St Mary's C of E (Aided) Primary School, Pulborough

Collective Worship Policy

'A Christ centred school with a child centred curriculum'

Rationale
The Trust Deed and school ethos statement inform the policy and practice of collective worship at St Mary's C of E (Aided) Primary School, Pulborough.

The daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life. Through this and in the general ethos of the school we seek to promote our mission statement.

A Christ-centred school with a child-centred curriculum.

It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of our school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy, parents and other visitors are highly valued.

Legal Framework
We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act that there must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude. Parents have the legal right to withdraw children from collective worship either partly or wholly and suitable arrangements will be made to accommodate these children. However, since this is a Church school, Christian worship is central to our life and work and is regarded as an essential part of our children's education. We therefore expect all children to attend and participate in collective worship. A record is kept of children who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Aims
Through collective worship we aim to:

- provide an experience of worship that will allow children and staff to respond to the presence, love and peace of God and enable the school community to consider spiritual and moral issues
- introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year
- explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to well-known Christian prayers
- strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of our school and to enable children to explore their own beliefs and encourage participation and response

- celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognizing the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God
- encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them and develop a sense of identity and responsibility towards each other, the wider community and the local Church
- foster a concern for others within the school and the wider world, an appreciation of the created world and awareness of our responsibility for it
- to provide our children with regular opportunities for stillness, reflection and prayer

Our Christian Values

Collective Worship at St Mary's is based on our Christian Values which are drawn directly from the teachings of Jesus. Each of these values is used, in turn, as the theme for Collective worship:

Autumn 1 – love
Autumn 2 – hope, perseverance, courage
Spring 1 – humility, service, forgiveness,
Spring 2 – compassion, wisdom, justice, peace,
Summer 1 – faith, trust, truthfulness,
Summer 2 – friendship, generosity, thankfulness.

These values are embodied in the new commandment that Jesus gave us:
John 13: 34-35
"…love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."

We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection.

Values Education

Our vision is a school where all children experience a diverse range of learning opportunities facilitated by enthusiastic staff who recognise and encourage the potential in every learner and who ensure that all children develop into confident, responsible and successful members of their community based on shared Christian values.

We therefore blend Christian teaching and values education together in order to provide opportunities for our children to become;

Confident and independent learners who want to 'have a go' at any new challenges that come their way.
Responsible members of the community who want to 'make a difference' for the world around them.
Successful individuals who want to carry on learning.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship at St Mary's and this forms part of each assembly. We conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way; telling children that this is a special time, a period of reflection as well as a celebration. We expect children to behave in an appropriate way; asking them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and to participate fully in the prayers and hymns.

All acts of collective worship begin with music playing to remind children that this is a special time. Candles are lit to remind children that Jesus is with us and we all make the sign of the cross. The worship includes a time for prayer, a reading from the scripture or other appropriate text and a hymn. The children are actively involved throughout the worship either by listening, answering questions, sharing their own ideas and thoughts, joining in with drama, reading, leading the prayers and singing. All acts of collective worship end with a prayer. The candles are then blown out before any certificates are presented or messages given. This allows us to make a clear distinction between worship and assembly. The children then lead out as music is played.

Children are encouraged to reflect on how their experiences and what they learn during collective worship can be applied to their daily lives both in school and outside.

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. Our current schedule is as follows:

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Headteacher or Deputy Head. The themes for Monday's collective worship reflect our Christian values for that particular half-term, the Church calendar, our school ethos and current events.
Tuesday	Whole school Songs for Worship. Children are reminded that singing is another form of prayer. Songs and hymns are chosen to follow-on from Monday's collective worship, to prepare for forthcoming events and to develop and extend children's repertoire.
Wednesday	Class-based assemblies. These give class teachers the opportunity to develop the theme of Monday's collective worship in line with the age and needs of children in their particular class.
Thursday	Whole school worship led by either the Parish Priest, visiting Clergy or members of the school senior leadership team.
Friday	Whole school worship and celebration assembly. Certificates of achievement are given out to individuals, groups or whole classes. Vine leaves are also awarded to those children who have been identified as demonstrating particular Christian values in a sustained and selfless manner.

Class Assemblies	These are usually held on a Friday and are an opportunity for children to share their learning with their parents and the rest of the school.
Happy Book	Each half term we hold a Happy Book Assembly. Children's achievements across a wide range of activities and attitudes are recognized and individual certificates presented. Copies are also kept in the Happy Book.
The Eucharist	Father Paul celebrates the Eucharist in school approximately twice each term. Parents, friends, Governors and parishioners are encouraged to join us. Children from across the school are actively involved in this service acting as altar servers, reading the Gospel, leading prayers or as members of the school choir. An increasing number of children, suitably trained by Father Paul, are able to receive their communion.
St Mary's Church	The school holds a special Leavers' Service at St Mary's Church in July each year. This is in addition to children playing an active part in the Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day, Easter and Christmas services at the Church.

Content and Approach

To support and enrich our collective worship we encourage staff who are planning collective worship to use a range of resources and strategies to enable all children to access and play an active part in what we see as an essential part of school life at St Mary's. We make regular use of the 'Values for Life' resource as well as the weekly service sheets from St Mary's Parish Church. Our collective worship themes are explored through stories, hymns, prayers and responses:

- Celebration of the major festivals of Christianity
- Presentation of Bible stories
- Active participation of children of all ages through mime, drama, reading, sharing opinions and thoughts, writing prayers, selecting readings etc.
- Topical matters from news or the locality
- Age appropriate literature with implicit or explicit religious teaching
- Appreciation of the natural world and human activity
- Appreciation of the talents, achievements and work of ourselves and others
- Visitors who represent organisations and faiths who have a brief acceptable to our Christian values and the Christian ethos of our school.
- Use of music
- Use of DVDs
- Age appropriate material through the Internet
- Appropriate focal points and artefacts.
- Prayer in different forms – formal, informal, collective, private, silent.

Equal Opportunities and SEND
All children, regardless of academic ability, age, gender, ethnic origin or faith will have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of RE. This will include taking all reasonable steps to ensure that all acts of collective worship are accessible to every child at St Mary's.

Other faiths
Although our collective worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith and culture, showing acceptance and understanding regardless of individual children's beliefs.

Visit and Visitors
As part of the curriculum we ensure that appropriate visits are made available to the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and invited to share their experiences and knowledge; their role is to educate, not to evangelise. St Mary's Church, together with Father Paul, is our most valuable and frequently used resource.

Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring
A book is kept recording details of each act of collective worship. This is handwritten daily by the Headteacher. Each teacher also keeps a book recording Class Worship. In Key Stage One these books are maintained by the class teacher. In Key Stage Two children are more actively involved in recording their class worship.

Evaluation strategies used by staff and Governors for assessing the outcomes of collective worship include:

- Observation of the children's interest level and attentiveness
- Observation of the children's general behaviour in and around school and towards one another
- Written observations and checking that practice matches planning
- Formal observations with written and/or verbal feedback
- Seeking feedback from children, staff, parents, governors and other visitors
- Observing the extent of the collective worship's influence on children's attitudes and behaviour throughout the school
- Discussions with colleagues

Conclusion
At St Mary's C of E (Aided) Primary School we offer pupils opportunities to explore and share beliefs and consider the importance of prayer, quiet reflection and silence. We encourage them to consider the relevance of ideas, beliefs and Christian values to their own lives, to think about the needs of others and what it means to be part of a Church school.

Policy approval and review
This policy was approved on

This policy will be reviewed in April 2018

Policy written by
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