

St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Documentation Information and Control

Worship Policy

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Persons responsible for review: The Governing Body in consultation with the Head Teacher

Reference to other documents:

St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Worship Policy

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Psalm 103.1

1. Rationale

- 1.1 Recognising its historic foundation, St Paul's Church of England Primary School, Newcastle upon Tyne, exists
 - (1) to glorify Almighty God, and
 - (2) to serve the community by providing, within the context of biblical belief and practice, an excellent education.

- 1.2 In St Paul's C of E Primary School collective worship shall be an integral and focal part of the school's life. This fact is made known to those parents and carers who request the admission of their child(ren) to the school and to those who apply for posts of employment.

- 1.3 Children and staff shall meet together for an act of collective worship each day. The pattern of such acts each week includes whole school, phase or key stage group, or a class times of worship. It is recognised that some parents or carers may exercise their right to withdraw their child(ren) from such acts. In the event of this happening the school shall supervise the pupil(s), engaging him or her or them in a purposeful activity and doing all that can be done to ensure that he or she or they do not feel isolated.

- 1.4 The content of acts of collective worship, in accord with the Trust Deed, shall be wholly and exclusively Christian, making full and systematic use of the Bible, with other relevant material to support Biblical truth.
- 1.5 All acts of worship will be conducted in such a way that the integrity of each individual is respected. It is recognised that for some participation will be tentative and exploratory whilst for others it will be a natural outcome of their belief and a time when they enjoy communion with God.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 Collective Worship, as an essential element of the wider curriculum, shall be a means of enhancing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- 2.2 All acts of Collective Worship shall be distinct from those times of corporate celebration during which the gifts and talents of pupils, individually and corporately, are acknowledged and affirmed and the successes of the school made known. This distinction shall be carefully maintained especially when celebratory assemblies follow or precede acts of collective worship.
- 2.3 The primary aim of all acts of worship within the school shall be the worship of and communion with Almighty God, whom we acknowledge to be our Creator, Provider and Saviour.
- 2.4 The essential elements of Christian worship include adoration, confession, thanksgiving and prayer, offered to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit, through and in the name of Jesus Christ.
- 2.5 As participants hear of God's love and deeds, the acts of collective worship shall encourage their spiritual growth by helping them understand the character of God and his will for mankind.

- 2.6 The acts of collective worship shall be events which stimulate personal engagement and response, providing pupils, staff, parents and visitors with opportunities for stillness and reflection as well as praise and prayer.
- 2.7 Acts of collective worship shall help participants develop an awareness of how the Bible may be used to discover who God is and what he has done, as well as being the primary God-given aid for personal devotion and reflection.
- 2.8 Appropriate Bible passages shall be read and referred to when the wider community, along with the Church of Jesus Christ, celebrates the major festivals of the Christian year (*e.g. Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Harvest*).
- 2.9 Acts of collective worship shall also help participants discover how the Bible helps people, individually and corporately, to reflect upon and grow in understanding issues of concern to mankind (*e.g care for the created order, family-life, and peace amongst nations and peoples*).
- 2.10 Acts of collective worship shall also promote an understanding of virtue and growth in the experience of forgiveness, humility, love, trust and reconciliation.
- 2.11 Acts of collective worship shall encourage a sense of unity and identity amongst pupils, and between pupils, staff and the wider community.

3. Organization

- 3.1 The organisation of acts of collective worship shall be shared between members of staff, with the Head Teacher having overall responsibility.
- 3.2 As stated in the Trust Deed, the governor responsible for Worship shall be the officiating minister of the parish of St Stephen and St Paul, Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne.

- 3.3 Since God requires that those who worship him must do so in spirit and truth (*John 4.23f*), and because this biblical teaching is adopted by the Church of England, the use of any artefact or symbol in an act of worship shall be carefully monitored to ensure that the will of God is neither ignored nor undermined.
- 3.4 As the Church of England acknowledges it is but one part of the visible Church of Christ on earth, when appropriate, members of other churches shall be invited to lead or participate in acts of worship.
- 3.5 Recognising that pupils may come from a non-religious, another Christian, or a non-Christian religious tradition, St Paul's School shall be sensitive to this fact by showing that love and respect Jesus Christ enjoins all people to show.
- 3.6 Traditional responses and prayers which express essential Christian belief may be used along with extempore prayers.
- 3.7 As we discover from the Catechism and Psalter, found in the *Book of Common Prayer*, during a pupil's life at St Paul's School he or she should expect to be introduced to, or reminded of, who God is (*see Psalm 23*), God's will for us (*as summarised in the Ten Commandments*) and those things for which God would have us pray (*as found in the pattern prayer known as The Lord's Prayer*).
- 3.8 Special seasonal acts of worship, to which parents and carers will be invited, will take place in school at Christmas, Easter and Harvest.
- 3.9 Special acts of worship on Christmas Day, Education Day, Mothering Sunday, Easter and at Harvest take place in the church of St Stephen and St Paul, as well as each Lord's Day. The link between the church and the school is important, with the church praying regularly for the pupils and their parents or carers, the staff and the governors, and the community which the school serves, and pupils and parents and carers being invited to church.

3.10 The Head Teacher shall ensure that the themes for worship each term are planned and adequately resourced with music and teaching aids that are appropriate for the understanding and conceptual development of the pupils.

3.11 The Head Teacher shall:

- (1) ensure that the plans and records of worship are up to date;
- (2) support and enable colleagues to plan and lead Key Stage and class worship
- (3) lead the staff in the development, implementation and review of this policy.

3.12 Class worship, whilst allowing for more variety, shall also provide opportunities for pupils to share their strengths and weakness, and their differences and difficulties.

3.13 When appropriate pupils will be encouraged to read and pray and participate in presentations during acts of worship.

3.14 All acts of collective worship in St Paul's School shall contribute to the Every Child Matters agenda by helping children (1) be healthy, (2) enjoy and achieve, and (3) make a positive contribution.

4. Review

The governors shall review this policy every other year.