



Keep your roots deep in Jesus Christ the Lord, build your lives on him
and always be thankful. *Colossians 2:7*

Compassion Friendship Respect Forgiveness Trust Thankfulness

Policy for Collective Worship

September 2023

FUNDAMENTALS

(a) **Christian emphasis**

In this Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Collective Worship is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England 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 the designation of the religious character of the school by the Secretary of State.

(b) **Collective Worship contributes** to 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 pervades all that we do. Both staff and 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 throughout the day.

(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. 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.

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, with faith in Him, 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 the source of knowledge about God and Jesus as the source of inspiration and guidance;
- The importance of prayer;
- The central symbols of Christianity;
- The cycle of the Church year.

(e) **Definition**

Christian worship is defined as “gatherings of adoration, praise and thanksgiving to God through Jesus ... the purpose of all worship is the same: to offer praise to God for His grace and glory.”¹

(f) **The links with local Churches**

We have very close links with St. Peter’s Parish Church. Our vicar Revd Paul Hunter comes into school every Thursday to lead our worship. The whole school family goes to church for Sunday morning services to celebrate all major Christian Festivals. As well as attending for celebration services we also participate in getting the Church ready for these services through decorating window ledges for Christmas and Easter or creating posies for Mothering Sunday. Each class also goes to Church regularly during RE lessons so that our pupils feel that Church welcomes them for reflection and wonder at all times.

(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, whilst reflecting our denomination, will take into account the levels of development of pupils.
- (i) The provision of collective worship conforms to the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education policy.
- (j) Elements of the Religious Education syllabus may be delivered via school Worship but Worship in no way replaces Religious Education.

2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THIS POLICY AND FURTHER REVISIONS

- (a) The policy has been revised in September 2023. Consultation took place with our vicar Paul Hunter, with all teaching staff and the governors’ Standards and Effectiveness committee.
- (b) The Headteacher Miss Kate Leyland is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of worship.

1. A New Dictionary of Christian Theology Edited by Richardson & Bowden SCM Press.¹

3. STATEMENT OF BROAD AIMS

- To contribute to the Mission Statement of the school.
- To create an environment in which children and adults have the opportunity to worship.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith.
- To develop links with St Peter's Church and introduce pupils to the worship heritage of the Church of England.
- To worship God through Jesus.
- To contribute to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

4. ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY

- (a) Collective worship is held each day at 2.45pm; on Mondays Mrs Hurley and Ms Hennelly lead the whole school in 'Praise and Prayer' with a focus upon learning new Worship songs, on Tuesdays and Wednesday Miss Leyland leads the whole school in Collective Worship with Revd Paul Hunter leading on a Thursday and on Friday Mrs Kemp and Miss Langley lead 'Celebrate and Serve' where we celebrate pupils' achievements from each class alongside recognising how members of our community are living out our Christian Values. Pupils enthusiastically lead parts of Worship daily.
- (b) Worship is led by our vicar, headteacher, teachers, pupils and invited visitors.
- (c) Worship lasts for fifteen to twenty minutes although this may vary from day to day. Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfE 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 music or art work.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt. Pupils are also involved in leading worship and/or performing through drama, music 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) Parents, family and governors are invited to join our Worships throughout the year
- (e) The calm and respectful atmosphere for worship is created by pupils and staff entering and leaving the hall quietly to worshipful music.

Singing plays an important part in the act of worship with the expectation that all pupils and staff will join in to the full.

Christian symbols used include: the permanent cross of our window, a small stand often covered with a coloured cloth, green, purple, red or white depending on the Church's season or day. Three flames which represent the Trinity are lit as everybody says the Grace, a Bible,

an illuminated church and other varying artefacts are used throughout the year to provide a visual focus point as an aid to worship.

- (f) Notices or other non-worship activities are not a feature of our Collective Worship. They are included in our Together Time at the end of the school day.
- (g) The whole school community (pupils, staff, parents, governors, friends) attends and participates in Sunday morning Worships to celebrate festivals throughout the year as decided by the vicar and headteacher.
- (h) The vicar leads us in incorporating the Eucharist into the Worshipping life of our school.
- (i) Because of the importance placed on the worshipping life of the school, children will not be withdrawn for extra tuition, music lessons etc.

5. CONTENTS AND APPROACHES

- (a) Worships are based upon the half term's Christian Value alongside observance of the Church year, acts of worship which stand alone and our celebration of pupil's achievements. During the school year opportunities will occur for many of the following:

- Sharing and taking note of common experiences.
- Expressing concern for others.
- Looking at the world.
- Exploring common values, standards and rules.
- Topical events.
- Celebrating the curriculum.
- Sharing and celebrating pupil achievement.
- Stories which illustrate faith themes.
- Music.

All of the above will happen in most schools. But in this Church School, all these things will be done clearly and explicitly in the presence of God, in a way which points to God and which brings our concerns and joys before God.

- (b) The content of our Worship is organised according to our Christian Values the observance of the Church Year, the celebration of curriculum work, half termly themes and acts of worship which stand alone. The class worship corners/areas may use elements of the theme as a basis for display and pupil prayers. A central worship display in the hall reflects the current theme.
- (ii) Approaches used are various and include adult and pupil led, storytelling, music, drama, visual aids and role play.

6. RESOURCES

- (a) Resources are financed out of the annual school budget via the School Improvement Plan or area audit.
- (b) Worship books are kept in the staffroom with other resources in the Worship trolley.

7. **CONSULTATION, MANAGEMENT, RECORDING and REVIEW**

- (a) Current best practice means that the worship co-ordinator meets regularly with the vica to plan worship themes. The rest of the staff team, especially those involved in leading worship are consulted and asked for their input so as to develop the theme in the best way. Our worships are planned and these plans are stored in the Collective Worship folder. Acts of worship are evaluated by the Head Teacher regularly and are recorded on the same sheet. Each terms act of worship is evaluated by the Head Teacher with the Vicar.
- (b) Staff development is included in the School Development Plan and INSET provided when appropriate. Governors are able to attend training courses provided by the Diocese for collective worship as and when required.
- (c) The vicar feeds back to Governors about our Worships as our Values governor.
- (d) The role of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator is to:
- co-ordinate the planning of worship;
 - keep a record of worship themes and hymns;
 - attend INSET on worship;
 - advise on class or group worship and prayer;
 - look for curriculum links and themes that will provide a hook to engage interest;
 - consult with adults and pupils when appropriate;
 - keep up to date with resources;
 - be responsible for outside visitors taking part in worship;
 - evaluate the quality of worship.

8. **THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS for COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

(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 in faith groups. Worship may take place at any point in the school day.

(c) **Worship in Church**

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

(d) **Parental rights of withdrawal**

Parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship. This provision and its limitations are indicated on the school website which states –

“These arrangements are without prejudice to the parents’ statutory right to withdraw their child from these activities under current legislation. In practice however, because worship and faith pervade school life, it would be essential for any parent wishing to exercise this right to discuss the matter with the headteacher well in advance.”

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, the incumbent, in consultation with the Governors, possibly with advice from the Diocese. However, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, then formal procedures will come into play (see policy). The only difference to our school’s Complaints Procedure with regards to worship will be that ultimately the matter could end up being adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the Bishop of the Diocese.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with Blackburn Diocesan Board of Education “Guidelines for Collective Worship” and acknowledges the use of material from that document.