

# St. John's C of E VC Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

### Introduction

At this church school, all aspects of school life reflect a Christian ethos and this policy is based on Christian principles. We aim for all our community to fulfil our vision to 'Together Fly High Like an Eagle' and believe that Collective Worship makes a significant contribution towards this vision.

### Why is it important?

At St John's Primary School, we believe in developing the whole child and enabling them to achieve their potential and be the best person they can be. We wish to promote the importance of all pupils developing a confident sense of identity and a positive self-esteem. Collective Worship is an opportunity for all pupils and staff to be still, to question and to take time to reflect.

In line with guidelines set out in the Education Reform Act, 1988, at St John's we hold a daily act of worship (referred to as service) that reflects the broad traditions and the principles and practice of the Church of England. It aims to be consonant with the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government.

We follow the principles listed below:

- In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010, our school services should be inclusive for all.
- School services should promote pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development, including time for reflection.
- School services should contribute to the religious education of all pupils.
- School services should promote Christian values.
- Whenever possible, school services should have a sense of occasion.

### What do we aim to achieve for the children?

- To foster a sense of fellowship, bringing pupils together.
- To create an atmosphere and space where those who wish to worship may do so.
- To encourage in pupils a reflective approach to life and to develop the skills to do this.
- To increase sensitivity towards and awareness of the search for meaning in the face of life's mysteries.
- To encourage children to express their responses in a variety of ways: music, drama, questions, dance, art, poetry and prose.
- To encourage pupils to make changes to their behaviour or attitudes as a result of the message of the service.
- To encourage respect for and an understanding of the significance of faith and Christian (and other religions) practices and beliefs.
- To introduce pupils to various liturgical practices and aspects of religious worship (prayer, hymn, drama, art) in an open and honest atmosphere.
- To foster a sense of community and to promote respect and understanding towards people's faiths and beliefs.
- To ponder on the many questions that life presents and to know that people of all ages and beliefs ponder these too.

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## How do we do it?

- Provide pupils with an engaging encounter (window), a time for reflection (mirror) and time to consider how they can put the meaning of the service in to action (door).
- Provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the challenging aspects of life.
- Ensure, as far as possible, that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the pupils.
- Give time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space, and over time, consider each of the 4 quadrants of spiritual development (self, others, world and beyond). This includes giving time for prayer.
- Illustrate forms of worship that others have found helpful in their spiritual development e.g. silent contemplation, dance, singing.
- Celebrate all that is good and lovely about life - our school, local community and natural surroundings.
- Link our services to the Christian values of the school.
- Involve pupils in the service in a variety of ways and provide opportunities for them to plan and lead worship.
- Provide an environment that is conducive to worship and adequately resourced e.g. literature, visual aids, music, artefacts and guest speakers.
- To invite (never coerce) a response from the children which is appropriate to the occasion.
- Involve members of our community (e.g. local clergy) to lead or join in with our worship.

## Organisation

The guidelines require that Collective Worship be of a broadly Christian character and based upon Christian values. At St. John's, our chosen Christian values of friendship, determination, collaboration, positivity and respect will be the consistent themes underlying all worship delivered and will often be illustrated through relevant bible stories.

The Headteacher and all teaching staff are encouraged to deliver services on a rotational basis with visitors invited in regularly as appropriate.

Four services a week are held in the hall at both Worrall Road and Lower Redland Road. Key festivals such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas are celebrated together as a whole school, usually at All Saints Church.

One service a week will be held in classrooms (Class Service) and is an opportunity for children to reflect upon the whole site service in a smaller and more intimate setting. This service will involve a reflective task such as drawing, sharing and recording thoughts or a pupil-led discussion.

## Recording

Both sites have Worship Teams that assist in the recording of services that take place. This consists of written notes, photographs and pupil feedback recorded in a Worship Book. Discussion and outcomes from class worship are recorded in a Class Service Book. These books are monitored by the R.E. Coordinators and services are peer-observed to ensure quality and consistency.

## Withdrawal

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from Collective Worship are made aware of the programme and the school's intention to be open and respectful of all pupils' personal beliefs. They should be given the opportunity to discuss this if they wish and the decision to withdraw is reviewed on a yearly basis.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

R.E. Policy

Spirituality Policy

Equalities Policy