



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP GUIDANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

At St Paul's Church of England Primary School, we believe that collective worship is an integral part in the life of our school.

It is an opportunity to promote the Christian foundation of our school and come together to share our love of God, worship Him as our Father, through Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit, acknowledging His presence, reflecting upon Him and giving Him praise and honour. It is also a time to and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together, and to provide a moment for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day for our children and staff. Collective worship involves the school coming together and we expect everyone to take an active part in it.

Our act of collective worship acknowledges and values the response of each person, and provides opportunities to express feelings of respect and reverence, delight in life, wonder, joy, gratitude, rejoicing in the good, sorrow, anger, etc. It is hoped that all can contribute and all can gain from it.

The school recognises, as with all areas of the curriculum, collective worship should be a valid educational experience.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community. At all times worship is offered to God through Jesus Christ. We will respect and encourage individual spiritual development of children and adults regardless of faith tradition.

2. OBJECTIVES

Through collective worship in our school, our objectives are:

- to provide an opportunity for pupils to have a life enhancing encounter with Jesus Christ, as their Friend, Saviour and Lord
- to provide opportunities for pupils to learn more about and worship God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- to provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God
- to explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well-known Christian prayers, e.g. Lord's Prayer
- to introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year
- to celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God
- to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- to enable pupils to explore their own beliefs.
- to provide an opportunity for calm reflection
- to promote a common sense of ethos and shared values, giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school

- to strengthen and support the school community, developing in children a sense of community spirit
- to encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them
- foster a concern for others within the school and wider world
- to foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.
- to help our pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to the beliefs, culture and values of a range of faith traditions.
- to celebrate achievements and special occasions, in respect to individuals, the school and the community.

3. ORGANISATION

3.1 Structure

Collective worship may take place in the hall, classroom, school grounds and St Paul's Church, and other appropriate venues on occasion.

Collective worship may be led by member of staff, visitors, or pupils with appropriate guidance and training.

Clergy of St Paul's church, authorised ministers of other churches and people from the community are invited to lead the act of collective worship on a regular basis.

Class reflection/worship times are encouraged, and prayers are said before lunch and at the beginning and end of the day.

The detailed organisation of the weekly collective worships is described in appendix.

3.2 Conduct

We conduct collective worships in a dignified and respectful way. This is a period of calm reflection as well as joyful celebration. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point.

3.3 Content

Collective Worship at St Paul's is based on core beliefs that are common to all Christians:

Belief in God the Father, as Creator: Worship should encourage a sense of awe and wonder and foster a respect for the world and its people.

Belief in Jesus: The life of Jesus, especially his birth, death and resurrection, lies at the heart of a Christian understanding of God and his love. Worship should focus on major Christian festivals. Stories from the gospels provide opportunities for insight into spiritual and moral teaching.

Belief in the Holy Spirit: The power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians is proof of God's life. In worship this may be approached through stories of individual people and organisations that have witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives, either internationally, nationally or locally. The work of the church for the poor and oppressed of the world is also an activity of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible: The Bible has unique authority as God's word for Christians, and its use is central in Christian worship and life. Children should be familiar with the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, as a source book for inspiration and learning.

As a Church of England school the content of our worship is organised to cover all the major Christians festivals (including Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost) and special times (Advent, Lent), draws on frequent reference to Biblical teaching, use the Lord's prayer and includes practices and prayers reflecting the tradition of the Church of England.

In any act of worship some of the following elements will be included:

- Songs and music from a variety of styles and cultures
- Prayer, traditional and contemporary
- Reflection and contemplation
- Individual and group activity
- Readings, stories
- Special clothing, artefacts
- Discussion, speech and silence
- Creative arts
- Use of the senses
- Artistic imagery
- Different seating arrangements

The normal structure of a collective worship will include:

- a gathering
- an engagement (readings, drama, etc.)
- a response and reflexion with opportunity for prayers
- a sending out

3.4 Planning

Collective worship themes are planned termly and are drawn up by the Senior Leadership team and clergy of St Paul's who meet termly for this purpose.

The themes reflect the Christian Church Year and promote the values of our school ethos. They can be linked with Christian Values, special occasions and festivals, or other Christian focus.

Some acts of collective worship will be discrete and others will build on a theme running over a number of days or weeks.

Collective worship plans are distributed to all staff, the vicar and other leaders and are displayed in the staff room and leadership's offices.

3.5 Record Keeping, Monitoring and Evaluation

A termly rota records individual acts of worship.

The Headteacher, named school governor with responsibility for collective worship and foundation governors have a special responsibility for monitoring the collective worship.

The process of evaluation will involve staff members, children, parents and governors.

Collective worship will be formally evaluated by small groups representing the school community. The process of evaluation will take place termly and shall be carried out as part of the whole school self-review process.

Collective Worship is also specifically inspected through the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS).

3.6 Resources

A significant resource is the church. A variety of artefacts to aid worship include crosses, candles, and other Christian symbols.

Other available resources include posters, bibles, storybooks, prayer books, hymn books and music CDs.

Most resources are located in the Deputy-Head office.

4. PARENTS

Parents are warmly invited to attend any collective worship. They are encouraged to attend celebratory assemblies at the end of each half-term, and special occasions like Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the end of the school year. This promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

Parents' attendance is also welcome at special Sunday services held in church during the year with the school and at monthly family services, to express and reinforce the special link which exists between St Paul's school and St Paul's church.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The role of the Headteacher

- To ensure that the statutory requirements for collective worship and the requirements of the SIAMS inspection are met
- To monitor/ assess the collective worship with the CW team
- To ensure the implementation of the CW policy and guidance
- To ensure governors are kept up to date by the CW coordinator
- To ensure that Collective Worship has appropriate resourcing reflecting its importance in the life of a church school.

5.2 The role of the Collective Worship Team

- To assist the Head-Teacher in ensuring the implementation of the policy and guidance, as well as recommendations made after the last SIAMS inspection.
- To plan termly the themes and leaders for worship, organising visiting worship leaders, with the help of clergy of St Paul's and the governor in charge of monitoring Collective Worship in the school.
- To ensure that leaders of worship are prepared and have the necessary resources and training, and to support them in planning acts of worship.
- To attend appropriate Continual Professional Development that will enhance Collective Worship in the school generally
- To extend and update resources as and when necessary, in line with the school's budget arrangements and ensure resources are accessible and well maintained
- To provide and organise a range of enrichment opportunities in Collective Worship, including special events regarding other faiths
- To plan the hymns and songs to be rehearsed and used.
- To organise for appropriate music to be played before and after worship.

5.3 The role of the Staff

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all staff, who are expected to:

- Make a positive contribution to collective worship through their participation and leadership.
- Show by their response and demeanour that they value the occasion.
- Help to enhance the quality of the Collective Worship with appropriate feed-backs.

5.4 The role of the Governors

- To ensure that Collective Worship is daily held in the school following the legal requirements, guidance given by the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, and SIAMS inspection.
- To name at least one governor to be responsible of monitoring and evaluating the Collective Worship.
- To attend some special services, regular collective worships, and special Sunday Worships held in church with the school
- To monitor and assess the quality of Collective Worship by receiving regular reports from the CW co-ordinator.
- To review annually and update the CW policy and guidance on the basis of reports from the CW co-ordinator and/or Headteacher on changes to national or diocesan policy and guidance.