

# The Federation of St John's & St Paul's Whitechapel CE Primary Schools

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

### Introduction

Collective Worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It reflects the mission statement and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. Our collective worship provides the pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- worship God and experience a sense of awe and wonder;
- understand how our school values are rooted in biblical teaching;
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- consider spiritual & moral issues;
- celebrate Christian festivals, school values and children's achievements;
- grow in understanding of, and participation in, prayer;
- develop a reflective approach to life and develop as a community, based on Christian Values.

At times worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- consider moral issues in a Christian context
- explore beliefs drawn from their own faith background and cultural heritage.

### Ethos

We endeavour to create a positive ethos throughout school life based upon Christian Values. From Nursery, the school follows a religious education scheme of work that encourages a study of world faiths and works towards an understanding of our multi-faith community. This may include informal visits to local places of worship.

Our positive school ethos is reinforced in a number of different ways:

- through a daily collective act of worship where the children are encouraged to reflect upon and participate in religious activities;
- with an awareness of the spiritual needs of children through curriculum-based activities and teaching;
- by developing a sense of stewardship of the world;
- by confronting, discussing and resolving moral issues;
- by staff acting as role models;
- through close links with our parish churches (St John's on Bethnal Green/ St George-i-t-East);
- by encouraging a strong sense of community and collective learning and encouraging children to make an individual contribution to all aspects of school life.

### Collective Worship organisation, content & detail

There is a daily Act of Worship. Children sit in class groups, boys and girls mixed. The assemblies take place during the school week:

*Celebration Assembly:* Includes recognition of academic and sporting achievement, merits awarded for behaviour and effort, birthdays etc. with prayers chosen or written by children.

*Class Assembly:* Can be exposition of work, drama, songs; includes a prayer written by the children. When no class assembly, a member of SLT leads on an aspect of the School's Vision or the linked school Christian Values of the half-term.

*Headteacher's Assembly:* A three-year programme:

*Autumn Term,* Old Testament stories

*Spring Term,* New Testament stories

*Summer Term,* stories from other religions and cultures; The Lord's Prayer; Famous Lives; The Early Church

*Clergy Assembly*

*Singing Assembly:* Praise and worship songs and traditional hymns, as well as popular songs with moral content which reflects our core values.

Each act of collective worship will include a variety of elements at different times such as one or more of the following:

- Thinking time, with soft music, as children enter and leave the hall.
- Candle lit to signify God's presence with us
- The singing of hymns or praise songs
- Hearing a talk, a story, a poem or a short passage from sacred scriptures
- Opportunities for children to engage in corporate prayer and reflective responses

The whole school visits their parish church for collective worship on appropriate occasions such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the end of the school year.

In addition, our religious days ensure that collective prayer and related in-school activities play a key role through the events of the liturgical calendar. Examples of these are our Advent Activity day; Easter Celebration Day; Pentecost Reflection Morning and Remembrance Day Events.

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local church communities. Children are given opportunities to participate in worship throughout the year.

St John's School has a Pupil Worship Council who play an active role by: monitoring and evaluating collective worship, discussing their ideas with the Worship Coordinator and ensuring the hall is a reflective space for worship.

### **Prayer**

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. All acts of collective worship will finish with a prayer. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. At the beginning of lunchtime Grace is said in KS1; in KS2 children will share their own prayers. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times for reflection.

The presence of prayer corners in classrooms provides children with the opportunity to stop, pause and pray. An example of this are the prayers that are selected by class prayer monitors.

Our 'Prayer of the month' is linked to current themes or issues that impact on the school and wider community. This is also displayed communally and on the school's website.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection. and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

### **Statutory Duty**

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

This policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school and speak with the Headteacher.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The school will review this policy every three years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout our schools.

File name	Federation Worship Policy 2021
Date of latest revision	December 2020
Date Ratified by Governors	
Date of Review	Autumn 2023