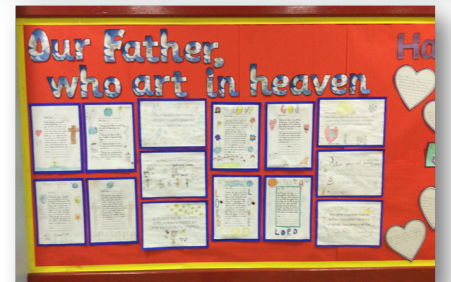


# Slyne-with-Hest St Luke's Church of England Primary School

## Worship Policy



Worship Co-ordinator: Paul Bowden (HT)

Reviewed and amended: January 2024

## Policy for Collective Worship

All the policies of the school embody the statements in the school mission statement:

*Listen, learn, love and laugh as part of God's family.*

### 1. Fundamentals

(a) Christian emphasis

In this Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Collective worship is in conformity with the ethos statement and the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England.

We believe we are here to:

- Serve the community of our village (Slyne-with-Hest) and our families from wider afield who are part of our community. As such we **listen** to each other in order to flourish together.
- Establish and foster a love of **learning**. As a church school we strive for the highest educational standards but within a shared belief that education is far more than learning facts or achieving a standard – to educate effectively we believe we are developing the whole child (mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually) and as such put worship and RE / PSHE / PE/ Music and the Arts as vital strands of what we offer.
- **Love** 'We love' because God first loved us and we seek to demonstrate that in our dealing with all members of the community – that is not easy and not always a saying 'yes' to everyone but follows the model that Jesus gave. This also links to our Bible verse where we seek to '**Encourage one another and build each other up**' (1 Thessalonians 5 v11) – every member of our school community is unique and special in God's eyes and as such needs to be valued, included and encouraged to be the best that they can be.
- **Laugh** and share in the ups and downs of life together.

All this takes place in the knowledge that we are **part of God's family**.

The school's ethos statement is:

Recognising 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 school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

The daily act of collective worship required by law in the School shall be consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England and the basic curriculum required by law in the school shall include religious education consistent with the faith of the Church of England. Use should be made, within the provisions of the Education Acts for the time being in force, of the Parish Church or other Church of England place of worship, both for occasional acts of collective worship and for religious education.

- (b) Collective Worship contributes to the working out of our **Ethos Statement** through our **Mission Statement** and the **aims** and **ethos** of the school, and therefore to the Christian Education we provide. It also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the values of our school.
- (c) Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils' education. As such we are concerned to resource it properly and ensure that it is of the highest standard. The worship and prayer life of the school is not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities will be taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum generally and at the end of afternoon sessions as well as graces before lunch.
- (d) The Church of England Heritage  
Forms of worship within our denomination(s) differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to our Trust Deeds. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian Church.

Whatever the approaches, we expect that pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them. These include:

the nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;  
the nature of human beings as children of God, part of his creation and, though sinful, destined for eternal life;  
Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God;  
the central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity;  
the central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance;  
the importance of prayer;  
the central symbols of Christianity;  
the cycle of the Church year.

- (e) Use will be made within the provisions of the Education Acts for the time being in force, of the Parish Church of St Luke's, both for occasional acts of collective worship and for religious education.
- (f) Collective Worship and assembly.  
The school meets together for Collective Worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, e.g. important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from Collective Worship and parents' rights to withdraw their children do not apply.
- (g) Worship in the school, while reflecting our denomination, will take into account the levels of development of pupils.
- (h) The provision of collective worship conforms to Diocesan/District policy
- (i) The relationship to Denominational Religious Education. (Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled Schools using the Diocesan/District Syllabus)  
*It may be that elements of the syllabus are delivered via school worship. Worship and Religious Education may be closely interconnected or kept largely separate. (GBD)*

## **2. Responsibility for the policy**

This updated policy was presented for approval by the Governing Body in February 2024 and will be reviewed annually.

It was formed originally by the Headteacher (who is also the Collective Worship coordinator) and used material contained in the WOW worship folder, produced by the Blackburn Diocese and in negotiation with Rev P Bicknell (then incumbent of St Luke's Slyne-with-Hest). It has been reviewed annually since its formation.

The Headteacher maintains an overview of the policy's implementation in school. He will ensure a ½ termly worship plan and rota is formed which contains all the information required to lead WOW worship.

## **3. Statement of broad aims**

Collective worship should:

- **Explore** those questions which are important to everyone
  - Explore the teachings of the Bible, prayer and value of truth and love
  - Explore what worship is and what it means to have faith
  - Explore what it means to put God at the heart of the school life
- **Encounter** a faith which is alive
  - Encounter the awe and wonder of God and His creation
  - Encounter creative silence and up lifting praise
  - Encounter God through the sacrament
- **Experience** the joy of celebrating God's love
  - Enjoy worship and being in church and part of the church family
  - Participate in leading acts of worship
  - Experience being part of the school family
  - Experience and understand the central place of the Eucharist / Communion in the life of the Church.

## **4. Organisation and Delivery**

- a) The agreed pattern of weekly (and termly) worship, indicating times, locations, composition:

**Monday:** whole school worship led by the headteacher on the Value agreed for the half term

**Wednesday:** whole school worship led by the vicar. This normally in school but will include opportunities for the whole school to visit the local church (St Luke's) for significant days e.g. Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday etc

**Friday:** whole school celebration worship led by the headteacher including the use of a wide range of Christian music and prayer

On **Tuesday and Thursday** worship takes a variety of different forms:

- Class worship led using materials produced by the worship lead – this will include lost of opportunity for discussion / practical activities and active prayer
- Worship led by the school worship team – this may be Key Stage / whole School or in classes
- Worship led by other groups – NISCu / members of other local churches / visitors
- Worship including the use of the Diocesan 'God's Big Story' weekly video resources
- School Eucharist (termly)

Pupils will be included in leading worship in their classes and when we meet together as a whole school. The worship group will lead (as noted above) in a variety of forms.

The school welcomes a range of visitors to lead worship and these are added to the rota as appropriate (e.g. NISCu/ Rev Gordon (URC)/ Sportsreach etc)

b) The approximate length of collective worship will be 15 mins

c) Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfE regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussion and question and answer. Pupils may be read to or instructed or they may be asked to listen to readings or to think about and respond to a stimulus such as a work of art.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt. Frequently pupils are involved in leading worship or performing through dance, drama or music.

When any such activities occur, they may be counted as teaching time even though they take place within worship. It is appropriate that, in a Church school, worship and learning is seen as a seamless whole even though, for the purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two."

d) Parents, family and governors are invited to attend worship when we join together in church and for special assemblies / acts of worship in school. The size of the school hall is, unfortunately, a limiting factor in inviting them more often.

e) A worshipful atmosphere is created and sustained by:

- Playing appropriate music for the children to come and leave the hall to (a selection of classics / worship songs / world music will be used as well as songs played on the keyboard)
- Times of reflections and silence will be built in to the worship
- a lit candle indicates the start and end of the worship time
- a large wooden cross is always a focal point in the hall for worship
- modern technologies are used to present the gospel to the children in a variety of ways and provide clear stimuli for reflection and prayer
- displays are placed around the cross to aid worship
- the Christian colours of the Church Year are used on the altar cloths

f) Worship will be distinguished from notices and other 'assembly' activities by the blowing out of the candle.

g) Worship will take place in Church at least on the following occasions:

- Harvest Festival
- Christmas
- Easter
- Leavers Service

Authority has been delegated to the Incumbent and Headteacher in negotiation to add to these occasions when necessary

- h) The school celebrates Holy Communion with the whole school once a term in school and is led by the vicar.
  
- i) The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England / Methodist ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.
  
- j) Because of the importance placed on the worshipping life of the school, children will not be withdrawn for extra tuition, music lessons etc.

The children in school would visit church more regularly but 2 roads need to be crossed to get there and the church building can only just accommodate us when we arrive.

## **5 Content and Approaches**

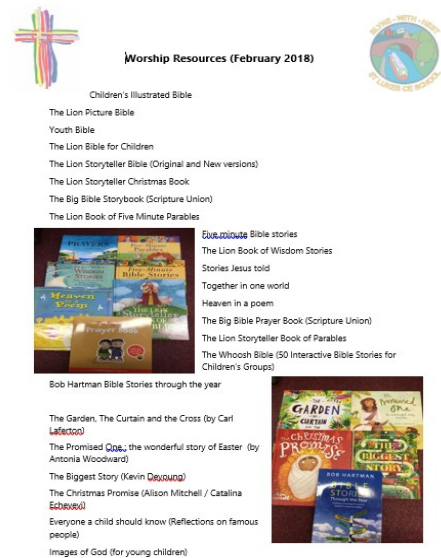
- (a) Worship will include:
  - Music
  - Drama
  - Questioning
  - Story
  - Passages of scripture
  - Reflection
  - Visual images
  - Video clips
  - Puppetry
  - Accounts of personal experience
  - Silence
  
- (b) Content will be organised on a half termly worship plan. This will include: the observance of the Church Year, the celebration of curriculum work, Values based materials weekly (or longer) themes, and acts of worship which stand alone.

## 6. Resources

a) There is a budget for Worship – the headteacher as worship coordinator will be responsible for organising new resources for use in worship. Any members of staff wishing to purchase worship resources should consult the headteacher.

b) Resources will be kept in the headteachers office / staffroom they include:

- WOW worship materials
- The Lion Storyteller Bible and other children's Bibles
- A wide range of prayer books
- Range of music and books
- Assembly / Worship ideas books
- Values for Life materials
- 12 baskets worship material (related to SEAL materials)



A full list can be seen in 'Worship Resources document

## 7. Consultation, Management, Recording and Review

(a) The Collective Worship co-ordinator will ensure:

- there is a half-termly plan in place for the leading of worship
- the links with the incumbent / church are maintained
- visitors are asked to lead worship when appropriate
- there is opportunity for the children to engage in different styles of worship and that the content is varied
- children take an active part in the worship life of the school

- resources are kept up to date
  
- (b) Although the headteacher as worship coordinator will have responsibility for the planning of worship there will be close links with the incumbent and other worship leaders. A termly meeting will be held with the incumbent to plan worship for the following half term – this will be done in conjunction with the worship co-ordinator from Halton St Wilfrid's, where the vicar is also incumbent.
  
- (c) Staff development will be provided for the whole staff by the worship coordinator in staff meetings / INSET. The worship co-ordinator (and other staff) will attend any appropriate Diocesan worship training.
  
- (d) Records of Acts of Worship will be kept in the headteachers office.
  
- (e) Monitoring and evaluating provision
  - The worship coordinator monitors and evaluates the quality and content of Collective Worship. At the end of each half term the half termly plan is evaluated and any areas that need to be considered are used in the planning of the new half termly plan.
  - Parent questionnaires are sent home regularly – these includes questions related to the worship life of the school
  - Children are asked their opinions about worship and these are taken into account in future planning

The headteacher reports to the governing body on a termly basis in relation to school worship and church school distinctiveness.

The policy is reviewed annually and updated as required.

### **The legal requirements for Collective Worship in our school**

#### **(a) Legal Basis**

Collective Worship in Church Schools is governed by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as well as by the Trust Deed of the School. The Collective Worship provided by the school is in accordance with the Trust Deed.

**(b) Daily Worship**

Daily Collective Worship has to be provided for every pupil. This worship may take place in various groupings such as the whole school, separate Key Stage groups, year groups or house groups or in classes or tutor groups, but not in faith groups. Worship may take place at any time in the school day.

**(c) Worship in Church**

Worship should normally take place on the school premises, but may take place in Church on special occasions.

**(d) Parental rights of withdrawal**

Parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship and this provision and its limitations are indicated in the school Brochure. (The form of words given in the Diocesan / District Syllabus is repeated here:

*The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England / Methodist Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England / Methodist ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.*

**(e) Complaints about the provision of Collective Worship**

It is hoped that any complaint will be resolved informally by the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Governors, and possibly with advice from the Diocese or District. However, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, then formal procedures come into play and the matter will be adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the Bishop of the Diocese