



**Respect**

**Creation**

**Fellowship**

**Wisdom**

**Hope**

# ARCHBISHOP BENSON C of E SCHOOL

## Collective Worship Policy

**Chair of Governors**

**Mandy Hoare**



## 1.0 Introduction

At Archbishop Benson School, we are proud to be a Church of England school rooted in our local community. In keeping with our inclusive vision and values, we are committed to being the school of first choice for all local families providing an excellent education for all our pupils. Our policies and procedures are focused on ensuring that we all enjoy and achieve within a nurturing and enriching school community.

### Vision:

With **fun and learning**, **hand in hand**, **all things are possible**.

"**I can** do **all things** through **Him** who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

### Values:

**RESPECT**

**CREATION**

**FELLOWSHIP**

**WISDOM**

**HOPE**

### School Aims:

To help fulfil this vision the school has the following aims:

- To enable each child to achieve his or her full potential in levels of academic maturity, creativity, spirituality, physical development and independence
- To educate pupils in the principles of the Christian faith, promoting respect for moral values, differing races, religions and ways of life
- To awaken and develop every child's sense of self worth
- To develop respect, commitment and responsibility for others, to equip children to be able to make a positive contribution to the community in which they live
- To provide a wide variety of activities, visits and special events which enrich children's learning

## 2.0 Rationale

At Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School, worship is central to the life of our school community and is the main platform for exploring our vision and values. Our worship is well planned and of a high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible as well as learning from other faith traditions.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and we recognise that our collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of our staff, or pupils and our families. In Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School the purpose of collective worship will be to lead all members to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

*"Worship in (CofE) schools promotes theological and religious literacy and liberates participants to an imagining of a different order of justice, mercy and hope"*<sup>1</sup>

Through Collective Worship, our pupils are offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They are offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world are given. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to

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<sup>1</sup> CEE Vision statement "Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good" Autumn 2016

mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (*and other faiths*<sup>2</sup>) calendar. Pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.<sup>3</sup> (Refer to our SMSC Development Policy)

### 3.0 Legal Framework

#### 3.1 Daily act of collective worship

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings.

The Education Reform Act of 1988 sets out the law regarding collective worship and Circular 1/94 provides further guidance. The law states that collective worship in schools should aim to:

- provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs
- encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of the worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered
- develop a community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, "that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", is not relevant. Worship in Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions. However, we conduct collective worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school family and beyond.

The governing board of Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School has the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

#### 3.2 The right of withdrawal

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. In Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School there is a significant number of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

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<sup>2</sup> Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

<sup>3</sup> "To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God". William Temple (1881-1894)

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and head teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply. This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service, when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.

#### **4.0 Guiding Principles**

Collective worship at Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School seeks to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults' in their spiritual growth by providing opportunities for reflection, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality;
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Create an atmosphere in which genuine worship may take place and where pupils' own beliefs are valued and each one has the opportunity to respond in their own way.
- Enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- Encourage respect of other people's religious beliefs and practices.
- Evoke a sense of beauty, awe & wonder;
- Strengthen and support the school community, giving expression to, and reaffirming, the core Christian values which underpin the school's vision, policies, curriculum and moral code;

#### **5.0 Aims**

The word "worship" comes from the Anglo Saxon word 'weorthscipe' and can be defined as either 'the adoration of God or a Supreme Being' or 'to honour, value and praise someone or something of worth'. In the context of worship in school, our aim is to provide experiences which deepen the inner senses and engender feelings of self-worth and the uniqueness of the individual as well as a sense of belonging to the school community.

The aims and objectives of our acts of collective worship are to:

- Enable children to become familiar with the Bible and grow in their appreciation that for Christians it is God's word; and to show a similar appreciation for other sacred texts.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience;
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Carefully select materials and themes for worship to make sure our pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well-known Christian prayers and prayers of thanksgiving during the course of the day as well as prayers and reflections from other world faiths.



- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Develop a sense of self-worth and celebrate the gifts that each child and adult brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God;
- Reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and learn to appreciate the significance of mystery - i.e. that we can't understand and explain everything;
- Foster a concern for others within the school community and wider world;
- Deepen appreciation of the gift of the natural world and the importance of acting responsibly toward the environment;
- Provide a variety of different opportunities across the week and the year for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.

## **6.0 Our worship arrangements**

### **6.1 Leadership**

- The RE Lead, the SMSC Lead and the Headteacher liaise routinely to ensure a joined-up approach to the planning & coordination of collective worship
- Daily worship may be led by the headteacher, a member of staff, a small group of pupils, a whole class, a member of the clergy or local church, individual visitors or teams e.g. Open the Book
- Support and guidance is given to visitors leading worship. An information leaflet for visitors is produced based upon the one produced by the Diocese (Appendix 1)

### **6.2 Medium term planning**

For each half term of the year, there is an over-arching theme for collective worship based on our vision and 5 core value. Those leading worship are encouraged to reflect the vision or chosen value within worship sessions. The value themes are broad enough to allow all those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective although staff can use the School Values Overview sheets as reference material. Opportunities are planned to develop spirituality across each half-term e.g. termly SMSC or Anti-Bullying focus activity/event.

The Headteacher, DHT and RE Lead liaise to ensure that key liturgical events as well as SMSC-related occasions and global citizenship events are also reflected within the half-termly worship overview. Once a year, each class has the opportunity to plan and share their class assembly to the school community. This assembly will contain worship elements as well as moments for spiritual reflection.

There is always room for flexibility and spontaneity and on occasions it is recognised that teachers & leaders may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

### **6.3 Weekly planner proforma includes prompts relating to:**

- Who is leading and who is involved in the worship
- How worship reflects the cycle of the Church year and related Christian concepts
- How the Christian values of the school are identified, expressed and celebrated through the collective worship
- How explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school
- The range and variety of materials being used, including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, songs, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or candle
- Providing opportunities for children and adults to explore faith in today's world
- Allowing for spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection

- Planning deliberate opportunities for spiritual growth as well as responding to spontaneous moments for spiritual development.

#### 6.4 Organisation

- We hold a daily act of collective worship. This can be either a whole-school or a class-based act of worship.
- We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We explain to the children that worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time, and expect children to behave in an appropriate & respectful way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create a conducive atmosphere by using music as well as candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.
- Our acts of worship reflect the aspirations, the achievements and the learning of our pupils. Collective worship sessions provide an opportunity to
  - o reward children for their achievements both in and out of school
  - o encourage the goals and aspirations of our pupils
  - o reflect on our school vision – 'With fun & learning hand in hand, all things are possible'.
  - o promote the values of the school.
- We encourage the children to participate in collective worship – sometimes by sharing their work with the other children and by raising/sharing issues that they have discussed in their classes. On some occasions a class or year group will lead the collective worship, and parents are invited to attend. We strongly encourage their attendance as this promotes community spirit and strengthens the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements and development.
- Our acts of worship are led by members of staff or priests, ministers and other invited visitors.
- Our worship is communal and we offer an open invitation to all governors and invite parents and members of local churches on specific occasions and where possible.
- Worship will be planned to take account of the major festivals and seasons of the Church Year, and to link with the worship plan, annual SMSC Development priorities and other initiatives or topics of interest within the school.
- Worship may take place in the school hall, in classrooms or occasionally at a local church. The worship space in the hall is made special, using liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year; and the atmosphere for worship is created using Christian signs and symbols, candles, music and sometimes a focal point. Collective worship includes ritual and liturgical responses. Pupils are seated in a way that gives them the best experience of the collective worship & the best opportunity to take part. The school has extensive grounds and these are also seen as a place to be worshipful and thankful.
- Collective Worship usually takes place in the morning & lasts for 30 minutes.

#### 6.5 Adults may lead worship in the following ways through:

- saying prayers
- giving time for quiet reflection
- offering disc
- ussion
- leading into silence
- introducing songs/music
- incorporating drama
- showing pictures
- reading poetry
- telling a story
- showing artefacts
- introducing special people/visitors
- showing children's work and achievements

- sharing sacred writing
- showing DVD/media

#### 6.6 Our pupils may participate by:

- leading the planning
- leading the worship
- listening
- thinking
- reading
- acting
- singing
- dancing
- praying
- answering
- laughing
- crying

We recognise that singing/hymn practice alone is not an act of worship. It can become part of worship if time is given for reflection and pupils are able to engage with the meaning of the words. A 'thought for the day' alone is also not an act of worship. It can become part of worship if pupils are offered a space for reflection or any other opportunity to reflect/grow spiritually.

## 7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### 7.1 The role of the Headteacher

- Be aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to collective worship, and take account of Diocesan & CoE policy and guidelines.
- Ensure that governors and staff are informed about their legal responsibilities and receive training in order to implement policy and guidelines.
- Designate responsibility for co-ordinating collective worship to a member or members of staff or working group.

### 7.2 The role of the Governors

- Be familiar with all documentation regarding collective worship issued to parents on their behalf, and may wish to be actively involved in the planning, delivery, monitoring and/or evaluation of collective worship within the school.
- Ensure that collective worship is reviewed as part of the school's self-evaluation process.
- It is a statutory requirement that a school publishes information about the collective worship provided. Such information should advise parents about whether a "determination" relating to worship that is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" has been made. The parental right to withdraw their children from all or part of the collective worship should be clearly stated together with the arrangements and provision made for those withdrawn. If appropriate, mention should be made of the right of sixth form students to withdraw themselves.

### 7.3 The role of the RE/Collective Worship Lead or Collective Worship Team

- The main function of the R.E./Worship Lead is to support class teachers as much as possible and thereby to improve the overall quality of Religious Education and Collective Worship
- Support with the medium-term planning of termly programme of themes for collective worship
- Communicate regularly with members of the school community regarding the significance and content of the weekly/termly/annual programme of collective worship

- Assist the headteacher and the governors to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to collective worship
- Report to the headteacher and the governors on areas of strength and development as well as any matters of concern relating to collective worship
- Ensure that there is an action plan for collective worship which is included in the School Improvement/Development Plan and the SIAMS Self Evaluation Form
- Develop and maintain effective procedures for short-term/weekly planning and recording of collective worship
- Develop and maintain effective procedures for regularly monitoring and evaluating collective worship
- Be responsive to the needs and views of all members within our worshipping school community
- Provide appropriate resources for collective worship and ensure that they are utilised.

## **8.0 Staff development and training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development both as individuals and as groups or teams.

Our Collective Worship provision is an integral part of our annual School Improvement & Development process and internal CPD is outlined within our annual SIP/SDP plans. School based CPD can range from supporting staff with facilitated age-related spiritual growth within worship through to the exploration of prayer and higher-order thinking & questioning.

The school liaises closely with the Diocese of Truro to engage in external CPD ranging from SIAMS Framework training through to RE Hub network sessions and Headteacher Reflection Days.

## **9.0 Links to other policies and documentation**

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- RE
- SMSC Development
- PSHE & SRE
- Behaviour for Learning

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included on the school website.

## **10.0 Disseminating the policy**

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all pupils. This policy is available on our school website.

## **11.0 Monitoring and evaluation**

Planning, provision & impact of worship is monitored on a regular basis.

- Regular discussions with staff and pupils as to the relevance and impact of acts of worship;
- Observation of and participation in acts of worship to assess children's involvement and response and appropriateness of content and presentation;
- Regular review of school practice, evaluated against SIAMS Self Evaluation documentation. Identification of any relevant staff training needs
- Regular monitoring and development of resources
- Checking that appropriate opportunities to raise multicultural, equal opportunities and gender issues are created and taken
- Ensuring that the legal requirements for collective worship are being met.

A record of collective worship is kept by the Headteacher and RE Lead. It is discussed with the Incumbent on an annual basis

The Worship Buddies (team of pupils) are also involved in monitoring Collective Worship periodically.



The governors have a key role in this process to ensure that the legal requirements are met and that the worship offered to the pupils is of the highest quality, with a regular programme of monitoring, including taking part in collective worship & pupil conferencing. Designated governor(s) will seek assurances & evidence of how the monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time.

### **12.0 Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years from the date below. Designated governors will monitor the Collective Worship policy along with the SMSC & RWS Leads to look at its effectiveness and impact. In reviewing the policy it will consult the following groups:

- parents
- staff
- pupils
- Diocese

### **13.0 Conclusion**

At Archbishop Benson School, all should view collective worship as meaningful and valuable - a time when all adults and children are as one to reflect on joys, and sorrows, to express thanks, share concepts and experience and re-affirm the values of the school community and God's family, of which they are all part

### ***Appendix 1 - Guidelines for those leading Collective Worship***

We are delighted that you will be visiting our school to lead our Collective Worship.

At **Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School** we value our daily acts of collective worship extremely highly. Through it we identify, affirm and celebrate those ideals and values that we hold to be of central importance to us as a community.

It is important, for visitors to be aware that children in our school come from a range of faith backgrounds, and none; we therefore ask that those who lead Collective Worship take account of this in the preparation and delivery of their material.

At **Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School** we prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and to that end would like you to have enhanced DBS clearance. If you already have DBS clearance, please bring your certificate with you so that the details can be recorded on our school system. If you do not have DBS clearance, please let us know so we can support your visit appropriately.

Each child at **Archbishop Benson C of E Primary School** is involved in an act of worship every day. These take place in a variety of different groupings:

**Monday** - Whole School 8:55am

**Tuesday** - Class-based worship 8:55am

**Wednesday** – Whole School (visitor) 8:55am

**Thursday** - Whole School (Musical worship) 8:55am

**Friday** - Whole School (Pupil-led worship/class assembly) 8:55 am

We normally invite visitors to join us on Wednesdays for whole school worship, where *children from 4-11 years will be present, together with teachers & teaching assistants*. There is a small team including the Headteacher, RE Lead, a Governor and Vicar, which meets termly to plan the school worship. A planning sheet is then produced and made available to all those who contribute to our school worship.

If you have not already been given a copy of this sheet, please ask at the school office.

**We hope you will find the following guidelines helpful.**

We ask that visitors arrive at 08:45, ready to begin promptly at 08:55

*Parking spaces are available, as signposted.*

On arrival at school please report to the the school office where you will be asked to sign in and wear a visitor identification badge. On your first visit to the school you may be met by one of our older pupils who will be pleased to help in any way they can. If you require any special resources or equipment e.g. projector or CD player, please let us know in advance and we will endeavour to have them ready when you arrive.

The children enter the hall class by class with their class teacher and when everyone is ready to begin the worship a member of staff will greet the children & introduce you to them. Whilst the children enter, music is played and focus for worship is displayed on a table at the front or on the screens. If you have a preference for a piece of music or an object that could act as a focus for your time of worship, you are most welcome to bring it along. If you have a song or hymn which is especially appropriate that you would like to be sung, please let us know in good time.

Some of our visitors like to include a short time of prayer in the worship and it may be helpful to know that we use the traditional version of The Lord's Prayer which can be found on the back page of this leaflet.

We ask that your act of worship should last no longer than 30 minutes that it includes a short opportunity for quiet reflection on one aspect of your theme. This could be time of silence or you may wish to play music or read a relevant poem. A child or member of staff will want to thank you for your visit at the end of the worship. There may be some announcements that need to be made at this point. Do feel free to leave if you wish, remembering to sign out.

**Once again may we thank you for your visit.**

Reviewed Feb 2020  
Next Review date 2023

Our School Prayer is:

O Jesus,

**Friend of the friendless (Fellowship)**

**Helper of the poor (Respect)**

**Healer of the sick (Respect)**

**Whose life was spent in doing good (Respect)**

**Help us to follow in your footsteps (Wisdom)**

**Make us strong to do right (Wisdom)**

**Gentle with the weak (Hope)**

**And kind to all who are in sorrow (Hope)**

**That we may be like You (Creation)**

Our Lord and Master

**Amen**

The version of The Lord's Prayer used in our school worship:

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.  
And 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.

The school telephone number is 01872 273185

Our 'worship contact' is Mrs Lucy Whitford; she will be happy to answer any queries you have and can be contacted either by calling the school or emailing her at [lwhitford@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk](mailto:lwhitford@archbishop-benson.cornwall.sch.uk).