

*'Loving to Learn, Learning to Love'*



# **Collective Worship** **Policy**

**Last Reviewed: March 2017**

**Review Date: March 2018**



## **1. GENERAL PRINCIPLE**

Collective worship at St. Mark's plays an important part in the school life of our children.

We aim to celebrate our highest common values, whilst maintaining the integrity of individuals and groups.

We aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God and to explore their own ideas and beliefs;

- to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to encourage participation and response through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered;
- to develop community spirit, to promote a common ethos and shared values and to re-inforce positive attitudes.

## **2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Our daily act of worship shall be in accordance with the Trust Deed of St. Mark's school and shall be consistent with the principles and practices of the Church of England.

Worship will be

- appropriate to the ages and aptitudes of the pupils
- provided in a variety of settings, groupings and timings
- in sympathy with the school community in relation to cultures and beliefs represented

The school recognises the right of withdrawal of teachers. Any parent has the right to ask for his child to be excused from collective worship, but before exercising that right, parents are asked to discuss, with the Executive Head Teacher or Head of School, the full implications of withdrawal.

## **3. AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

- To affirm the distinctively spiritual nature of worship which is contained within "assembly".
- To provide a time for children to worship God and to explore their own ideas and beliefs.



- To foster a thought provoking atmosphere allowing for spiritual reflection and response.
- To affirm the Christian faith and to respect the religious beliefs of other faiths and cultures represented within the Community.
- To affirm the Christian status of Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
- To explore prayer, meditation and silence.
- To foster the skills of reflection and empathy, enabling pupils to participate in a variety of ways.
- To reflect upon Christian teaching in the Bible and upon other holy texts as they relate to the children's experience and to living together as a community.
- To develop a sense of community and shared values.
- To consider the needs of others and to foster charitable works.
- To be challenging and inspiring.
- To celebrate achievements of members of the school that are held to be of worth.

The School seeks to ensure that governors, staff, parents and pupils are aware of the school's aims for collective worship.

#### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Executive Head Teacher, Head of School and the Governing body shall ensure that a daily act of collective worship takes place.

The Collective Worship Leader is responsible for the day to day planning, organisation, monitoring and recording of worship.

Individual staff are responsible to ensure that

- material is chosen, as far as possible, so that all children can fully participate
- care is taken to find words, songs, hymns, prayers and meditations which invite a variety of responses without diminishing the Christian nature of the worship (e.g. Join with me, if you can, in this Christian/Muslim prayer)
- opportunity is given for pupils' own prayer
- opportunity is given for staff and pupils to work together in the preparation for acts of worship and for pupils to be actively involved
- each act of Worship is recorded in the Assembly record file on a daily basis. Record book to be kept in Hall.



## 5. ORGANISATION OF WORSHIP

- Account is taken of the multicultural nature of the school and our intention is that all members will worship together rather than apart.
- Care will be taken to ensure appropriate conditions for worship i.e. comfort of pupils and staff, appropriate atmosphere, visual focus, example of teachers.
- Acts of worship are based on the school values of RESPECT and the SEAL theme for each half term. An overview of these is available.

The pattern for worship each week at present is as follows:

Monday	Whole School (usually Executive Head Teacher or Head of School)
Tuesday	Classroom worship -song and praise
Wednesday	Classroom worship
Thursday	Whole school led by a class or a visitor
Friday	Whole School + Praise assembly (usually Executive Head Teacher or Head of School)

Reception classes have a separate worship time in the classroom during the Autumn term and begin to join the rest of the school as the year progresses.

The above pattern is flexible according to the availability of visitors but is planned each term in advance by the Worship Leader.

**There are additional opportunities to join in worship with St. Mark's church at the end of each term. These take the form of a carol service, Eucharist or more informal worship and may be held in church or in school. St. Mark's Church join members of the school community on these occasions**

Special Services are arranged to celebrate Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

Visitors and outside speakers are encouraged to lead/join in our acts of worship.



## Classroom Worship at St Mark's

- Class Teachers are asked to lead Classroom Worship each week.
- Worship may be linked to the overall School Theme for the half term or be used to reflect on matters of the moment pertaining to the particular class. (Circle time can be used)
- The theme should be recorded in the record sheet .

### Guidelines/Suggestions

1. Plan for 5 to 10 minutes but include:

- some time for thinking
- some time for sharing
- some time for listening
- some time for stillness and silence

2. Use a focus which the children will learn to recognise and respect: the lighting of a candle, a vase of flowers, a picture, a piece of sculpture, a crucifix or cross, a shell or other natural object.

3. Learn to use silence through stilling exercises and guided meditation  
Regularly conclude with silence.

4. Keep the session short and simple. Use some of the following:

- ◆ a short passage of scripture
- ◆ a story, poem, or piece of literature
- ◆ a picture, poster or slide
- ◆ a prayer – perhaps with a simple ritual
- ◆ a hymn or song, which the pupils come to know well
- ◆ a flower, twisted root, a shell, signs of seasonal change
- ◆ an object from the technological world to assist reflection on the power and creativity of human beings
- ◆ a personal account of an event or experience in your own life
- ◆ music
- ◆ silence

5. Invite the pupils to reflect on the content of the worship either individually or in small groups, allowing time for discussion and reflection of 2 to 3 minutes.

6. Use music to begin or end



## **Implementation**

The Collective Worship Leader, under the guidance of the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School, will ensure that all staff implement the policy.

The Collective Worship Leader will report back to the Executive Head Teacher, Head of School, Governing Body and SLT as requested. The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed annually

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

