

# St John's Church of England Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

Date ratified by Governing Body: March 2019

“To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God”.

*William Temple (1881-1894)*

## **1. Introduction**

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our living and learning values and celebrates the contribution that each child makes to our community. Worship will reflect the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will recognize and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors.

## **2. Aims**

Collective worship at St John's will support the school's Vision Statement, by providing opportunities for children and staff:

- to explore a relationship with God in Jesus Christ.
- to reflect on values that are of a broadly Anglican Christian tradition, whilst recognizing the validity and importance of other Christian denominations, religions and belief systems.
- to consider spiritual and moral issues and, through reflection, raise awareness of the ultimate questions of life relating to matters of faith.
- to reflect on their own beliefs.
- to deepen and widen the experience of those of 'faith' and encourage those of 'little or no formal faith' so that they begin to feel for themselves something of what it means to worship.
- to develop an enquiring mind and express and explore their own views openly and honestly.
- to develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values. The common good.
- to foster an awareness of the world around them and a sense of their place within it.
- to develop a respect for and an understanding of different beliefs.
- to develop a sense of sharing and belonging through different groups of children coming together.
- to reflect and discover – a hope and future.

## **3. The Anglican Christian Tradition**

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.
- Singing a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional contemplative 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

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.  
The Light and Peace of Jesus / Thanks be to God  
God is good / All the time / All the time / God is good
- Using Collects as a focus for worship.
- Celebrating Eucharist.
- Encouraging links with the worship of the local Parish Church.

#### **4. Implementation**

Collective worship is a legal requirement. Each school must provide a Christian act of collective worship for all pupils every day. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class.

#### **5. Inspection**

Worship is inspected under S48 of the Education Act (SIAMS – Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools).

#### **6. Parental Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship on grounds of conscience. However, as collective worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents.

#### **6. Governance**

Governors attend worship throughout the year and monitor the impact of worship on the pupils and the wider school community.

## Appendix

### Inviting Visitors to lead collective worship

When briefing visitors for school worship, make sure you tell them:

- who exactly will attend, whether it will be the whole school or a section of it, and if so, which section
- what the school's aims, ethos and policies are
- how long the speaker is expected to talk for (10 – 15 minutes)
- the current worship theme and context for the speaker - what has already been done and what will be done later in the term
- how pupils and staff are normally involved in collective worship
- what resources or hardware are available to them, should they so wish
- exactly how much their contribution will be - is it just the talk or will they be asked to choose the song and lead the prayers and remember to:  
give them plenty of notice (don't assume that a visitor who wears an RE or religious "hat" can produce an assembly at a few moments notice!)  
invite them to attend an act of collective worship beforehand so that they may see how the school conducts them, or, if this is not practical, lend them a copy of the collective worship policy document
- some visitors may also need to be told that collective worship is not an appropriate vehicle for hard sell evangelism, and that inclusive language ("we all believe....") is to be avoided
- visitors who are regularly involved in collective worship should appreciate sensitive feedback on the appropriateness of their contribution to the school worship programme.
- and finally.... never leave a visiting speaker to take an act of collective worship alone.