



WARK CofE FIRST SCHOOL

Policy Documentation

School Worship Policy

_____ Chair of Governors

_____ Date

Staff Consultation	
Governor Consultation	
Arrangements for monitoring	
Review date	Nov.'16
Signature of nominated Governor.	
Other relevant policies	
Points to consider at next review.	

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Rationale

Wark C of E First School exists to serve its community and to provide a respectful caring environment, incorporating Christian values where all children are helped to develop and learn to the best of their abilities. Collective Worship makes a significant contribution towards achieving this mission statement. It is an opportunity for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day for our pupils.

The school's Instrument of Government states, "In recognition of its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils."

At Wark Church of England First School, pupils participate in a daily act of worship. This is based on Anglican principles, taking in to account the background, ages and aptitudes of the children and what is educationally appropriate for them. Acts of worship are inextricably linked with the ethos of the school. The ethos of the school is both inspired by and reinforced by acts of worship.

Aims

Pupils who do not come from Christian families should be able to join the daily act of Collective worship, even though this would, in the main, reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief. (Circular 1/94).

We aim to provide collective worship that provides pupils with the opportunity to:

- worship that which is considered worthy
- consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues
- explore their own beliefs
- develop their spirituality
- participate and respond
- promote a common ethos and shared values
- help pupils develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others
- promote respect, tolerance and understanding for those with differing beliefs and backgrounds.

Through our collective worship we will provide the opportunities:

- to help children discover their place in the world;
- to highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension through experiencing worship;
- to provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery;

- to provide an opportunity to celebrate major, and some minor, Christian festivals;
- to heighten awareness of the ultimate questions / realities of life, to provide the opportunity to reflect upon these and to support the search for meaning;
- to enable children to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to the community,
- to respect the integrity of each individual as a child of God;
- to enable pupils to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer;
- to celebrate gifts, talents and achievements;
- to establish, explore, and reinforce the common Christian values of the school community such as love, peace, kindness, compassion, forgiveness and reconciliation;
- to foster a feeling of community and belonging in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings;
- to develop personal relationships and to encourage social development;
- to provide an opportunity to empathise with the needs of others;
- to provide an opportunity for children to become acquainted with the faith of the people from the local and wider community;
- to encourage stewardship, respect and care for God's creation by a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues;
- to foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy;
- to give memorable and enjoyable experiences;
- to provide an opportunity to bring before God in prayer, personal needs and those of others;
- to share with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level, and give them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God.

Collective worship provides an opportunity for the school community to reflect on important issues and:

- reinforces a sense of group and community identity
- gives pupils the experience of being still and quiet
- provides an opportunity for celebrating success and times of joy
- provides an opportunity for being together in times of sadness and sorrow
- provides an opportunity for highlighting and reflecting on core human and school values, such as truth, justice, respect, and honesty
- offers the opportunity to mark significant points in the year such as festivals and national, local and school events.

Collective worship contributes to pupil's spiritual development by providing opportunities to:

- reflect upon the value, purpose and meaning of life and our existence
- experience times of quiet and stillness in the midst of the busyness and activity of the school day and school life

- experience materials from religious and other sources which suggest that there is more to life than the immediate and the material
- celebrate all that is good and lovely and express thankfulness for the joy of being alive
- illustrate forms of worship that others have found helpful in their spiritual development e.g. silent contemplation, music, dance, art, architecture, singing

Collective worship contributes to pupils' moral development by providing opportunities to:

- reflect on issues of right and wrong
- hear about people in whom and in which goodness, moral awareness and rightness are exemplified
- learn about religious and other teachings concerned with right and wrong

Collective worship contributes to the social development of pupils by providing opportunities to:

- gather with others for a common purpose
- share times of joy and sadness with others in the community
- learn how to behave appropriately within a particular social setting

Collective worship contributes to the cultural development by providing opportunities to:

- hear music and stories from a range of cultures, times and places
- reflect upon ideas concerning beauty and what is pleasing to the eye and ear
- appreciate the range of talents and gifts found within the school community and wider society

Collective worship contributes to the intellectual development by providing opportunities to:

- think and expand their knowledge base and understanding
- have ideas, beliefs, preconceptions and prejudices confirmed or challenged
- reflect upon the nature of learning and the value of education

Inclusiveness

The centrality of worship in this school is made clear to parents who apply to enter their children in the school. The worship is designed to be inclusive and parents and children should understand that worship is an occasion where each individual's integrity is respected. It is not an occasion for evangelism. We aim that there should be an integral partnership between the content and conduct of school worship and the ethos of the whole school. Opportunities are given for pupils to reflect individually on spiritual issues.

Pupil withdrawal

All parents have a right to withdraw their children from school worship. Any parent wishing to do so should make a formal request to the Headteacher, who will then

arrange to meet the parent to consider the matter further and discuss possible arrangements to accommodate the child. If parents decide to take this option for their children the school must ensure that not only pupils are adequately supervised and have something purposeful to do but also that they are not made to feel isolated and 'different.

Multi faith issues

We aim to be sensitive to the fact that the pupils in our school come from a variety of religious traditions as well as many pupils whose families have no religious affiliation. As a C of E Aided school we aim to reflect the Anglican foundation of the school but not to impinge on the integrity of particular pupils or the faith communities from which they come.

The Management of Collective Worship

- Most days, a school act of worship is held in the hall, although on some occasions in order to allow an opportunity for greater intimacy and cater for the needs of various age groups, a class assembly may be held.
- On special occasions the act of worship may be held elsewhere e.g. in the parish church, at the war memorial, or outdoors.
- All members of the school community and visitors are welcome to join in, if they wish to do so. It is attended by all children and all staff, except staff on playground duty that day. Playground duty operates on a rota system to ensure all staff are able to participate in our worship
- Our Parish Priest leads worship on a weekly basis
- Acts of worship usually last 10-15 minutes and are planned and carried out by members of staff, visitors including a regular visit by the incumbent, or by the children themselves.

Planning Acts of Worship

All acts of collective worship are considered carefully, to ensure that age, aptitude and background of pupils are taken into account. They are planned using termly planning sheets which give themes, topics and special events and festivals. There is a recording and evaluation format to ensure that there is continuity and progression, and enable the monitoring and evaluation to take place. This in turn should lead to high quality collective worship which is:

- well organised, planned, resourced, delivered and evaluated
- special and different from ordinary classroom activities, offering a sense of occasion
- both inclusive and unifying, recognising the personal integrity of all members of the school community
- genuine worship

- Themes for worship are planned into the cycle of work for the school in order to ensure relevance to the children. They are based on the Diocesan Policy
- All teaching staff are involved in planning and delivering the programme for worship

- Records of collective worship are kept on a weekly basis and include the leader, themes, music, prayers, curriculum links
- On special religious festivals e.g. Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance, worship is shared with the wider community
- Most years a Eucharist is held in school on a specific occasion e.g. Ascension, Candlemas, Pentecost
- The Year 4 pupils attend the Diocesan School leaver's service in the summer term held at St Nicholas Cathedral. We may join together for worship with members of our local church schools
- Members of the school community use other opportunities for worship during the school day e.g. lunch time, home time, in responding to children's ideas or observations.

An act of worship may be based on:

- a religious theme related to topics currently being studied within the school.
- a Christian festival.
- Christian beliefs and values.
- special events or current affairs.
- issues which arise in school e.g. caring for others, sharing.
- celebrations e.g. achievements, special days

The role of the Governing Body

- governors are aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to collective worship, and take account of the policy and guidelines of the Diocese;
- governors take account of the legal requirements, any school Trust Deed and guidelines issued by the Diocese;
- governors are actively involved and familiar with all documentation regarding collective worship issued on their behalf and be actively involved in the process of collective worship development within the school;
- governors ensure collective worship is appropriately reviewed as part of the school improvement plan and should be actively involved in the review process;
- governors are aware of the requirement under Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) for the inspection of collective worship;
- Governors ensure that a school prospectus includes details of collective worship provided at the school. These details should inform parents of the parental right to withdraw their child from collective worship. The arrangements and provision made for those children withdrawn from worship should be clearly stated;

The role of the head teacher;

- the head teacher is aware of their legal responsibilities with regard to collective worship and takes account of the policy and guidelines of the Diocese

- the head teacher ensures that governors and staff are well informed and receive training in order to implement the Diocesan policy on collective worship

The role of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator

- The collective worship co-ordinator is the Head teacher who assists the governors to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to collective worship;
- reports to governors on matters of review and development;
- communicates with members of the school community regarding the significance and content of collective acts of worship;
- ensures that there is a development plan for collective worship which is included in the School Development Plan and the National Society Toolkit;
- develops and maintains effective procedures for planning, recording, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing collective acts of worship;
- is responsive to the needs and views of members of the school community, those of the Christian faith and those of other/no faith;
- Develops and utilises the resources available for collective worship including:
 - Books
 - Posters
 - Websites
 - Visual aids/artefacts
 - Music
 - Visiting speakers
 - Worship leaders
 - Use of the Parish church
 - Resources

Conclusion

Collective worship is an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, to support the curriculum and to provide an opportunity for stillness, reflection and prayer promoting the Christian ethos and values of our school.

This policy will be reviewed at least bi-annually by the worship coordinator and head teacher.