St. John the Evangelist C of E (Aided) Primary School

Policy for Collective Worship

Our School’s Vision Statement

***“St. John’s is a caring, Christian community striving to support its members to achieve their God given potential. Exploring our unique gifts and raising aspirations, we prepare our children for the challenges of the modern world. Following Jesus’ example, we seek to grow good people who can make a difference.”***

We believe that

**“Children are a gift from the Lord.”**

**(Psalm 127 v.3)**

We believe that any gift from God is most precious. This makes children the most precious gift. Consequently, developing and supporting every child in our care to become the best that they can be is fundamental to all that we do.

Revised September 2021

Next review September 2022

St. John the Evangelist C of E (Aided) Primary School

Policy For Collective Worship

Introduction

St. John the Evangelist C of E (Aided) Primary School is an Anglican School, the school’s worship is shaped by the rites and practices of the Church of England. The trust deed informs the aims and purposes of the school, this, in turn, liberates those leading collective worship to build on the rich, lived diversity of Anglican tradition and identity. We believe that our worship is consistent with the trust deed and provides all members of the school community with the opportunity of discovering the reality of God in their lives.

The Aims of Worship at St. John’s

Worship is the unique heartbeat of our school and is offered as part of a wider opportunity for pupils and adults to encounter faith by engaging in conversations about God, both as individuals and together. Our worship is driven by our school’s Christian vision and is an essential component of an education that enables all pupils to flourish and to ‘live life in all its fullness’ John 10:10.

Remembering that Jesus said “For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.” (Matthew 18:20). Worship is a time to reflect on God’s word and the teachings of Jesus and an opportunity to consider the impact that gospel teachings have on our everyday lives and how they can guide us on life’s journey.

The school aspires to provide worship which is:

**Inclusive:** all members of the school family, both Christian and non-Christian, can come together to share the love of God in our lives. We recognise that individuals will be at different stages of their spiritual journey and it is right that everybody should be given the opportunity to think and to ask questions. We endeavour to ensure pupil’s involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship so that the children are instrumental in the direction that worship takes.

**Invitational:** worship at St. John’s provides the opportunity for all to engage in the way that they wish. All individuals are welcome and are given the freedom to participate in prayer, reflection and singing in ways in which they feel comfortable.

**Inspiring:** all members of the school family should be inspired and motivated by the big questions that are explored during worship. We want everyone in our school community to achieve their God given potential by recognising the impact that they can have on the world around them – no matter how small they may be.

The aspiration to provide collective worship that is Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring is underpinned by the following aims:

* Explore our school’s vision and reflect on moral values such as compassion, gratitude, justice, humility, forgiveness and reconciliation; and develop virtues such as resilience, determination and creativity that develop character and contribute to academic progress.
* Help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today’s world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God.
* Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
* Experience how worship can lead to a practical expression of love both in the school and the wider community, developing a sense of justice for all and valuing all of God’s children.
* Experience how worship can transform, strengthen and challenge the way we live our lives.
* Enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
* Enable pupils to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

Provision of Worship at St John’s

The rhythm of daily worship provides the opportunity for all worshippers to step away from the busyness of school life, creating a space for an encounter with faith in God. It also provides the opportunity to reflect on larger questions of meaning and purpose. Our school’s collective worship provides a shared set of symbols, signs, words and actions which give the community a language upon which it can draw, in times of joy and grief.

Each half term’s worship is based on a different Christian theme over a two year cycle. Worship is planned carefully through a series of acts of worship, each of which has opportunity to explore both Biblical teaching and non-Biblical texts. Planning for worship also takes into account the church’s year and events of national or international importance. Each Christian theme has a high status with the entrance hall display reflecting children’s responses and a worship banner which is displayed at the front of the hall.

Parents are invited to worship with us in school or at St John’s Church several times through the year. The school’s website also promotes the worship focus, providing the opportunity for children and adults to explore the theme further at home.

Leaders of worship are varied: staff, clergy, children and visitors. Children are invited to play an active part in daily worship through drama, prayer, singing and written response, no matter how young they may be. During the year the school family also attends services at St. John’s Church (Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter). The Year 6 leaver’s service is held in the church too.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Collective Worship

At St. John’s we aspire to provide worship that is inspirational, supportive and relevant. Therefore, it’s important that it constantly evolves to meet the changing needs of the school family and the world in which we live.

Useful strategies for collecting evidence will include:

* Pupil voice – finding out the children’s views in both formal and informal ways.
* Parent comment cards.
* Feedback from clergy and other visitors.
* Regular discussions with colleagues.

Right of Withdrawal

We acknowledge the parents’ legal right to withdraw their children from worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. At present no children are withdrawn from collective worship. We make it clear that the act of worship is central to the life of our school it’s an opportunity to come together as a family and grow as a community. We also affirm that the withdrawal of pupils from collective worship would not isolate them from the Christian teaching the school gives.

Review of the Collective Worship Policy

This policy document will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management of the school before being presented to the Governing Body.