



# **Belgrave St Peter's Church of England Primary School**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

**Date of Review: January 2023**

Approved by Governors (date)

Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

# Collective Worship Policy

## Introduction

At Belgrave St Peter's Church of England Primary School, we uphold Christian values and beliefs. We are committed to:

- teaching and living the Christian way of life;
- providing quality education for all our children;
- developing respect and consideration for all members of our community;
- worshipping God in all we do.

We believe in the concept of lifelong learning and the idea that both adults and children learn new things every day. We maintain that learning should be a rewarding and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Our teaching of Religious Education provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It supports and reinforces the aims of Belgrave St Peter's School, valuing all children equally and as individuals, whilst encouraging pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions through exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning.

This policy is carried out within the context and spirit of the school's vision:

*At our school, we welcome everybody: those from all faiths and beliefs. We are an inclusive school where our Christian values of love, faith and hope are at the heart of everything we do. Everyone within our school family is respected and cared for. Our children will succeed with the love of God.*

Our vision is rooted in 1 Corinthians 13:13, which states, 'And now we have these three: faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love'. Through our Collective Worship and our school daily life, these three values are the golden thread and form the foundation for everything we do.

Collective Worship, within a Christian context, plays an important part in the life of our school. It is an oasis in the school day when children meet together with members of staff in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and where all present are given the opportunity to reflect and participate. It is regarded as 'quality' time and represents something special or separate from ordinary school routine.

## Aims

Our worship is consistent with the principles and practices of the Church of England. The Church recognises it is called to proclaim that faith afresh in each generation. Acknowledging our formative role with the next generation, we try to take a

pioneering approach, seeking to express our faith and worship in new and fresh ways. To listen to our children as they seek to answer Jesus' question to St Peter: "Who do you say that I am?"

### **Our policy for collective worship supports this by:**

- Recognising that Collective Worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our pupils' and staff spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Providing a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which enables them to:
  - worship God
  - reflect on Christian values for schools, personal development, multi-faith festivals and celebrate successes in and out of school
  - develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
  - consider spiritual and moral issues
  - respond to the worship offered
  - respond to Christian language and symbolism and experience stillness and quiet
  - experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation. These might include praise, seeking forgiveness or quiet reflection
  - begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship

Ensuring the daily act of collective worship be distinctly Christian in content and follows the liturgical calendar.

Collective Worship will be:

- Inspiring, invitational and inclusive.
- Led by senior leaders, staff, children, clergy and visitors.
- Develop the Christian vision, values and ethos of the school and focus on our school Christian values
- Heavily involves pupils through members of the Worship team
- Celebrate and give thanks for the achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals
- Provide a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future
- Take place in the school hall or the church
- Respect the right of parents to withdraw their children for Collective Worship

### **Content of Daily worship**

As a Church of England school the content of our worship is organised to:

- Follow a half termly, yearly cycle to cover our three Christian Values
- Cover all the major Christians festivals including Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.
- Be rooted in Bible teaching
- Use the school prayer, Lord's prayer and other prayers written by pupils and led by the worship group

- Be presented using a variety of styles and to include music, story, drama, enthusiastic singing, reflection and reverence in prayer time.

### **Special Services and Visitors**

We value our links with Holy Trinity church. We hold our Harvest, Christmas, Easter and end of year services in school and often invite speakers to visit. We invite Alex from Holy Trinity Church to lead collective worship regularly. Where possible we also invite other members of the community in to lead worship.

### **Inclusion and Withdrawal**

Collective worship is central to the life of the school. However, parents/carers do have a legal right to withdraw their children from all or part of worship. Before making the decision to exercise that right parents /carers are encouraged to discuss the issues with the Head teacher. Staff also have the right to withdraw on grounds of conscience but we hope that all staff will feel able to support the Christian ethos of the school by participating in collective worship.

### **Elements of Worship**

*"There are times when worship will be quiet, contemplative and serene and others when laughter, music and dance will be the appropriate form of expression."*

Atmosphere - This is all-important in creating the right foundation for Collective Worship. Quiet, orderly behaviour and respectful attitudes on entering, leaving and throughout the assembly are expected. Staff enhance the atmosphere by their presence and participation. An altar dressed in the liturgical colours on frontals designed by the children, with a cross /a bible and 3 candles, depicting the Trinity, help to set the scene. Worship begins with a gathering, and acknowledgement of where we are.

Music - This is played at the beginning and end of the assembly and also during worship.

Stories and talks - These are carefully chosen to fulfill the objectives of Christian Collective Worship and to symbolize the application of Christian Values as depicted in the Bible, through events in history or in their application in modern day life. Stories of a religious or secular nature will be used whilst personal anecdote from pupils, teachers and visitors will be encouraged as a means of expressing that which is important in our own lives. Particular emphasis is laid upon helping children to understand themselves better, to develop empathy and to face up to moral issues.

Songs - These are chosen from a wide variety of sources, relative to the theme of the worship that week. Some are learned by heart and actions are incorporated, whilst

others are displayed on the screen. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words; and they provide a real source of pleasure.

Prayers and reflection - The most personal part of an act of worship. Collective Worship in school should provide opportunities for children to be taken to the threshold of prayer, and to cross it if they wish, in a way that respects the integrity of all present. Participation in prayer can never be imposed but we stress the need for stillness, reflection and respect for others. Silence, written prayers, impromptu prayers, The Lord's Prayer, children's prayers and the school prayer may be used. Candles are lit and provide a focus for pupils' thoughts. Reflection and thinking time are given some direction by the leader in order to concentrate pupils' response.

Scripture - Sentences and extracts will be quoted from the Bible as our Holy Book on a frequent basis and, where appropriate, examples from sacred books and writings of other world faiths may be used to provide comparison and to allow for reflection. Longer passages may be used as readings.

Presentation - Sets the tone within the act of worship. In keeping with the reverent atmosphere, use is also made of visual aids, artefacts, drama, demonstration and video. This document should be seen in conjunction with our policies relating to RE & SMSC and have regard to all other school policies including those of SEND, Health and Safety, and Equality and Diversity.

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

Collective Worship is regularly evaluated by members of staff and children. As part of staff meetings and SLT we discuss what has gone well and what we could do to improve our Collective Worship further.

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.