the worship.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base our worships on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our worships in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold worships that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. We have class worship on Monday, whole school worship on a Tuesday, whole school worship led by our local clergy on a Wednesday, Thursday is class Worship and Friday is Celebration Assembly.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The headteacher or other members of staff normally lead worship, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups conduct them instead. Our worship lasts for approximately 20 minutes.

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.

It is appropriate that in a church school, worship and learning are seen as a seamless whole even though, for purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two.

We take the themes of our worships from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. We also celebrate and acknowledge other World Faiths and their festivals.

Our worships reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in worships by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Worships offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. Darwen St James' C of E Primary Academy is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all the children in Friday's Celebration Worship.

We invite parents to worship on a weekly basis and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

We welcome governors' attendance at our worships at any time.

Notices are given at the end of school worship.

Worship takes place in Church on a half termly basis. Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Mothers Day Service (not on Mothers Day), Easter, Pentecost, end of year.

Worship is led by the Vicar, members of the Church, Key Stages, Headteacher, Assistant Heads and KS leads.

Children whose parents do not wish them to attend Church are supervised at school.

Resources

Resources are purchased when they are required. Resources are kept in the RE resource area and the Worship Co-ordinator's resource cupboard.

Consultation, Management, Recording and Review

- The Collective Worship Lead plans and buys resources (plans include ideas from Worship Team and clergy).
- Planning is undertaken by Worship Lead with the Worship Team and Clergy.
- Staff may attend courses when appropriate
- A programme of worship is in place.

Monitoring and Review

It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the Headteacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

Legal Requirements

(a) Legal Basis

Collective Worship in Church Schools is governed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as well as by the Trust Deed of the School. The Collective Worship provided by the school is in accordance with this.

(b) Daily Worship

Daily collective worship is provided for every child. This is done as a whole school.

(c) Worship in Church

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 and this provision and its limitations are- (*The form of words given in the Diocesan/District Syllabus is repeated here*).

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England/Methodist 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/ Methodist 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 or District. 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, (or, in the case of the Methodist Church, the complaint would be referred to the Superintendent Minister and then the Connexional Authorities).