



Policy on Collective Worship

“Love to learn, learn to love”

1 Corinthians 16:14

Rationale

Collective Worship is central to the daily life of pupils and staff at Archbishop Runcie Church of England (VA) First School and takes place daily in accordance. The contents of all our collective acts of Worship is in accordance with the aims of the school Trust Deeds.

Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship provides a focus for the daily life of our school. Through it, the Christian ethos and values of our school are reflected and affirmed. Collective Worship aims to be inclusive, invitational and inspiring to the whole school community. Collective Worship provides staff and pupils the opportunity to:

- Worship God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- experience a variety of styles of Worship and recognise that within the Anglican Communion there is a diversity of practice;
- develop respect and understanding of both the nature and language of Christian Worship;
- celebrate:
 - Christian festivals;
 - achievements;
 - school values and the ethos of the school as a Christian community;
- grow and deepen their understanding of Christian Worship;
- cultivate a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community based in Christian values;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of Worship;
- develop a sense of unity and identity amongst pupils and between pupils and staff;
- grow spiritually and experience prayer, reflection and stillness;
- explore faith in our current world;
- encounter teachings from the Bible;
- reflect on how Worship can influence their lives, both in and out of school;
- feel safe and affirmed.

At times, Worship will also reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- consider moral issues in a Christian context and to develop social understanding;
- explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage.

Inclusion

The centrality of Worship in this school is made clear to parents who apply to enter their children into our school. Our Worship is designed to be inclusive and parents and children should understand that Worship is an occasion where each individual's integrity is respected. We aim that there should be an integral partnership between the content and conduct of school Worship and the ethos of the whole school.

We are sensitive to the fact that the pupils in our school come from a variety of religious traditions as well as many pupils whose families have no religious affiliation. Pupils who do not come from Christian families should be able to join the daily act of collective Worship, even though this would, in the main, reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief. As a Church of England Voluntary Aided school we aim to reflect the Anglican foundation of the school but not to impinge on the integrity of particular pupils or the faith communities from which they come.

We aim to provide collective Worship that provides pupils, regardless of their beliefs, with the opportunity to;

- consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues;
- explore their own beliefs;
- develop their spirituality;
- participate and respond;
- promote a common ethos and shared values;
- develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others;
- demonstrate respect, tolerance and understanding for those with differing beliefs and backgrounds.

Collective Worship is inclusive of everyone in our school. Prayer is a valued part of Worship; however, it is not compulsory or forced. Children are encouraged to use prayer time to reflect on the learning which has taken place, as well as on their own lives. When a prayer is read, children can make it their own by saying Amen at the end.

“For some pupils the experience of Worship will be tentative and exploratory. For those who have already developed a growing Christian commitment, Worship will be the natural outcome of belief and a place where their deepest thoughts and emotions can be expressed in communion with God.”

‘Open the door’ – D. Barton, A. Brown and E. Brown p12

Pupil Withdrawal

The right to withdraw pupils from any/all Worship is available to all parents. If parents decide to take this option for their children, the school must ensure that not only pupils are adequately supervised and have something purposeful to do but also that they are not made to feel isolated and excluded. Parents who may wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from collective Worship must discuss this in person with the head teacher, before making a formal request, in writing, to withdraw their child. It is important to note that although children can be withdrawn from acts of Worship, they cannot be withdrawn from the ethos of the school as this is evident in all areas of school life.

Organisation, Planning and Evaluation

Our acts of Worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in Worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme, and the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils. Throughout their time at our school children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside traditional elements of Worship such as prayer and song.

- Worship is held daily, usually in the school hall near the beginning of the school day. It is attended by all children in key stage 1 and 2 and all classroom staff are expected to be present.
- Each term is planned to take account of important days and the seasons in the Anglican calendar, whilst reflecting on central themes.
- The Head Teacher, Deputy Head, clergy from St Nicholas and All Saints lead Worship regularly. Worship is also led by visitors on occasions e.g. Jesmond Parish Church, charities such as Christian Aid, People’s Kitchen.
- Early Years Foundation Stage classes hold Worship separately but Reception children are gradually integrated into whole school Worship in the spring term.
- When possible, we hold a ‘Songs of Praise’ which includes more hymn singing/learning.
- Occasionally class prayers are held instead of full school Worship.
- Class prayers are said before lunch time and brief prayers at the end of the school day. Children are invited to say Amen if they would like to make the prayer theirs.

The Head teacher plans the themes for each term in consultation with the local clergy. A feedback evaluation is kept of all acts of Worship and this is collected together to provide a feedback. The planning is flexible to take into account changing situations, both within and outside the school.

Class Worship

All classes in Key Stage One and Two take part in leading acts of Worship. Class Worship takes a variety of forms and covers different themes throughout the year.

Class Prayer and Reflection Area

In each classroom, there is a quiet area where children can reflect, think and pray. This area shows the current liturgical colour, a bible, cross and class prayer book. Throughout the year, themes linked to collective worship may also be added.

Services

We regularly visit the churches of All Saints' and St. Nicholas' for services (e.g. Maundy Thursday, Pentecost, Carol service). These are planned and led jointly by local clergy and staff and involve participation from the children. We also hold services in school, usually for Mothering Sunday and Harvest as well as Easter (if school is open during Holy Week). Parents and visitors are regularly invited to services and acts of Worship in school. Year 4 pupils attend the Diocesan School Leaver's Service at the Cathedral Church of St Nicholas' in the summer term.

The School recognises the centrality of the Eucharist in Anglican Worship but because of the age of the children and the desire to be inclusive it is not the practice to have a school Eucharist on a regular basis.

The management role of the Head Teacher

The role of the Head Teacher is to:

- plan the programme of Worship in consultation with clergy & staff;
- ensure records of Worship are kept up to date;
- liaise with visiting clergy;
- support and enable colleagues to plan and lead acts of Worship;
- monitor and advise on resource needs;
- take responsibility for organisation, ordering and maintenance of resources for Worship;
- be aware of the professional development needs of staff;
- lead staff in the development and review of policy and guidelines.

Conclusion

Worship is an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, to support the curriculum and to provide an opportunity for stillness, reflection and prayer in a busy day. 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.

Key Personnel

Worship Coordinator: K. Massey

Named Governor: A. Shipton

This policy will be reviewed at least bi-annually by the Ethos Committee.

COVID-19 APPENDIX

From March 2020, whole school Worship has not been held due to restrictions.

Daily Worship is still held by bubble adults in classrooms (or visitors outdoors) in line with our school Risk Assessment but staff will not be asked to carry out evaluations as we are highly aware of workload.

Date	Reviewed / updated	Staff involved
November 2001	Updated	Worship Coordinator Head Teacher
February 2003	Reviewed in light of Section 23 inspection	Worship Coordinator Head Teacher
May 2005	Updated	Worship Coordinator Head Teacher
Dec 2005	Updated and agreed by governing body Jan 11 th 2006	Worship Coordinator Staff and governors Head Teacher
May 2007	reviewed	staff
May 2008	updated	C Bull
March 2009	updated	governors C Bull
March 2009	Agreed by Curriculum Cttee and approved by full Governing Body	
May 2010	reviewed	C Bull
April 2011	reviewed and amended	P Cunningham & C Bull
May 2013	updated	J Robson & P Cunningham
June 2015	reviewed	J Robson & staff
July 2017	Review	JR
January 2020	Updated	KM & KW Ethos Committee
October 2020	COVID-19 addendum added	Ethos Cttee