Bidborough Church of England Primary School

Faith in Our Future

Collective Worship Policy

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Faith in Our Future

Matthew 13:31-32 – The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed…Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.

Our life together at Bidborough Church of England Primary School is rooted in Christ's words describing how a little faith can make all things possible. With the values of love, hope, forgiveness, courage and koinonia underpinning all that we do, we seek to prepare all to step out into the world reflecting God's love for one another. With 'Faith in Our Future' we encourage all to:

- *Grow confidently, as a responsible, life-long learner*
- *Achieve highly, not only in academic areas but in their own personal goals*
- *Contribute successfully, as a member of the wider community*
- *Enjoy life, feeling prepared for every stage of life's journey*

Collective Worship Policy

INTRODUCTION

Our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our school, reaffirms our vision and values and celebrates the central role that each child has to play in their community. Collective Worship is at the heart of our school. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England, and will recognise and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

In our school, it is our aim that Collective worship is accessible, inclusive and inspiring.

Collective Worship gives pupils and school staff the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar

In line with the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

1. Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
2. Enables all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
3. Helps pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
4. Enables pupils as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.

5. Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

IMPLEMENTATION

Collective worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, pupils, the incumbent of our local church and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class. Our school plans systematically and cohesively using Rochester Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long and short term planning of worship and this enables continuity.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles of word, action, emotion and symbol, reflecting the research of David Csinos. For example, we provide a range of creative opportunities including music, silence, symbolism, drama and the use of IT. Our worship consists of 4 elements:

- Gather – we welcome the community, for example, with music, simple liturgy and the lighting of the candle.
- Engage – we share, for example, a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message
- Respond – pupils, for example, discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing
- Send – we share, for example, the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect them in their lives. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle.

Pupils regularly plan and lead worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the collective worship leader to develop their own understanding of worship and to design a worship to support the spiritual development of their peers. The collective worship leader attends regular professional development with Rochester Diocese and accesses a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.

SPECIAL TYPES OF WORSHIP

Once a week school takes part in ‘Worship and Praise’. In this worship the children are encouraged to reflect on the meaning of the words they sing and to learn new worship songs. On Friday afternoons the theme of the act of worship is celebration. The whole school is able to celebrate the achievements of the pupils both in and out of school, offering this to and thanking God. Each class from Year 1 to Year 6 also has the opportunity to lead a special assembly to celebrate their learning and achievements with parents.

The team of our local church leads Worship weekly. The children are encouraged to attend special events held by the church during the year. Special services are held for all major Christian festivals and to mark the end of the school year, some are in school and some in church led by the Vicar. At the end of the year a special leavers' service is held in Church. Other speakers from local or national/international organisations are occasionally used to widen children's horizons. These take place in the school hall so that we are able to accommodate parents and friends of the school. Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies. This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the senior leadership in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community.

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND INSPECTION

Our school regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils through our questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared as appropriate with our worship leaders and governors and play and integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in consultation with the Diocese of Rochester (SIAMS).

PARENTAL WITHDRAWAL

Worship is regarded as special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none. We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship. However, as collective worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents.