



## ST DUNSTAN'S, CHEAM, C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Policy Subject: COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

**Date: January 2021**

**Review Date: January 2024**

### **Vision Statement**

**'St Dunstan's – a thriving Christian school, guided by the Good Shepherd, founded on faith, inspiring the best in everyone.'**

For all members of our school family we celebrate:

- excellent achievement and progress in all that we do
- learning for life in all its fullness
- Christian values alive within our school
- being at the heart of our community

Policy Statement:

### **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

#### **RATIONALE...WHY WORSHIP?**

As a Christian School with a Church of England foundation we consider worship to be central to the life of our school. It is an affirmation and a celebration of the values, principles and ethos of the school. It provides an opportunity for the children to express and develop their spirituality.

Worship is more than simply coming together to share a common purpose, for example, celebrating children's achievement. Opportunity must be provided to acknowledge and reflect on the relationship between God the creator and Mankind the created. School worship is the vehicle by which we acknowledge the wider world and whereby we may be touched by its mystery and wonder. For those who have already developed a growing Christian commitment, this provides an opportunity when their deepest thoughts and emotions may be expressed in communion with God (Barton et al 1994).

It must be remembered that there is a legal requirement, under the Education Reform Acts 1988 & 1993 for pupils to take part in a daily act of collective worship. The National Society (Church of England) for Promoting Religious Education, in its 'Terms of Union' state: 'The daily act of collective worship required by law in the school shall be consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England' and

'Use shall be made ..... of the Parish Church or other Church of England place of worship, both for occasional acts of collective worship and for religious education.'

### **AIMS**

Worship as we have stated above is not just a discrete activity but an integral part of school life. However, as worship often provides the time for a 'collective' act of worship, the following aims have been set out to show those which are specific to worship and those which are common to both worship and assembly.

#### **Christian Worship**

To help children to develop an awareness of the presence of God in everyday life.

To develop an appreciation of the special relationship between God and Man and its expression in human relationships.

#### **Elements Common to Worship and Assembly**

To provide an opportunity for children to Develop a 'sense of awe and wonder' at the world around them.

To offer children and staff an opportunity to worship and extend the spiritual dimension in their lives and relationships. To encourage pupils with diverse beliefs to recognise the importance of a faith and of religious principles within a supportive religious environment.

To lead children to an awareness of God revealed in the person of Jesus and to help them to understand his life and ministry.

To develop an understanding of the Christian faith through use of Bible stories, music, nature, the Arts and stories of the Saints.

To provide time and opportunity for prayer to express our praise and thanksgiving to God.

To provide regular time and opportunity for silence and reflection, inviting the spiritual response of all pupils.

To provide time for repentance and to experience God's forgiveness.

To provide time and opportunity for giving thanks and praise and to enjoy the fellowship which results from sharing love, joy, hope, friendship, acceptance, anxieties, sadness and forgiveness.

To bring to God in prayer one's personal needs and the needs of others.

To develop an awareness of and a concern for the needs of others as well our own.

To develop the concept of 'sacrifice' exemplified in the life of Jesus.

To develop an awareness that one's own needs and desires must sometimes be sacrificed for the benefit of others.

To provide an opportunity to offer ourselves in God's service.

To provide time to share and celebrate the things we have been doing and to share our thoughts and ideas.

To help children to develop the attitudes and values which are fundamental to the Christian faith.

To help children to develop shared attitudes and values such as respect for self and others and to encourage good standards of behaviour.

To encourage children to observe and participate in the sacramental life of the Church.

To give children experience of being active members of a caring community by fostering an atmosphere of love, kindness and security.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

As a church school we are committed to the children of faiths other than Christianity and those children of no faith. Diversity of religion, race and culture is felt to be of positive benefit, enriching both our school worship and our school community. As collective worship is central to the life of the school, it is felt that school worship will contribute to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, regardless of their own religious commitment. We try at all times to make our worship sensitive so that all

pupils feel that they can contribute, all can gain and all feel valued as persons and supported, whatever their belief system or lifestyle.

### **PLANNING AND DELIVERING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP.**

To optimise the value of collective worship, careful planning is essential. Variety is necessary and a balance needs to be achieved between a tight formal structure and a spontaneous freedom in worship. For this reason worship may be planned in various ways:

As a Church of England School our worship should reflect some of the essential features within the rich traditions of Anglican prayer and worship. Worship may be planned around the cycle of the Church's year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. Each act of collective worship begins with the phrase *Leader: 'The Lord is here' Reply: 'His Spirit is with us'* and a candle is lit.

With increasing pressures on curriculum time, a planned approach may allow themes already being developed across the curriculum, or ideas being explored in particular curriculum area(s) to be extended through school worship. Careful consideration of content should allow the Christian values and ethos of the school to be made explicit and thus more clearly understood by pupils and staff, and better reflected in the life of the school.

There are occasions when a particular event or activity may become the focus of a worship, for example, acknowledging the departure of pupils, or school initiatives such as reminders about codes of conduct or charity fund raising.

A meeting at the beginning of each term takes place between the Headteacher and Deputy to organise dates and themes. Consultation also takes place between staff and the Team Rector/ other members of the clergy.

The whole school comes together for worship on Mondays and Fridays with whole school Praise Worship on Wednesdays. Monday's and Friday's worships are generally led by the Headteacher or by visitors who are invited to the school. Clergy, who are present in school often join us for worship. Wednesday's whole school worship is led by the KS2 Phase Leader, supported by other staff. On Tuesdays and Thursdays KS2 and the KS1/EYFS have separate opportunities for worship which allow for their different developmental needs to be more suitably met. These separate KS worships on Tuesdays and Thursdays are led, on a rota basis, by the corresponding KS staff and SLT, and the nursery children usually worship together and on occasion join the older children in the main school. Children contribute regularly to worship through, for example, music, drama, prayers and readings. A whole class or a group of children may choose to lead or contribute to worship. Every class leads a class assembly during the school year based on their prior and current learning. Daily prayers are said, in class at the beginning of lunchtime and at the end of the day.

Staff and children attend services in church. The KS2 pupils attend Eucharist monthly which is celebrated in church or in the school hall, as well as services for special occasions such as Harvest or Christmas. Together with RE coordinator and church rector children often write parts of the Eucharist service which can change

with the season. Children in the KS1 also attend church for a short service at Easter and as part of their R.E. throughout the year. Year 2 children join KS2 for Eucharist as they mature during the school year, when it is being celebrated in school. Children are expected to play a prominent role through readings, prayers drama, singing and music making. Parents, governors and other friends of the school are warmly invited to take part in all school services, including Easter, Harvest and Christmas Worship and the End of Year Leavers' service. The annual Confirmation Service is a general parish occasion with the school candidates well supported by their families and by members of the staff and the governing body. Each summer term, our Year 6 children attend the Leavers' Service at Southwark Cathedral. The teaching staff or others leading the acts of worship are always careful to ensure that pupils are supported whenever their personal responses and ideas are expressed in front of others. Pupils are encouraged to receive each other's contributions positively. They are very supportive of each other.

### **WORSHIP PLANNING / EVALUATION**

In the interests of progression, continuity and quality of provision it is necessary not only to plan but also to record/evaluate the themes covered in acts of worship, together with key resources, the age group of pupils involved, the name of the leader and the date. Plans are currently kept on the management computer which is accessed by the Headteacher, Deputy, and subject leader. Evaluations vary from those undertaken by staff/clergy leading the worship, other staff, children, clergy. In our monitoring and evaluation of collective worship we look for the following: criteria as proof of a successful and worthwhile act of worship

- A range of strategies are regularly used to 'engage' children's interest.
- A peaceful, reflective atmosphere generally prevails.
- Children are comfortable with silence.
- Children participate confidently and enthusiastically.
- Children can articulate what collective worship is about.

### **6. RESOURCES**

Resources such as stories and prayers are chosen with sensitivity and care taking into account the children's ages and backgrounds. Resources are to be found in the R.E. cupboard in the Music Room and in the personal collections of the staff who regularly lead worship. Alternatively the prayers written or suggested by the children, or simply expressed by the teacher may be the most appropriate. As the children go through school there is value in introducing them to some of the prayers of the Christian tradition, such as the Lord's Prayer and others which, if simple and meaningful may eventually be learned by heart. (See Appendix 1)  
St Dunstan's Church and clergy members are valuable resources.

### **7. RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL**

We expect all children to attend Collective Worship. Although parents have the right (under the 1994,1988 and 1993 Education Acts) to withdraw their children from collective worship, the Governors expect that parents who have specifically chosen

our school for their children will wish them to attend the daily act of worship and other services.

## **8. EVALUATION**

We are aware of the need to review and evaluate our current policy and practice. Therefore it will be discussed by those leading large group acts of worship and by the whole staff and revised as necessary before the January 2024

**Agreed Date: January 2021**

**Review Date: January 2024**

## APPENDIX 1

### Our short School Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus,  
bless us all,  
that working together  
and playing together,  
we may learn to love you  
and to love one another.  
Amen

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name,  
Thy Kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory  
for ever and ever.  
Amen

### Spiritual and Moral Development

"Spiritual development is essentially to do with the development of the inner self, with self knowledge, relationships, questioning our place in the universe, the purpose of our lives and our ultimate destiny. As spiritual beings we are marked by our capacity for wonder and our sensitivity to the thrill of the infinite. Often the most powerful messages which human beings can transmit are felt rather than heard or said. Messages communicated through art and through silence can be as eloquent as a set of written instructions"

D. Pascall: Chair NCC Dec 1992

"There are three areas of school life in which opportunities arise for spiritual and moral development. They are ethos of the school, all subjects of the curriculum and collective worship."

## NCC discussion paper 1993

### Defining spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

1. The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:
  - ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values
  - sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
  - use of imagination and creativity in their learning
  - willingness to reflect on their experiences.
2. The moral development of pupils is shown by their:
  - ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
  - understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
  - interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.
3. The social development of pupils is shown by their:
  - use of a range of social skills in different contexts, for example working and socialising with other pupils, including those from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
  - willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
  - acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; they develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.
4. The cultural development of pupils is shown by their:
  - understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and those of others



understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain

knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain

willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities

interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socio-economic groups in the local, national and global communities.

OFSTED Inspection Handbook 2015