



Blackburn The Redeemer Church of England
Primary School
with
St Stephen's Church of England Primary School,
Tockholes



Policy for Collective Worship

Reviewed by: Curriculum Committee May 2023

As a small yet unique part of God's Big family, we will inspire and nurture all to become the very best they can be. Opening up the world, we will celebrate our Father's (God's) wondrous, diverse creation. We will all live, love, laugh and learn in the light of Christ.

As a unique part of God's, diverse family, we will live out our Redeemer Values, nurturing all to become the best they can be. Together, we will help each child learn that through believing, loving, caring, sharing everyone will grow in the Light of Christ.

To create communities where hope is firmly rooted in the fullness of God, where each individual can fulfil their true potential.

Introduction

At our two schools our Religious Education and Collective Worship includes a daily act of worship and regular services in Church, all of which follow the rites, practice and doctrine of the Church of England.

It is the duty of the Governing Body to secure that, subject to the legal requirements which apply to Voluntary Aided schools e.g. The Education Reform Act 1988, section 6, all pupils at school shall take part in the daily act of collective worship as required by the Act in accordance with the traditions of our school and the demands of Diocesan Policy.

Collective Worship clearly plays a major part in promoting the Christian aims, values and ethos of the schools as expressed in our visions:

St. Stephen's, Tockholes

As a small yet unique part of God's Big family, we will inspire and nurture all to become the very best they can be. Opening up the world, we will celebrate our Father's (God's) wondrous, diverse creation. We will all live, love, laugh and learn in the light of Christ.

**'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'
Philippians 4: 13**

The Redeemer

As a unique part of God's, diverse family, we will live out our Redeemer Values, nurturing all to become the best they can be. Together, we will help each child learn that through believing, loving, caring, sharing everyone will grow in the Light of Christ.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love



! Corinthians 13:13

Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and Governors see it as an essential part of all the pupils' education. As such we are concerned to resource it properly and to ensure that it is of the highest standard. The worship and prayer life of the schools is not limited to legal daily acts of worship; opportunities will be taken to use prayer and in the curriculum generally.

Our Core Values

Hope, Forgiveness, Compassion, Community, Friendship, Humility, Thankfulness and Wisdom all underpinned by Love.

Worship or Assembly

Schools have traditionally often referred to "assembly" rather than "collective worship". We believe the two do not have to be distinct; "assembly" being the gathering together to share a common purpose e.g. celebration of achievement, "worship" being a time to acknowledge, reflect on and respond to God. We believe that our achievements should be seen within the setting of our Christian beliefs and values and as a realisation of our God given gifts and talents. Collective worship is also the place where we acknowledge the infinitely larger world we live in and are touched by its mystery and wonder. We do recognise that there are times when we assemble together for purposes other than worship e.g. simple notices or announcements – such times are legally distinct from worship and hence withdrawal rights do not apply.

Forms of worship within the Church of England do differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world wide Christian church. Stories and other material from another faith may be used from time to time where these might effectively illustrate Christian values and support the development of respect for self and other people.

Whatever the approaches and material used, we expect that pupils will be introduced to the following key beliefs and aspects of our Christian faith and helped to explore them:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through His life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God
- The nature of human beings as children of God, part of His creation and destined for eternal life
- The central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity
- The central place of the bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance.
- The importance of prayer
- The central symbols of Christianity notably the cross
- The cycle of the Church year.

Our schools' policy sets out a framework within which all staff can operate and gives guidance on content, organisation and resources. This document is designed for all staff, school governors, inspection teams and LA and Diocesan advisers/inspectors. Copies are provided for all teachers, for the Chair of the Governors Curriculum Committee (to be made available upon request to any Governor) and for the Head teacher (to be made available on request to supply teachers, support staff, trainees teachers and parents.) An additional copy is kept in the office for LA advisers or inspection teams.

Responsibility for this policy

Responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the governing body in consultation with the Head. Governors should:

- Contribute to and then agree the school policy for collective worship
- Receive reports on school worship along with reports for all other curriculum areas
- Ensure that there is a co-ordinator for collective worship
- Ensure that funding is identified for resourcing collective worship
- Agree those occasions when collective worship will be held in Church
- Attend collective worship in school or Church when possible
- Ensure that collective worship has a place in the Development Plan
- Agree when and how collective worship is reviewed
- Agree wording about worship in the school prospectus.



This policy was approved by the Governing Body after consultation with staff, R.E. Co-ordinators, the clergy of both churches, CSA and Diocesan representatives.

The head is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of this policy.

Aims

Within the context of a Church School, collective worship should support both the children and adults taking part in developing their own beliefs, values and attitudes through an exploration of shared human experience with an emphasis on Anglican beliefs and practices as is appropriate to the school situation.

Collective worship is an integral part of the ethos of the school as expressed in our mission statement. Pupils are given a sound foundation in knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith as appropriate for their age and abilities. Through knowledge, discussion and thought, pupils are helped to explore and define their faith.

Therefore the aims of collective worship at St Stephen's Tockholes CE Primary School are to enable all pupils to:-

- ◆ Experience and participate in a caring Christian community.
- ◆ Develop their own beliefs, values and attitudes.
- ◆ Develop self-confidence and a positive self-esteem.
- ◆ Gain in their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith as appropriate to their age and abilities.
- ◆ Begin to understand the nature of God as revealed in Jesus.
- ◆ Celebrate the major festivals and selected Saints' days of the church year.
- ◆ Learn about the place and significance of the Bible.
- ◆ Develop an understanding of and confidence in Anglican beliefs and practices.
- ◆ Learn the Lords Prayer, the Grace and other appropriate prayers and responses.
- ◆ Develop the ability to be still and reflective.
- ◆ Understand what worship is and begin to develop their own relationship with God.
- ◆ Develop a sense of awe and wonder at creation and the gift of life.
- ◆ Explore important questions about life and creation, including areas such as love, truth, loss, suffering etc.
- ◆ Share the achievements, joys and difficulties of all members of the school community in the presence of God.
- ◆ Develop performance skills and participate confidently in group preparation and performance.
- ◆ Explore, but not share, the beliefs of others through story and discussion.

Organisation and Delivery

In order to achieve the aims outlined previously, collective worship at St Stephens Tockholes CE Primary School is organised into either whole school or class worship. Worship takes place at the start of each day (from 8:50-9:10am) in either the main school hall or in classrooms when separate key stage worship is taking place. Worship is led by the Head, staff and pupils. We also have invited guests leading worship on occasions. Members of the clergy from Tockholes Church and other local churches regularly visit the school to lead worship.

Parents are invited to attend Celebration Worship on Fridays and on all occasions the school worships take place in both Churches. Governors are welcome to join our assemblies whenever they are able to join the school communities at this time.

It is very important that we create a worshipful atmosphere for effective collective worship to take place. Children who arrive late for school are encouraged to join our worship by quietly entering the hall and joining the class nearest the door. Music is played as children enter the hall, to ensure all children are aware they are entering a "special space". A candle is lit and once all the children are assembled a welcome is used to signal the start of our worship time. At the close of worship the candle is blown out and once again music is played as the children leave. We also display images linked to Christian values to help create a reflective atmosphere.

We celebrate all achievements made both individually or as a school community as part of our worship time. On occasions other messages are given to the children at the end of our worship time, once the candle has been blown out but prior to the music starting for the children to lead out.

At least termly the school communities worship at both Churches; notably Harvest Festival, Christmas Carol Service, Easter Service and the end of year Leavers' Service.

Once a week worship is held in class – this gives all children, even those less confident the opportunity to contribute. Each class has a worship table and as with all worship the candle is lit to signify the start of this special time in the day. School supports and works alongside both Churches in encouraging children to consider confirmation.

Content and Approaches

In planning collective worship, we try to ensure a range of content and activities are used. Any worship time might include: -

- Singing
- Silence and other reflective moments
- Readings and storytelling



- Rituals and responses
- Drama
- Music
- A talk
- Discussion or questioning
- Interviews/role play
- Use of religious symbols
- Prayer
- Challenges/problem solving
- Recognition of achievements
- Use of visual aids

The content of our collective worship tends to follow a fourfold approach: -

1. Observance of the church year, supported with specific services
2. Celebration of curriculum work
3. Short themes of up to half a term
4. "One off" assemblies

Within these 4 approaches content of our worship includes: -

- Sharing and taking note of common experiences
- Expressing concern for others, both those known to themselves and people from the news
- Looking at the world and our place within it
- Exploring common values, standards and rules
- Exploring specific incidents and issues
- Sharing biblical stories
- Sharing other literature, poetry or art with a Christian theme
- Sharing information about other faiths
- Celebrating and sharing achievements

Cross Curricular Links

Collective worship has clear links to the teaching of R.E. in our schools, but there are also links to many other areas of the curriculum. The importance of cross curricular teaching is clear; no subject can be taught in isolation, a broader experience of learning will undoubtedly lead to a greater level of development in all areas of the child's experience – intellectual, physical, social, emotional and spiritual.

1. **English** – Speaking and listening are central to taking part in collective worship. Children are encouraged to listen to Biblical and other stories, poems, experiences and opinions. They are equally encouraged to retell stories, take part in role play and explain their views, ideas and experiences. Reading and responding both to the Bible and other reference books is also a fundamental part of collective worship.
2. **Science** – There are of course some specific areas of linked study for example the universe and the story of creation, but in more general terms an understanding of the uniqueness of every individual adds an important dimension to children's scientific investigations about themselves.
3. **Geography/History** - The study of Biblical stories and events inevitably leads to an examination of the impact the environment had on those events and the shaping of beliefs. Children will be involved in contrasting Biblical societies with now, vital if faith is to be relevant to their own lives not just a story of other people from distant lands and in distant times.
4. **The Arts** – The arts can provide a valuable insight into both Christian and other faith practices. Music, pictures, photographs, films and artefacts all help to bring faith and worship alive and real.
5. **PSHE/Citizenship** – Exploring religious and moral beliefs is a major element of PSHE/Citizenship – developing an understanding of the differences between people and how to develop relationships with those who hold different beliefs to yourself. We use a variety of materials across the school. Exploring feelings and using biblical stories to explore concepts such as right/wrong and forgiveness are all vital elements of both collective worship and PSHE. Collective Worship frequently includes the celebration of achievements within our "school society" and hence provides an understanding of how citizenship works.
6. **Physical Education** – A celebration of talents and achievements of both sporting teams and individuals is an important part of collective worship.

All the above happens in most schools, but in our schools, St Stephen's Tockholes C.E. Primary School and The Redeemer C.E. Primary School, all of the above are done clearly and explicitly in the presence of God, in a way which points to God and brings our concerns and joys before Him.

Resources



The requirements of the Diocesan syllabus and the age and ability of the children in school leads to the use of the following types of resources:-

- ◆ Teachers' books and articles
- ◆ Audio-visual aids
- ◆ Story books, posters, artefacts and art work
- ◆ Human resources - clergy, advisers and visitors.

Equal Opportunities

Equal Opportunities at St Stephen's Tockholes CE Primary School and The Redeemer C.E .Primary School is carried out according to our agreed Equal Opportunities Policy.

All staff leading worship are responsible for ensuring that all pupils irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity and social circumstances, have access to worship opportunities at a level appropriate to them whilst in our school.

The monitoring of the policy for Equal Opportunities is ultimately the responsibility of the Headteacher, but every member of staff is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the policy in terms of promoting good practice.

Recording and Reporting

Records of the Acts of Worship that take place in school are kept by the Worship Co-ordinator. All records kept are straightforward, brief and understandable to those who need to use them. They serve two key purposes:

- ◆ To show the range of approaches used.
- ◆ To show the content covered (including songs used).

Reporting to the governing body takes place in line with our procedures for reporting all areas of the curriculum. The Chair of Governors, takes a strong personal interest in the collective worship in school, regularly leading or attending acts of worship and discussing worship with staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation is carried out to enhance the collective worship within our school.

Monitoring takes place in a number of ways:

- ◆ personal evaluation by the worship leader shared with the co-ordinator
- ◆ discussion with individuals or groups of children
- ◆ discussion with members of staff.

The Role of the Leader

The Worship Co-ordinator is responsible for

- Determining the aims for collective worship throughout the school and, in consultation with the Senior Management Team, staff and governors, documenting these aims within the school policy for collective worship.
- Ensuring that the Diocesan Guidelines for RE and collective worship are known and understood by all who lead worship in our school.
- Keeping clear records of the acts of worship taking place in school.
- Monitoring the collective worship in the school thereby ensuring that worship holds its central place within the broad and balanced curriculum of our school.
- Undertaking an annual review of collective worship in school
- Submitting reports to the governing body as required.

Appendix

The legal requirements for Religious Education.

A. Legal requirements.

Religious Education in Church Schools is governed by the 1996 and 1998 Education Act.

The legislation requires Religious Education to be provided for all pupils (1996 Education Act, Section 352)

B. Parental rights of withdrawal in a Voluntary Aided School.

All pupils in attendance at a maintained school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship unless the parent requests that he might be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship in the school.

The worship and Religious Education provided by St Stephen's Tockholes CE Primary School and The Redeemer CE Primary School is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. Our faith position is not confined to collective worship and R.E. lessons; it is also reflected throughout the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the whole ethos of our school reflects our Christian faith, removal of pupils from Worship or R.E. (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of our school.

This policy was last updated by the Worship Co-ordinator in May 2023. It is based on Diocesan Guidance and was presented to the Governing Body for approval.



The Worship Policy at St Stephen's Tockholes CE Primary School and The Redeemer C.E. Primary School, will be reviewed and modified on a regular basis at least every two years.

It is possible to add amendments to this document prior to a review and these will be incorporated into the next issue. To add comments please complete the information on the following sheet adding the date and signing where indicated.

Name of Worship Co-ordinator – Rosie Barnes