



## Collective worship policy

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### **“Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him” Mark1.3 From John**

#### **Our Vision**

At Dodworth St John the Baptist Primary Academy, we prepare our pupils for the adventures life brings. By fostering respect, curiosity, and teamwork, we aim to nurture individuals who will contribute positively to their community and the wider world.

#### **Christian Values**

The specific Christian Values of **guiding** kindness, honesty, and unity, (Mark 1:3: “Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him” from **John**, who pointed the way), to embrace learning and *life in all its fullness* (John 10:10).

#### **Introduction**

This policy is an agreed statement of the values and aims of collective worship at Dodworth St. John the Baptist Primary Academy. It has been prepared by the governors and headteacher with assistance from staff and diocesan advisers. Collective worship is valued as a central aspect of the life of our church school, through which children grow spiritually, emotionally, morally and culturally.

#### **Legal status of collective worship and rationale**

As a Church of England school, due regard is paid to statutory requirements, that schools will provide opportunities for daily collective worship that is ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’ (School Standards and Framework Act 1998)<sup>1</sup>

It will also reflect the traditions of the Church of England, i.e. the Anglican tradition. However, there is also a balance of content that enables children to develop an understanding and respect for other faiths.

Recognizing its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

### **The right of withdrawal**

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory. However, parents have a legal right to withdraw their child from any or all acts of worship. Those who wish to exercise this right must inform the Head Teacher in writing; they will also be required to advise the school on what alternative spiritual activity they wish their child to engage in during this time, whilst they are cared for by a member of the school's staff; parents may provide suitable activities for children so withdrawn. Please be aware that this does not mean that the children will be exempt from the Christian ethos of the setting which underpins our teaching, learning and relationships.

### **Worship in our school should:**

As worship:

- Be at a level to enable children and adults to explore their own understanding of God within a Christian framework.
- Explain and promote the core Christian values of the setting.
- Have Integrity as acts of Anglican worship whilst being *invitational, inclusive* and *inspirational*.
- Be based on Biblical text or themes.
- Be central in importance to the life of our school community, which is part of a wider community that embraces the whole world.
- Mark the seasons and festivals of the Christian year
- Develop understanding of Anglican traditions such as the lighting of a candle or use of a cross

For people:

- Develop personal spirituality within the setting community through a range of experiences including individual and collective prayer.
- Celebrate the God given gifts and talents of individuals.
- Make a significant contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of members of the school community.

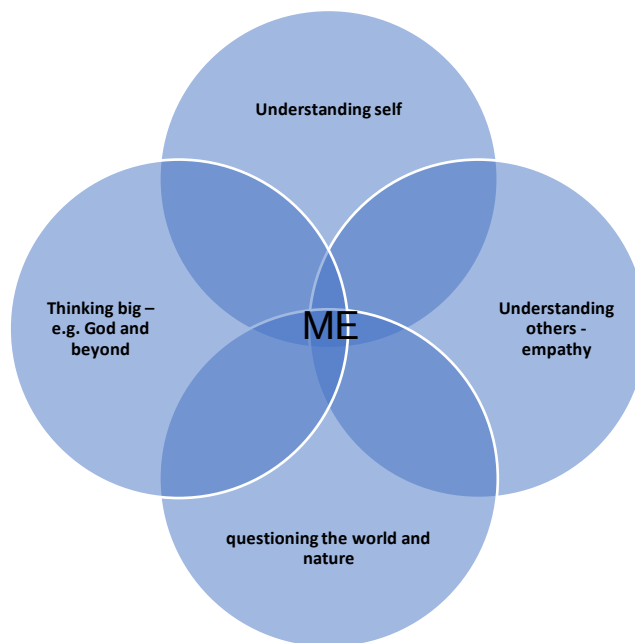
### **Aims of our worship**

- To promote the joy of worship as engaging, inspiring, inclusive and transformative.
- To develop spirituality, morality, social and cultural values.
- To give an opportunity to experience the meaning and significance of faith as revealed in the Bible.
- To understand, celebrate and develop children's knowledge of Christian beliefs, celebrations, traditions and religious festivals in the Anglican Church's year.

- Facilitate a deeper understanding of the Christian story narrative, from creation to the present day.
- To appreciate that people, cultures and beliefs differ and to demonstrate respect, tolerance and generosity towards them.
- To develop young children's sense of self-worth and to provide opportunities to celebrate achievements.
- To develop a caring attitude to others and a sense of community and loyalty
- To provide opportunities for children to plan, lead, contribute to, monitor and evaluate collective worship.
- To invite clergy of the parish, other lay members of the parish and other Christian leaders in the community [as are acceptable to the parish church] to lead worship weekly.

### How we achieve our aims

We aim to promote collective acts of worship, which are rich, meaningful experiences that are appropriate and significant to the pupil's needs, age, development and interest by:



- Providing opportunities and creating an experience of the presence of God, by looking beyond the physical, material and measurable to explore feelings such as awe, wonder, love, respect and courage.
- Arranging worship at a distinctive, identifiable time in the school day. It will take place in a variety of groupings in the school hall, classrooms or within the school's outdoor environment as appropriate.
- Planning and linking themes which focus on a particular idea/concept, i.e., the liturgical year; festivals and celebrations, our Christian values.
- Using a wide range of resources, artefacts (from religious and secular sources), music, art, drama and external visitors to engage children's interest.
- Encouraging children to participate and experience different styles of worship, e.g., prayer, praise, silence, rituals, and become familiar with the language of worship, Biblical readings and liturgy.

- Providing opportunities for children and adults to reflect, contemplate their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs.
- Using the centrality of prayer – personal silent prayer, personal shared prayers, collective prayers, writing prayers; all prayer will be invitational.
- Involving young children and members of the wider community to participate in collective worship and activities within the parish. For key Church Festivals, such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, Key Stages, Class Grouping and individual classes will visit St James' Church for worship.
- Presenting and creating displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas, thoughts and questions.
- Through providing a peaceful environment enabling stillness, reflection and prayer as well as times for a joyous environment with singing, music, dance, drama, etc.

### **Central attributes of an act of worship**

The setting will endeavour to fulfil the following 'central attributes' of worship:

Gathering Making worship a special time of the day.

Engaging Using the best available techniques to stimulate interest in the content.

Responding Ensuring there is time and opportunity for individual, group reflection and thought, so those attending can respond in a variety of ways.

Sending Summarising the worship in a meaningful short message used to create an opportunity for those attending to implement the ideas covered and to conclude the worship.

Collective worship should be planned systematically, so that there is continuity, variety and clear focus on Christian stories, values and traditions. Worship is led by a variety of people that include school staff, Canon Keith and representatives from church and members of other Christian denominations. Occasionally outside speakers will be invited, but the structure of Collective Worship will remain the same.

### **The centrality of prayer**

During the collective worship there will be a time for response and reflection, to ponder on a question, statement or thought. This may also be reflected in an invitational prayer, offered spontaneously by a child or adult, read out or recited. This prayer can be displayed and used in class and setting reflective areas so that:

- Children understand the nature and purpose of prayer.
- Children understand the part prayer may play in their lives and the life of the setting community.
- Prayer contributes to the spiritual development of individuals and the whole setting community.
- There will also be appropriate opportunities for prayer and other worship activities, including reflection, outside of collective worship.

The school has a prayer tree on which children can write and attach their own prayers which will then be gathered and shared in a Collective Worship. From time-to-time dedicated prayer spaces will be created to engage children in prayer in a more varied and engaging way.

## Planning and Organisation

### Planning

Collective worship is planned systematically so that there is continuity, variety and clear focus on Christian beliefs and festivals.

### Organisation

**Monday** The theme will be introduced in a whole school Collective Worship.

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**Tuesday** In class worship focus will be on a bible story that represents the theme of the week

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**Wednesday** The Collective Worship will focus on recapping what the children remember about the theme and individual worships

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**Thursday** Praise assembly celebrates values through collective singing

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**Friday** The Collective Worship will focus on celebrating pupil achievements including the demonstration of key values

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### What Collective Worship Looks Like In Practice

The pattern of collective worship is as follows:

- Collective worship begins with each class bringing in their class candle to place on the Worship table. There may be Value poster or image with question visible suggesting content of the worship
- Everyone will be greeted and welcomed with 'Good morning St Johns' and 'Peace be with you' to which the response is 'And also with you'
- The Worship table candle will be lit and the Candle Lighting prayer said by all. (Led by pupils)

*God is here with us*

*God is in the light*

*Now there is no dark*

*Our candles burning bright*

- Welcome and quick messages as to not detract from the theme
- The collective worship theme will be presented and everyone will be encouraged to engage with the theme/question/issue to enable them to connect with their own and others views/thoughts/opinions.
- After the theme has been presented, the children will be invited to spend a time in reflection on what has been presented during the collective worship. Children will be encouraged to spend a few moments in silence either with their eyes closed or focusing on the visual aid.
- Prayers will be led by either the leader or children, concluding with the Lord's Prayer or School Prayer (invited to make their prayer by saying Amen)

*O Lord bless our school*

*That learning together*

*And playing together*

*We learn to serve one another and serve you*

*Amen*

- It is important that the impact of what has been discussed is taken away by the children by ensuring that they leave the moment with a sense of thought/ action regarding the theme.
- The end of collective worship is signalled by extinguishing the candle whilst stating our school values of kindness, honesty, and unity and everyone will be dismissed with the words, 'Be ready for today's adventures ... Amen'
- The children then move into another space/lesson in a respectful way and the class candles are collected

### **Communication**

The school will communicate with parents our collective worship themes via newsletters and display boards.

### **Reflection**

Each class has a dedicated space for reflection, which includes the candle which is brought to collective worship Mondays and a book containing in class reflections sometimes capturing ideas provoked from school collective worships. Additionally, the poster of end of day reflection questions will be displayed. As per the display/environment policy each main display should have a philosophy-based question to provoke thoughts from pupils

### **Parental involvement**

Parents will be kept informed about the themes of worship at the school through (for example, weekly newsletters, the collective worship section of the school website)

### **Responsibilities**

The normal expectation within our church school is for all staff to view collective worship as an important part of their own well-being and spiritual development as human beings. The school will endeavour to timetable staff so all have an opportunity to attend regularly.

At interview all applicants are informed that the school holds acts of collective worship that promote the Christian ethos and values of the school. The normal expectation will be that staff will participate in and lead collective worship.

The leadership team including named Spirituality Lead are responsible for co-ordinating the programme of induction and training for staff.

**Canon Keith** – Dodworth Church, supports the school in developing the link to the local community church through key date services (Easter, Christmas, Harvest, Leavers)

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation of collective acts of worship are undertaken by governors and key staff. This process supports the school's self-evaluation and staff development and appraisal. All leaders of collective

worship are asked to evaluate continuously, reflect after every worship, to develop and improve their practice.

## Appendices

APPENDIX 1a - Collective worship observation form and Observation pointers

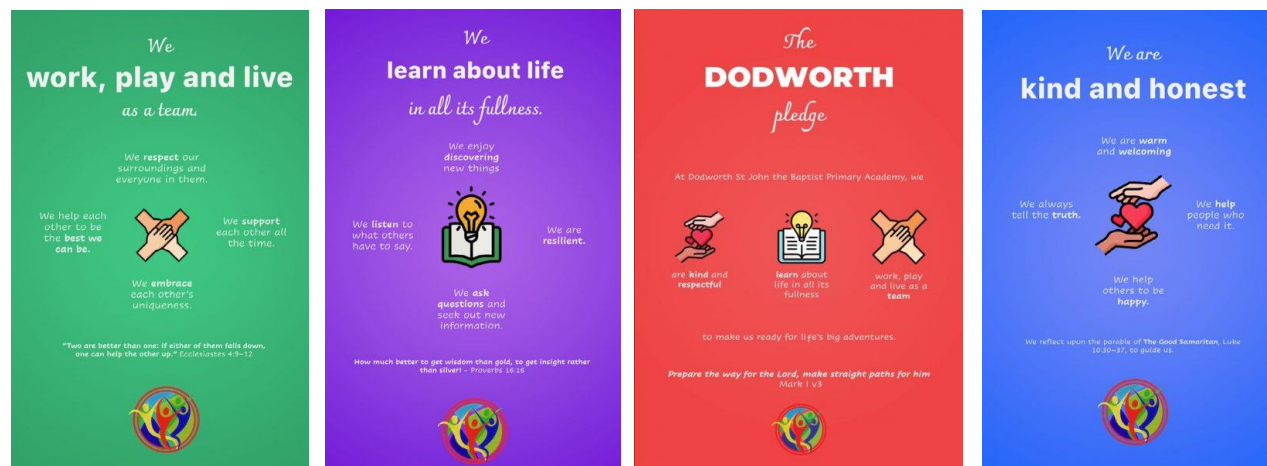
APPENDIX 2 - Liturgical Colours/calendar and seasons of the Christian year

<sup>1</sup>Other statutory documents concerning Collective Worship include: section 25 of the Education Act 1944, the Education Reform Act 1988 and Section 346 of the Education Act 1996

References to 'parish' refer to the local parish church to which the school is linked.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

- The School Vision
- The school values Pledge
- The school policy on Equal Opportunities
- The school policy for Teaching and Learning



## APPENDIX 1 Collective worship observation form

Leader: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

Worship Theme: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Allocation: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

*Collective worship in Church of England Settings should at its simplest create a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us.*

CRITERIA	ASPECT	COMMENT
<b>Central Attribute 1</b> <b>Gathering</b>	Is there a real sense of a very special time in the day?  Immediate impact, relevant, welcoming, stimulates interest or dull, uninteresting, lacks focus.	
<b>Central attribute 2</b> <b>Engaging</b>	Does the worship leader capture the attention of the children and staff so they become actively engaged in the content?  Excellent - well expressed, stimulating or poor communicator  Convincing, enthusiastic, warm or lack of rapport.	
<b>Central attribute 3</b> <b>Responding</b>	Does the leader allow for a response from the children and adults – whether active or passive, noisy or quiet?	
<b>Central attribute 4</b> <b>Sending</b>	Does the leader send us out with a clear “thought for the day” something that changes our behaviour in some way?  Clear summary, learners given opportunity to reflect or unclear what the message was.	
<b>In addition</b>		
<b>Content</b>	Clear Christian / Biblical content and teaching.  Woolly, lack of structure, largely secular.	



CRITERIA	ASPECT	COMMENT
<b>Summary</b>		
<i>Collective worship in Church of England Settings should at its simplest create a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us.</i>		
<b>Gathering</b>	<b>Music (entry/exit)</b>	appropriate / random, linked to theme, creates atmosphere, delivers a message
	<b>Welcome</b>	whether greetings exchanged and introduction made
	<b>Atmosphere</b>	extent to which act of worship is portrayed as special and important
<b>Engaging</b>	<b>Focus</b>	table, cloth, Bible, cross, candle, artefacts ICT / Visual / drama provides appropriate, linked relevant visual/factual information
	<b>Awe and Wonder</b>	sense given of marvel of world / creation
	<b>Conviction</b>	extent to which message is clear and compelling or words lack power and appear as paying lip service
<b>Responding</b>	<b>Participation</b>	extent to which learners involved in responding, partner talk, opportunities for some to participate directly
	<b>Singing</b>	whether there was appropriate hymn / song, quality, enthusiasm of participation
	<b>Reflection</b>	learners given time to pause and reflect
	<b>Prayers</b>	extent to which prayers are appropriate and learner friendly, whether learners are invited to respond
<b>Sending</b>	<b>Dismissal</b>	whether the person takes charge, smiles, engages with some learners, says 'thank you'
<b>Other aspects</b>	<b>Distinctively Anglican</b>	clear reference is made to the Bible and Anglican Christian teaching and belief e.g. the Trinity - God, Jesus and Holy Spirit

<b>Inclusive</b>	the worship reflects the multi faith / cultural nature of the world and feels inclusive to those of other and no faith
<b>Dynamism &amp; Theatricality</b>	was it a performance rather than an act of worship
<b>Open or Closed</b>	does the leader give room for the children to build their own meanings / connections / links or are they told what to think?
<b>Age Appropriateness</b>	are the language, concepts, ideas appropriate? Is it meaningful for the youngest yet appropriate for the oldest?

## APPENDIX 2

### Liturgical Colours and seasons of the Christian year

Season	Liturgical Colour	Description
<b>Advent</b>	Purple	The period covering the four Sundays before the 25th December:  Period of preparation for Christmas.
<b>Christmas-tide</b>	White or Gold	25 <sup>th</sup> December to 2 <sup>nd</sup> February
<b>Gap Between</b>	Green	Gap of Green until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday
<b>Lent</b>	Purple	The 40 days of preparation for Easter
<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	White or Gold	The Last Supper
<b>Good Friday</b>	Red	The Crucifixion
<b>Easter-tide</b>	White or Gold	Easter Day until Pentecost
<b>Pentecost</b>	Red	50 Days after Easter (lasts a week)
<b>The Rest of the Year</b>	Green	From Pentecost to Advent

<b>Meaning of the colours</b>	Purple	Penitence, preparation
	White or Gold	Joy, purity, innocence, Saints who are not martyrs
	Red	Fire & Blood, therefore Holy Spirit and Martyrdom
	Green	Everything else
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<b>In some places</b>	Blue	The Blessed Virgin Mary
	<b>Pink</b>	Mothering Sunday (4 <sup>th</sup> in Lent) and 3 <sup>rd</sup> in Advent

Locally there may be different versions of the colours used. At Dodworth St. Johns the term 'parent', used in any context, is intended to mean 'parent, carer or guardian'.

**Approved by Governing body**

date

**Date of next review**

date

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