

ST. PETER'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP  
POLICY AND GUIDANCE

## *We have faith In our children*

### **Our Vision**

We are a fully inclusive school at the heart of the community which encourages learning by providing a welcoming, friendly and nurturing environment rooted in our four Christian Values. These Christian values are central to the ethos of the school, and its teaching, ensuring that every member of the school community, through care and compassion, are treated with the upmost respect as we aim to teach acceptance in a changing world, offering the best possible opportunities and experiences to enable everyone to flourish and fulfil their full potential as a child of God.

### **Philosophy**

The challenge to us as a Church Primary School is to ensure that the legal requirements are met in ways, which also reflect the needs of the child and the ethos of the school. School worship is the place where we acknowledge the infinitely larger world we inhabit and where we are touched, however fleetingly by its mystery and wonder, which informs the children and helps them interpret their journey and experience. It should

be regarded as something separate to ordinary school activities but should provide the foundation on which all school life rests. In our school the process of worship takes place through a variety of media including song, story, drama, music and poetry.

### **Definition**

Collective worship and assembly are not the same, although collective worship may be part of an assembly. Collective worship is defined as worship appropriate to a group of individuals possessing a range of beliefs, believers and non-believers.

As an Anglican Foundation, Collective Worship at St. Peter's Church of England Primary School has a Christian orientation.

### **Legal Requirements**

The Education Act of 1988 re-emphasised the obligation laid on schools to provide a daily act of worship.

Arrangements for collective worship are made by the governing body after consultation with the Head Teacher. Within the governing body, the foundation governors have particular responsibility for seeing that the character of the school is reflected in the worship. Acts of collective worship may be held off the school premises if they are additional to the statutory act of collective worship.

Collective Worship can take place at any time of the school day but it cannot be designated as teaching time.

### **Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship, however, it is made clear to parents before their child attends the school that St. Peter's Primary is a Church of England School and that worship will follow the teachings of the Church. Also that worship is an important part of school life.

Withdrawal does not guarantee exclusion from the religious character of the school and the Governors hope that in choosing a church school, parents are hereby committing themselves to their child's participation in the religious life of the school.

Every effort will be made to ensure all children participate in worship.

Children who are withdrawn from worship will be supervised and given appropriate work.

Teachers have the right to withdraw from collective worship, as a Controlled School, however it is expected that teachers will take part in worship.

### **Nature of Worship**

Collective Worship and assembly are not the same, although it is usual for an act of worship to take place during an assembly, either as part of the assembly or its entirety.

Collective worship is defined as worship appropriate to a group of individuals, possessing a range of beliefs, believers and non-believers. During worship we aim to learn about and praise God. It therefore involves us gathering together to express feelings of respect and worth for ourselves, others, our local community and our world as gifts from God. It is a time when children can celebrate their social and academic achievements and a time to foster positive values held at the school, the local community and the wider world.

### **Aims**

Collective Worship at St. Peter's C of E Primary School will:

- meet the legal requirements
- be an experience which is enjoyable, meaningful and has educational value for all pupils
- enable pupils to make use of silence as a time for reflection, contemplation, meditation, and prayer
- celebrate and express those Christian beliefs and values which bind all within the school community
- enable pupils to become aware of the many questions which relate to life
- provide a common focus for the school and community
- celebrate achievements, special occasions and special events in relation to individual pupils within the school, to the school as a whole, or to the wider community
- acknowledge and pay respect to difference and diversity
- explore and share the beliefs of others
- allow children an opportunity to appreciate the use of symbolism and religious language to express feelings and belief
- encourage respect and care for God's creation

### **Objectives**

Collective Worship at St. Peter's C of E Primary will be a stimulating and enjoyable experience in which children can develop their own beliefs, values and attitudes. We intend to achieve this by providing children with opportunities to:

- Develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them.
- Experience thanks giving and to enjoy the unity which derives from sharing love, joy, hope, friendship, acceptance, anguish, fear and forgiveness.
- Develop awareness and concern for the needs of others as well as personal needs.
- Encounter beliefs, prayers, symbols and songs from the Anglican tradition in an appropriate manner.
- Reflect on and think more deeply about important issues.
- Respond through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered.
- Celebrate the Festivals and Saints days of the church year.
- Share in church life and Christian practice.
- Affirm values and commitment and reinforce positive attitudes throughout the School.

### **The Anglican Christian Tradition**

When planning collective worship, Church Schools will want to be aware of their Anglican Foundation and consider how this can contribute to the collective worship - without reproducing something inappropriate to the children's age and experience.

The following may be described as shared Christian elements of collective worship:

- Using the Bible, either as a source of knowledge and inspiration for themes and stories
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year - Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Saints Days
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the Grace
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to rap
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning e.g. cross, crucifix, bread and wine and candles
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection
- Using Psalms with simple responses - Taizé style

Whilst these are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using prayers from *Common Worship*
- Using Anglican sentences and responses e.g. *The Lord is here / His Spirit is with us/Peace be with you/ and also with you/ Go in peace to love and serve the Lord/ In the name of Christ, Amen*

- Using Collects as a focus for worship
- Celebrating Eucharist
- Understanding and embracing the Trinity
- Encouraging links with the worship of the local Parish Church

The Anglican Church is a worldwide church with a strong commitment to Ecumenism. So Church of England schools should also feel free to draw upon appropriate materials from other Christian Churches in their collective worship, as well as inviting Christian visitors to lead collective worship on occasions.

### **Entitlement**

At St. Peter's C of E Primary we believe that collective worship is an important part of every child's spiritual development and all pupils regardless of race, gender, physical or academic ability are entitled to participate. Every attempt is made, therefore to ensure that materials used are appropriate to a range of abilities and interests.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Collective Worship at St. Peter's is totally inclusive. All ages and abilities are provided for in planning and delivery of Collective Worship.

### **Equal Opportunities**

Our school worship is about sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives. It is about sharing common concerns and responsibilities and developing positive attitudes and values. It is about affirming the equality of each individual in God's sight, whatever a child's gender, ethnicity, physical or mental ability.

### **Assessment and Review/Evaluation**

The acts of worship will be evaluated by the head teacher, governors, staff and children on a regular basis. Worship will be monitored to ensure that:

- Agreed and planned content is being covered
- A variety of approaches and methodology are used
- High standards and quality are maintained
- Collective worship has been led by a variety of leaders
- Evaluation of parent and pupils reactions

The Worship team, pupils, staff and members of the Governing body are periodically asked to evaluate the impact of Collective Worship at St Peter's. Suggestions are welcomed and ideas adopted where possible.

### **The Contribution of Collective Worship to Aspects of the Curriculum**

Collective worship can contribute to all other areas of the curriculum, enriching class work, providing different perspectives, promoting thought and understanding and encouraging further study.

### **Links with Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development**

Collective Worship can contribute to SMSC development of the pupils through:

- Celebrating all that is good and expressing thankfulness for the joy of being alive.
- Providing an opportunity to reflect on experience and to search for meaning in that experience.
- Stimulating a sense of awe and wonder.
- Giving time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them
- Helping to value a non-material dimension to life.
- Promoting an understanding of the difference between right and wrong
- Promoting respect for people and property
- Helping pupils to understand how their actions can affect others
- Celebrating all/varied religious and cultural traditions

### **Guidelines for Practice**

The timing and organisation of collective worship can be flexible - it may take place at any time of the school day. Sometimes Collective Worship can be a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts for pupils in different age groups. It always reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief and is Christian in character.

The content of daily worship at St. Peter's C of E Primary School is Christian, following the Church calendar with one worship each week concentrating on achievement and particularly concerning social and moral development.

### **Content**

Pupils are required to "take part". This means that the act of worship must be one to which the pupil is capable of responding even though on a particular occasion some of the pupils may not feel able actively to identify with the act of worship.

There will be times when the worship is quiet, contemplative and serene and at other times it will involve loud music, laughter and dance. A balanced programme will provide a varied format of prayers, readings, songs, drama and other activities as well as drawing on the wealth of liturgical material, which is part of the Christian/Anglican tradition of worship. The Bible is used as a source book for inspiration and learning.

The school follows the Values for Life Programme which promotes the teaching of Christian Values. Eighteen values have been selected- Courage, Trust, Creativity, Justice, Forgiveness, Peace, Humility, Truth, Thankfulness, Compassion, Hope, Friendship, Generosity, Respect & Reverence, Wisdom, Service, Perseverance and Responsibility. We choose to focus upon six values each academic year. Detailed plans are provided for each week's Key Note Worship as well as suggestions for developing work on values in other areas.

The children are expected to come into the hall, or other worship area, quietly. Music is used to help create a reflective atmosphere. A candle is lit and there may be other objects to act as a focus for the children.

A clear end to the time for worship is indicated by the worship candle being extinguished. Any 'assembly' notices or announcements are kept separate from worship.

Components:

- story: from Christianity - from other faith traditions - novels - storybooks - children's fiction - biographies - 'true-life
- music: - song - traditional, hymns, carols, chants, folksong, children's songs
- recorded music - anything and everything
- performance - as accompaniment - 'recital'
- drama, dance: prepared - improvised
- film, video, radio
- art: slides - picture - sculpture
- prayer: - formal, traditional - Lord's Prayer, Grace Prayers learnt or listened to from the Christian tradition - Collects, Celtic, other school/pupil prayers - arising from work or thoughts prepared in advance or elicited during worship
- silence - meditation - reflection
- developing the skill of inwardness
- pupil involvement - taking a lead/musical/drama and role play

## **Organisation and Management**

The Foundation Governors in consultation with the head teacher and worship co-ordinator are responsible for Collective Worship.

The co-ordinator for Collective Worship at St. Peter's C of E Primary School is Miss Claire Chapman.

Collective worship takes place in school every day and, additionally, in St. Margaret's Church on special occasions.

The children are encouraged to lead and participate in worship. They have access to all resources and time to prepare to ensure confidence. This can include providing prayers, plays, dance, rap or leading the whole worship.

The school worship team meet regularly to plan, lead and evaluate worship within school, church and other schools. They promote worship and the Christian values in school and often help to create prayer spaces for children and staff to access.

### **Collective Worship and Godly Play**

The children will have the opportunity to experience 'Godly Play' Worships led by a classroom teacher.

#### **The Heart of Godly Play**

- Creating Sacred Space
- Building and working in community
- Learning religious language
- Using religious language to make meaning

A Godly Play session includes a time for the children to:-

- get ready
- tell a story using objects and artefacts
- explore the story more with open questions and discussion
- respond with a free choice using a variety of materials - art... silence... play...writing...
- enjoy a simple feast and sharing

### **Planning and Record Keeping**

A long term plan, covering a three year cycle is in place based upon the Values for Life Programme. The themes used are linked with the curriculum wherever possible and take into account the church calendar and changing seasons.

### **Visiting Speakers**

Visitors bring different perspectives into the school and they can participate by:

- Leading the worship
- Introducing their charity work
- Providing a personal viewpoint on faith and life issues
- Linking the school to the community

Visiting speakers are encouraged to lead worship, if appropriate. Speakers are made aware of the school policy on Collective Worship, arrangements agreed with the head teacher and the content agreed.

Visitors will therefore know the parameters in which they can work and know what exactly is required of them. These may include:

- The theme of the week
- Freedom with the format of worship
- The format of worship
- Attendance at a previous worship
- A brief on ages and background of pupils
- Duration of time of worship
- Equipment and resources available

Staff should attend worship conducted by visiting speakers to ensure that discussion can take place afterwards with the pupils and an evaluation made.

### **Resources**

These include books, slides, posters, CDs, prayers and an interactive whiteboard. These resources are kept in the head teacher's room and the hall. Music and words may be copied in accordance with Christian Copyright Licence, which is displayed in the staff room.

The school visits St. Margaret's at Christmas and for the Year 6 Leaver's Service and other special occasions; children and staff prepare these services.