



## **St. Nicholas C of E Primary School**

### **Policy for Collective Worship**

#### ***Our Vision Statement***

***“To maximise the learning potential of every pupil within the love of God.”***

Date reviewed: September 2020

Reviewed by: C Taylor

Approved by Headteacher: September 2020

Date of next review: Autumn 2023

## Statement of intent

At St Nicholas we see the value in collective worship and adhere to our statutory duty by providing at least **20 minutes** of collective worship a day. This time will enable pupils to explore their own beliefs and consider spiritual and moral issues.

The act of daily collective worship will be of a broadly Christian character; however, other faiths and cultures will be represented.

Collective worship provides the opportunity for the school to meet together in a variety of contexts and enables participating pupils and staff to consider events of the world and appreciate the rich tapestry of human experience and existence.

This policy outlines how our school implements collective worship within our daily routines, including the aims of collective worship and how pupils can be withdrawn.

St. Nicholas School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School. Collective worship is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England as laid down in the Trust Deed.

Collective Worship contributes to our Vision Statement and the aims and ethos of the school and thereby to the Christian Education we provide. It also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the values of our school.

**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 are taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum, generally and at the end of afternoon sessions as well as graces before lunch.

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 Deed. 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. At St. Nicholas C of E Primary School these 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

## **A Definition of Worship**

As part of this policy the school recognises a definition of worship as offered in *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology* edited by Alan Richardson and John Bowden SCM Press:

*“gatherings of adoration, praise and thanksgiving to God through Christ . . . the purpose of all worship is the same: to offer praise to God for his grace and glory.”*

Worship at St. Nicholas CE Primary School provides the opportunity to uphold such affirmations. It is an opportunity to focus upon wonder, celebration, mystery, joy and worth found in the deeper levels of human experience.

St. Nicholas C of E Primary School through its close working relationship with the Parish Church of St. Christopher with St Nicholas is able to access other fellow members of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. These are listed on the CTBI website <https://ctbi.org.uk/member-churches>

Worship in school, while reflecting our denomination, takes into account the levels of development of pupils.

The provision of collective worship at St. Nicholas C of E Primary School conforms to the Blackburn Diocese policy.

Elements of the school's RE syllabus are occasionally delivered via school worship. Worship and religious education are interconnected where it is appropriate to do so.

## **The broad aims of Collective Worship at St. Nicholas C of E Primary School**

We strive to achieve the following aims for Collective Worship:

1. To contribute to the Vision Statement and main aims of the school.
2. To create an environment for worship in which people might be brought to the threshold of worship, which provides an opportunity for believers to worship and offers them an *enjoyable* experience.
3. To develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith including:
  - Learning about the place and significance of the Bible
  - Understanding the significance of Jesus
  - Sharing in Church life and Christian practice
  - Celebrating the festivals and Saint's days of the Church year
  - Helping pupils understand the nature of God as revealed in Jesus
  - Showing that God is concerned with all areas of life.
4. From September 1996 pupils have been introduced to the worship practices of the Church of England through:
  - Y5 and Y6 children experience how to use church service books and are shown the central place of the Eucharist Service in the life of the church.
  - All children learn important and famous prayers of the Anglican Church
  - Children are taught appropriate responses

- Different forms of worship are presented by our visiting clergy, lay readers and Churches Together leaders
  - Continual development of the links with the Parish Church of St. Christopher with St Nicholas.
5. To contribute to the pupils' spiritual development by allowing opportunities for them to:
- Develop the ability to be still and reflective
  - Foster a sense of awe and wonder at creation
  - Explore mystery and the important questions about life
  - Reflect on and express their hopes, concerns, joys and sorrows
  - To develop / build up their relationship with God
  - Explore the ideas of faith.
6. To celebrate the life of the school in the presence of God by:
- Sharing and celebrating work undertaken by pupils in all areas of the curriculum
  - Building up the sense of community
  - Developing and reflecting the values of the school
  - Sharing achievements, joys and difficulties of all members of the school community
  - Exploring what it means to put God and 'the life of the Spirit' at the heart of the school.

Collective Worship provides our pupils with the opportunity to develop leadership and performance skills to participate in group preparation and presentation and to develop their confidence when speaking and singing aloud in public.

Collective Worship contributes to the pupils' moral development providing opportunities for them to:

- Explore and reflect on moral issues and concerns
- Reflect on their own values, commitments and beliefs
- Help them to develop behaviour built upon Christian values
- Help them to deepen their awareness of the needs of others

Collective Worship enables pupils to explore the beliefs of others. Through stories, music, visits and visitors we can begin to develop a sympathetic understanding of the attitudes and beliefs we share with members of other faith communities.

At this school, we aim that as part of our Collective Worship celebrations, children are brought to the threshold of faith, encouraging a closer relationship with God and Jesus.

## **Organisation and Delivery of Collective Worship**

The agreed pattern of weekly worship:

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Composition</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Led by</b>
Monday	9:10	Whole School	Hall	HT
Tuesday	9.10 10.25	KS1 KS2	Hall	KS Leaders
Wednesday	9.10	Whole school	Hall	D/HT
Thursday	9:10	Whole School	Hall	HT or DHT with Clergy
Friday	9.10	Whole School	Hall	* Class led assembly (to which parents are invited) * Achievement assembly * In-class assembly

The length of time allocated to specific worship may vary. 10.25am assemblies should be ended by playtime at 10.45am.

Worship is viewed as a vehicle for exploring aspects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education and therefore involves teaching and learning activities. In our Church school, worship and learning are seen as a seamless whole and it is only for the purpose of recording teaching time that we distinguish between the two.

### **Right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and are not required to provide a reason for doing so.

Parents will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the headteacher following a request of withdrawal in terms of:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part in.
- The practical implications of their withdrawal.
- Whether the parent will require notice in advance of such worship, and if so, what period of notice is preferred.

Alternative provision will be arranged for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Alternative provision may involve religious worship relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:

- The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational collective worship with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.
- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative provision will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

### **Staff**

The Governing Body indicate that it is a condition of appointment that teaching staff are required to be present at Acts of Collective Worship and should be involved in as many ways as possible.

Staff should evolve good practice for led worship, organise class assemblies, assist in the sharing of children's achievements and support their children in making their contribution towards Church worship and special services. This will be a focus for senior manager monitoring.

All staff are welcome to join our worship although classroom support staff are often carrying out preparation tasks given by the teacher during assemblies. We expect teachers to attend whole school acts of worship.

### **Children**

Children enter the hall quietly, in single file and are seated in the given positions. The mood is calm and still and they sit listening to music silently, which helps to create an atmosphere of calm and is an opportunity for meditation, prayer and contemplation.

During the worship, strategies are used to evoke and encourage a response. Children are asked to answer questions, reflect or pray in silence and praise through singing in verse and song. On some occasions staff will encourage the children to reflect on the content and follow up discussion in class.

It is on rare occasions that some children will miss worship due to unavoidable support activities and interventions.

During worship staff try to ensure that necessary discipline is quiet and as unobtrusive as possible. When necessary, children are moved to the end of a line to sit nearer to an adult in order to maintain a calm and spiritual atmosphere.

### **Governors**

Governors are very welcome to attend worship as this enhances their position in our school community. It also helps them to share in the life of the school.

### **Parents**

Parents are invited to participate in our worship in Church – Harvest Service, Christingle Service, Easter Service and the Leavers Service at the end of the school year.

They are also invited to participate in class led worship on Fridays. We ask that they understand that this is collective worship and not a performance, so photographs are not permitted until the act of worship is finished.

### **Clergy, etc.**

We welcome other Christian clergy and lay persons to lead our worship. We believe that the children will benefit from the rich reservoir of talent, interest and skills which these people are able to contribute to worship.

## **Responsibility**

The Headteacher is responsible for the oversight of worship. This role includes:

- Co-ordinating the planning of worship
- Keeping a record of all worship themes / hymns
- Attending INSET on worship
- Consulting with pupils
- Keeping up to date with resources
- Budgeting for worship resources
- Being responsible for the use of outside visitors leading worship.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Daily acts of worship are evaluated in the scrap book evaluation books.

Worship is reviewed on an annual basis. All staff are invited to contribute to a discussion on the management and organisation of worship in school.