



**St Peter and St Paul
CE VC Primary School**

Collective Worship Policy

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1. Introduction

As a Church school, part of the Christian community, we want to worship. We want our children to have the opportunity to learn to worship and to grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. Worship in our school is not simply a statutory duty. Christians believe that each human is made in the image of God and that worship is a vital factor in this image becoming more real and meaningful.

We believe that, at its heart, Collective Worship should provide opportunity for pupils and staff to come together, to sing and pray, to share and communicate their feelings with one another and to God. It should take them beyond themselves towards an encounter with the living God and should prove to be an exciting time for all of them.

2. The legal requirements

We comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on "each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship".
- The daily act of Collective Worship in a church school should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government, and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character.
- For Collective Worship, pupils can be grouped in various ways: whole school, according to age, or in groups (or a combination of groups) the school uses at other times. Pupils cannot be put into special groups just for Collective Worship.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises but all church schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in both VA and vC schools rests with the Governors in consultation with the headteacher.

Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility because they are appointed for “the purpose of securing, as far as is practicable, that the character of the school as a voluntary school is preserved and developed, and, in particular, that the worship is conducted in accordance with the provisions of any trust deed. The headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that all arrangements for Collective Worship are secured.

3. Anglican faith and practice.

As required therefore in C of E schools, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England which traditionally has the following traits. It is:

- **Biblical** – We use the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord’s Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers - many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.
- **Liturgical** – We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship – gathering, engaging, responding and sending – and use responses and other traditional aspects of liturgy such as the Lord’s prayer on occasion.
- **Thanksgiving** - We fill our worship with thank you prayers, we readily thank pupils and staff for all they do in school. We encourage intercessory prayer for individuals, those in positions of authority, the needs of the local community and the wider world.
- **Seasonal** – We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.
- **Symbolic** – We provide opportunities to use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and to enable pupils to discover the value of meditation and silence.
- **Ecumenical** – We invite not only members of the local parish church to lead and join in worship but members of other Christian denominations
- **Diverse** – so we try to use a variety of music and song from different traditions and cultures and to encourage different Anglican and other Christian visitors to reflect both the unity of Christianity but also its diversity in some way.

As a C of E school we foster strong links with our parish church involving its clergy in leading Collective worship and providing coherence between the worship in church and school.

The Anglican Church sees itself as part of a much wider church and promotes ecumenism. We recognise that, while some of our pupils and families belong to Anglican churches, many worship regularly at churches of other Christian denominations and others come from different faith backgrounds or none. We endeavour to ensure that everyone feels comfortable and accepted in worship without any pressure to participate inappropriately or to believe.

4. Rights and responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having sent their children to a church school, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Teachers have the right to withdraw from Collective Worship. We hope though that will not be the case, as during the recruitment process the importance we place on our Christian values is given due prominence

The Foundation governors have a particular responsibility to ensure the character and foundation of the school are reflected in Collective Worship but the actual arrangements are made by the co-ordinator in consultation with the head.

6. Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of Collective Worship as defined by the Education Reform Act 1988 are as follows:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs
- to encourage participation and response
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and reinforce positive attitudes

In our school we aim “to enable our school community to engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship every day.” (The Way Ahead, 4.6)

7. Planning

Long and medium-term planning for Collective Worship is led by the co-ordinator. Plans follow the cycle of the Anglican year and are arranged around half-termly themes centred on ‘Values for Life’ which provides a three-yearly

cycle. Each week tackles a sub-theme. The Collective Worship leader is responsible for ensuring leaders and visiting speakers receive notification of the current values and themes. Individuals and groups are then responsible for using them as a basis for developing their own short term plans for individual acts of worship.

Collective Worship in Church is something we wish to develop further. In the academic Year 2013/4 we visited Church formally for Harvest, Christmas Carols, Christingle and Easter. From 2014/15 we will be adding to this a monthly Monday community service.

8. Organisation

An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school in the hall or smaller class or key stage groups e.g. in individual classrooms or the KS1 area. Where Collective Worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of the gathering. When Collective Worship takes place in the hall, the Year 6 children are responsible for preparing the environment. We aim to provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music. A Collective Worship Working Wall records the various themes of our worship.

The headteacher and other members of staff together with groups of children take turns to conduct Collective Worship. A representative from the local Christian community leads on Thursday. Parents are invited to our Friday Collective Worship – at this gathering, certificates and achievements are shared. This promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and school work together to support the achievements of our children. Governors are welcome to attend acts of worship at any time.

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music and candles, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point. We ask children to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully and to participate in singing and prayers.

9. Resources

We have a good collection of assembly books and artefacts which we aim to regularly update and improve. We also access short term plans from the internet. We have an extensive collection of CDs which are used to provide

suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing on occasions.

We have also developed 3 areas in the school , aside from the hall, where reflection, prayer and peacefulness are encouraged:

- Prayer space in Rainbow Room
- The Quiet area on the field
- The seating area on the artificial grass on the playground

These areas may not always be entirely peaceful and quiet, but there is a shared understanding across the school that they have a special status.

10. Contribution to SMSC development

We recognise that although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide opportunities in this area almost too numerous to mention in detail. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

We aim to develop the monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship by continuing to keep records of Collective Worship and surveying adults and children as to their views on its effectiveness. We intend to make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead it before asking them to submit short term plans. The CW leader and others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria. The CW leader will also involve the Foundation governors more fully in the monitoring and evaluation process.

12. Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate. As when teachers prepare lessons, worship leaders take account of different learning styles and aim to present materials using multisensory resources. We are mindful of the work of Gary Thomas and his description of the sacred pathways which people variously use

for worship. These have been discussed by the teaching staff are at the front of our minds when planning an act of Collective Worship.

13. Implementation of Policy

The Collective Worship leader is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Appendix 1:

“SACRED PATHWAYS” Gary Thomas

Summary of spiritual temperaments:

At St Peter and St Paul CE VC Primary School we recognise that spirituality can be expressed, encouraged and developed in many different ways. It is important that we give our children the opportunity to explore these pathways in order that they may find those that are most effective for them.

1. *Intellectual* – Loving God with the Mind:

These Christians live in the world of concepts. They may feel closest to God when they first understand something new about Him.

2. *Contemplative* – Loving God through Adoration:

These Christians seek to love God with the purest, deepest, and brightest love imaginable. They want nothing more than some privacy and quiet to gaze upon the face of their heavenly Lover and give all of themselves to God.

3. *Enthusiast* – Loving God with Mystery & Celebration:

Excitement and mystery in worship is the spiritual lifeblood of enthusiasts. They are inspired by joyful celebration; cheerleaders for God and the Christian life. They don't want to just know concepts, but to experience them, to feel them, and to be moved by them. They like to let go and experience God on the precipice of excitement and awe.

4. *Caregiver* – Loving God by Loving Others:

Caregivers serve God by serving others. They often claim to see Christ in the poor and needy, and their faith is built up by interacting with other people. Caring for others recharges a caregiver's batteries.

5. *Activist* – Loving God Through Confrontation:

These Christians define worship as standing against evil and calling sinners to repentance. They are energized more by interaction with others, even in conflict, than by being alone or in small groups. Activists are spiritually nourished through the battle.

6. Ascetic – *Loving God in Solitude and Simplicity:*

Ascetics want nothing more than to be left alone in prayer. Let there be nothing to distract them—no pictures, no loud music—and leave them alone to pray in silence and simplicity.

7. Traditionalist – *Loving God Through Ritual and Symbol:*

Traditionalists are fed by what are often termed the historic dimensions of faith: rituals, symbols, sacraments, and sacrifice. They tend to have a disciplined life of faith and have a need for ritual and structure.

8. Sensate – *Loving God with the Senses:*

Sensate Christians want to be lost in the awe, beauty, and splendor of God. They are drawn particularly to the liturgical, the majestic, the grand. They want to be filled with sights, sounds, and smells that overwhelm them. The five senses are God's most effective inroad to their hearts.

9. Naturalist – *Loving God Out of Doors:*

The naturalist seeks to leave the formal architecture and the padded pews to enter an entirely new "cathedral", a place that God himself has built: the out-of-doors.