

# Bishop Henderson Church of England Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

### Review

Review Cycle	Date of Current Policy	Author(s) of Current Policy	Review Date
Annual	November 2022	Headteacher	

### Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Governors	Martyn Day		
Head Teacher	Chris Lane		

### Vision Statement

At Bishop Henderson Church of England Primary School, we are committed to equality of opportunity in line with the Equality Act of October 2010. We endeavour to make a positive contribution to the whole community by demonstrating qualities such as respect, co-operation and valuing differences while celebrating cultural diversity. This commitment applies to our work in the classroom, our pupil support systems, our recruitment and retention of staff and our work in the local and wider community. We promote the principles and practices of equality and justice throughout the school and we aim to be a school where everyone:

- is respected and respects others
- takes part in the life of the school
- achieves to their potential
- develops skills essential to life
- exercises choice
- celebrates cultural diversity

## **Intention**

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”.

Bishop Henderson Primary School is an inclusive school with children who have faiths and children of no faith. We recognise that in asking our children to worship we have to consider the background that our children come from. The faith background of both the staff and the child’s family is respected at all times.

We would ask any parent considering withdrawing their child from daily worship to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education. Any children who are withdrawn will be supervised by an adult, however this may not be their own teacher or TA. Staff may also withdraw from worship.

Collective Worship at Bishop Henderson Primary is first and foremost for the educational and spiritual benefit of its pupils. It is a shared activity, which allows a variety of responses. It is an inclusive activity, which builds with the broad dimensions of the curriculum. The creation of atmosphere is assisted by appropriate music, visual foci and symbols. Opportunity for reflection and responses, prayer, story, drama and art are also used to appeal to the pupils’ imagination.

## **SOME DEFINITIONS**

### **Collective worship**

Collective Worship in school has a very specific definition. A school community is not a worshipping community and the law recognises this by requiring “collective” not “corporate” worship. Broadly, worship in school is more appropriately referred to as worth-ship. This might encompass what is offered in a spirit of admiration, celebration and respect to God and/or people of excellence, worthy of honour and by extension to concepts, principles and conduct which are worthy of celebration as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit.

Worship defined in this way draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection for pupils and staff whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. In this way collective worship is inclusive not exclusive.

### **Worship of a broadly Christian character**

The majority of acts of worship must be of a “broadly Christian character”, and those that are must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being denominational. Paragraphs 60-63 of the DFE Circular 1/94 asks schools to define this as according a special status to Jesus Christ.

If we are to be inclusive in our worship in this school, taking the family backgrounds of the children into consideration, then, when according a special status to Jesus Christ, all pupils, whatever their beliefs, need to be respected. It is therefore appropriate in this school to tell stories of the life of Jesus, but inappropriate for all children to be required to address Him in prayer.

Many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all the faiths. It is important to concentrate on these as well as those specific to Christianity.

## **VALUES AND AIMS**

We believe at this school that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this

special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner. In our collective worship we often discuss our Christian Values

- Thankfulness
- Peace
- Respect
- Hope
- Perseverance
- Compassion
- Justice
- Friendship
- Service

The value for each service is changed every month.

**Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for children to:**

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of the other people in everyday situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not

Worship both reflects and nurtures the ethos of the whole school. It encompasses all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that every member of staff and every pupil may feel involved. In particular, school worship here develops the feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

## **OBJECTIVES**

We see school worship as an educational opportunity with clear objectives. We use this time to encourage pupils to:

- Show interest in, and a concern for, members of the school community
- Celebrate special occasions together
- Show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community, the wider world
- Share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by groups within the school
- Explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards, manifested in religions and society
- Reflect upon dimensions of human life – the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous,

tragic, sorrowful, solemn....

- Reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people

## **PLANNING**

In our school we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. Assemblies will take place in the hall as a whole school, team group, key stage or primary split group (i.e. half the school vertically) or using an online method such as Microsoft Teams.

Day	Theme
Monday	Whole School Service and Schools Government SLT/Visitor Led
Tuesday	Whole School Singing Service
Wednesday	British Values Service
Thursday	Wellbeing/School Council Service (This swaps every half term)
Friday	Whole School Celebration Assembly

***Visitors who lead Monday assemblies are made aware of the school values and may choose to use the value as a focus for their assembly. Themes which encompass religious festivals, known national or international events, and aspects taken from the school calendar are also used by staff leading worship.***

We believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. Therefore, the time is not over-dominated by school administration or moralising. We plan the time so that there is a variety in content and methods, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection/worship.

**We choose from a range of methods, including:**

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

## **Visitors**

We enjoy the fresh approach which visitors can bring to our school worship and we have good links with those who visit us regularly to lead worship.

## **SUCCESS CRITERIA**

At this school we evaluate our acts of worship against some of the following:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- Positive response to shared experience
- Good order with an atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well being
- A sense of occasion
- Enrichment of pupil's experience through a diverse approach

## **SOME CHALLENGES**

### **Staff non-contact time**

We appreciate the need for staff to have some time during the school day set aside for planning and preparation. We also recognise the value of the whole school, including staff being involved in our school worship, this takes place on Friday during celebration assembly where all staff and pupils come together for assembly. During the Monday assembly staff have the opportunity to meet with their teaching assistants (this assembly will be led by the head/deputy teacher).

### **Song/music**

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and can unify and uplift the school community. A bank of music from which to draw, taken from a variety of cultures and types is available

During our assemblies we take time to consider carefully the words of the songs and make this into a worshipful experience by reflecting on and responding to that song.

### **Prayer**

The use of prayer has led to a great deal of debate. We feel that prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts and we say a prayer at the end of each service. Nevertheless, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. We have developed various forms of introductions to our prayers which distance children, but give them the opportunity to participate if they so desire; e.g. I am going to pray, please listen if you want to join in at the end you can say Amen , ' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions.