

St Blasius Shanklin CE Primary Academy



**We aim for the highest standards and our vision for each child is
for them to:
'Enjoy and achieve in life in all its fullness, following in the footsteps
of Jesus'
'With God all things are possible'
Matthew 19:26**

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Date Agreed: February 2023

Last reviewed: March 2021

Review Date: February 2024

Signed: _____

Chair of Governors

Introduction

This policy is an agreed statement of the values and aims of Collective Worship at St Blasius C of E Primary Academy.

References to 'parish' refer to St Blasius Church Parish, which the academy is linked to. This is the parish named in the Instrument of Government (equivalent) for the

academy. The vicar will be the 'principal officiating minister' (ex-officio) of the named parish.

"To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God." William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury 1942-44

Rationale

Worship at our academy should:

- At its simplest, create a time and space where we can come closer to God and God can come closer to us.
- Be distinctively Christian.
- Use and promote the clearly identified core Christian values of the academy.
- Have **integrity** as acts of Anglican worship whilst being **invitational, inclusive** and **inspirational**.
- Be based on Biblical text or themes.
- Enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and a Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Be central in importance to the life of our academy community, which is part of a wider community that embraces the whole world.
- Reflect on human existence.
- Use the seasons and festivals of the Christian year.
- Develop understanding of Anglican traditions and the practice of the local parish church.
- Involve the active encouragement of the local church and members of the clergy.

For people worship should:

- Develop personal spirituality within the academy community through a range of experiences including individual and collective prayer.
- Engage pupils and adults with collective worship, making it relevant and transformational to the lives of members of the whole academy community.
- Celebrate the God given gifts and talents of individuals and the whole academy community.
- Make a significant contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of members of the academy community.
- Consider the beliefs and values of others, especially those within the academy community.
- Raise aspirations of individuals and the academy community.

To comply worship should:

- Reflect the Trust Deed.
- Be clearly outlined in the academy brochure and on the academy website.
- Involve learners and adults in planning, leading and evaluating collective worship.
- Be monitored and evaluated for the impact it has on the academy community by foundation governors.

Aims

- To promote the joy of worship as engaging, inspiring and transformative.
- To develop spirituality, morality, social and cultural values.
- Sometimes to provide a peaceful environment enabling stillness, reflection and prayer.
- Sometimes to be noisy and joyous with singing, music, dance, drama, gymnastics etc.
- To give an opportunity to acquire a secure knowledge of the Christian 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.
- To appreciate that people, cultures and beliefs differ and to demonstrate respect, tolerance and generosity towards them.
- To develop pupils' 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.
- Where possible invite clergy of the parish, other lay members of the parish and other Christian leaders in the community to lead worship regularly.

How we will 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:

- Creating a sense of occasion and reverence following the 4 central attributes of worship (see below)
- Arranging Worship at different places when possible, different times with different people and groupings, involving all members of the academy community at some time.
- Planning and linking themes which focus on a particular idea/concept, i.e. the liturgical year; RE curriculum, festivals and celebrations, within Christian and other faith traditions, Christian values – celebrating achievements, good work and behaviour.
- Using a wide range of resources, devotional aids, artefacts (from religious and secular sources), drama and external speakers to engage children's interest.
- Encourage 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 liturgical statements.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to reflect, contemplate on their own thoughts, feelings and beliefs – the centrality of prayer – writing prayers.
- Providing opportunities that develop pupils' awareness of what is beautiful, good, wonderful, awesome and puzzling in life experience – integrate the concept of spirituality.
- Involving pupils and members of the wider community to both lead and participate in collective worship and activities within St Blasius.
- Presenting and creating displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas, thoughts and questions.

Central attributes of an Act of Worship

The academy will endeavour to fulfil the legal requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act in conjunction with the academy's trust deed, by holding 'An Act of Collective Worship every day'. All staff members available will attend all acts of worship.

During Collective Worship, whether in the hall, classroom or outside, we will apply the following four central attributes: (See Appendix 1 for ideas for each element)

Gathering Making special and significant this part of the day through appropriate symbol and ceremony.

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.

The academy may vary the organisation Whole School/Class/Key Stage each year or term (Appendix 4). Our Collective Worship is planned systematically, so that there is continuity, variety and clear focus on Christian teaching and festivals. Worship is generally led by academy staff and pupils. But where possible LGB members, representatives from St Blasius Church, members of different faith communities and members of the local community are invited to lead occasional worships.

The academy week is directed by an 'opening reflection' led by a member of the SLT following a theme connected to our core Christian values. Each time the school meets, a candle lighting prayer is used.

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 a prayer, read out or recited, which is then displayed and used in class and academy reflective areas so that:

- Children understand the nature and purpose of prayer.
- Children understand the part prayer may play in their life and the life of the worshipping community.
- Prayer contributes to the spiritual development of the whole school community.

There will also be appropriate opportunities for prayer and other worship activities, including reflection, outside collective worship. Each class has a 'reflective area' to engage and prompt individual learners, as well as designated special spaces in corridor areas.

Management and Organisation of Resources

The Collective Worship coordinator plans worship on a termly basis, with input from the children, teachers, members of St Blasius Church and reflections/feedback from parents. Resources and artefacts are stored in the Principal's Office, hall and store room. All classes have access to prayer books and Bibles, as well as a class set of Bibles in the library. A board is displayed inside the hall, highlighting the focus and

theme of Collective Acts of Worship, music and prayer. The academy's reception area displays reflect the colours of the Church year, current ideas and themes, as well as the academy's distinct ethos and values.

Communication

The weekly newsletter contains our core values of Wisdom, Endurance and Friendship and the Principal's message often includes reference to the worship theme that week. Information about academy worship is also provided to St Blasius Church via the academy website, so that parishioners can be informed about worship in the academy.

Parental Involvement

Parents are actively encouraged to participate in Collective Acts of Worship. The weekly newsletter outlines the theme connected to our core Christian values along with the prayer and thought for the week. Parents are encouraged to participate in Church Services and Celebration Worship when held, throughout the year.

Legal status of Collective Worship

All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship.

In a Church of England School, worship must be in line with the trust deed of the school and will reflect the traditions of the Church of England, i.e. the Anglican tradition.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the daily act of collective worship. Academies must comply with this wish and must ensure a duty of care for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Collective worship guidance is contained in Circular 1/94.

Our academy will respect parental requests and will try to discuss the request to see if an accommodation can be reached and to ensure worship remains inclusive and invitational and open to all members of the school community.

Responsibilities

All teaching staff, including teaching students and HLTAs, are expected to participate and lead Collective Worship and all other support staff are asked upon recruitment, if they are happy to participate in Collective Acts of Worship that promote the Christian ethos and values of the academy. The academy welcomes offers from any member of staff who feels confident to lead worship.

The Principal is responsible for coordinating the programme of induction and training for staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation of Collective Acts of Worship, is undertaken by the Collective Worship Co-coordinator, Principal and LGB members on a termly basis. All those delivering worship will be observed termly. This process supports the Academy's self-evaluation and is reported to the LGB. (Appendix 2)

Pupils are also involved in evaluating Collective Worship through feedback in weekly class worship, questionnaires and pupil conferences. All leaders of Collective Worship are asked to evaluate continuously, reflect after every worship, to develop and improve their practice.

Collective Worship Coordinator: Miss Croucher

Review

This policy should be reviewed annually, or earlier if changes are made to the SIAMS Evaluation Schedule.

Appendix 1 – Ideas for addressing the 4 central attributes

Appendix 2 – Collective Worship Observation Form (and guidance)

Appendix 3 – SIAMS Evaluation Schedule: Strand 6 - the impact of Collective Worship

APPENDIX 1

From the SIAMS Schedule for collective worship 2013

The central attributes of collective worship and the extent to which they:

- Develop the Christian vision, values and ethos of the school and contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of participants.
- Provide opportunities for participants to gather, engage and respond in a variety of ways, grounded in distinctively Christian teaching.
- Provide opportunities to understand and celebrate festivals in the Church's year and reflect local Anglican/Methodist practice, including the Eucharist/Communion where appropriate.

Ideas for gathering

Based on the revised SIAMS inspection schedule for collective worship which references the "central attributes" of worship, Gathering, Engagement, Responding and in addition the Sending or Conclusion. How do we create a **Gathering** ceremony that changes the **space** used for worship (which is also used for lunch and PE) into a **sacred place** that enables children and adults to engage in this very special part of a church school day?

Safeguarding

Make sure that any activity is safe e.g. the use of candles in worship is common, always make sure there are clear and safe guidelines about the lighting, handling and extinguishing of candles.

Some gathering ideas:

- Teach a short prayerful song such as "As we are gathered Jesus is here".
- Light a candle with a prayer – "Dear God, show us who you are and how you want us to be".
- Light a candle with a prayer – "This is a special time of our school day when God can come closer to us and we can come closer to God".
- Light a candle with a prayer – "We light this candle as a symbol to remind us of God's perfect gift to us. Jesus is here, His spirit is with us, Amen".
- Other greetings:
 - "Peace be with you", "And also with you".
 - "The Lord be with you", "And also with you".
 - "Peace", "Peace".
 - Could be a confession using "Sorry, Thank You and Please".
 - Could be based on the school's Distinctive Christian Values.
- Use an inspirational or thought provoking image on screen as children arrive.
- Use music, playing while the children arrive, that links to the theme.
- Create a ceremony – a tee light in a special holder is lit in the classroom, the light is processed at the front of the class as they walk to the hall. As the school gathers all the

lights are placed at the front of the hall. When the main candle is lit, the light comes from one of the class candles.

- Instead of the children forming rows in their classes, the children arrive and create vertical rows from front to back. This mixes up the classes and creates a more family feel with older and younger children sitting next to each other.
- Try to create as much of a circle as possible, in Godly Play it is described as the children's sacred space. It brings the children closer and creates a more intimate feel to the assembly of people.
- Get a child to process the school banner accompanied by two candle bearers to the front when all classes are assembled.
- Start a Taize chant or other short repeating song in the classrooms and bring the song to the hall.
- Ask the children, explain that Gathering is a key part of our school worship, what would make it special for them, see what ideas they come up with.
- Vary the gathering each half term – perhaps the gathering can reflect the cycle of the church year.

Ideas for engaging

Based on the revised SIAMS inspection schedule for collective worship which references the "central attributes" of worship, Gathering, Engagement, Responding and in addition the

Sending or Conclusion. How do we **Engage** the assembled children and adults so they can focus on the theme / content of our talk / presentation / worship?

Safeguarding

Make sure that any activity is safe e.g. the use of candles in worship is common, always make sure there are clear and safe guidelines about the lighting, handling and extinguishing of candles.

Some engaging ideas:

Rule number 1 do not leave your amazing skills as a teacher at the hall door, unlike Church - school worship does not have a rigid liturgy; we can be incredibly creative in our presentational style.

Rule number 2 always know what you want the children and adults to take away, do not get distracted by a stunning presentational idea, find the right style to suit the message you want to convey.

- Gathering provides you with the first opportunity to raise the curiosity of those assembled. The imagery, the music, perhaps the fragrance you used (burning an incense joss stick) can be used to start the engagement.
- Ask questions about the image / music / fragrance.
- Find out what the children already know (we sometimes tell a Bible story that most of the children know quite well, rather than reading or telling it again, get the children to help you retell the story, their own words can provide you with profound insights.
- Tell a story from your own childhood.
- If you can play an instrument or have another skill use it – mine your talents.
- If you can paint or draw – use these skills to tell the story.
- Use volunteers.
- Use simple props, using 4 strips of cardboard held together with paper fasteners you can retell the story of Jesus Healing The Paralysed Man
www.youtube.com/watch?v=DX5xUpXHUNE
- Use video clips, try <http://jesuswonder.org/> as a resource.
- Talk to your vicar / lay ministers about Bible telling resources such as “Open The Book” a dramatic way of telling Bible stories that involves adults and children.
- Use props – a closed box that you carefully place behind you, and while you start telling the story you keep looking at over your shoulder – but you don’t say anything about it, the children will be desperate to know “What’s in the box?”.
- Create a sacred space, as much of a circle of children as you can make in the hall and sit on the floor at their level, talk in a low voice so everyone has to work hard to hear.
- Use Christian meditation techniques see www.wccm.org for information.
- Stand up to sing and use the hymn / song to increase blood flow and energise everyone.

Ideas for responding

Based on the revised SIAMS inspection schedule for collective worship which references the “central attributes” of worship, Gathering, Engagement, Responding and in addition the Sending or Conclusion. How do we allow the children and adults to **Respond** to the theme / content of our talk / presentation / worship?

Safeguarding

Responding can include information from children that reveals sensitive personal information. Be ready to stop the child before they say too much. You must make sure the

head teacher (or designated member of staff) is informed, takes note and you have confidence that there will be appropriate follow up.

Some responding ideas:

- When you ask a question, responding can be:
 - Think about this in your head.
 - Talk to the person beside you (talking partner) give the children 20 seconds and swap.
 - Gathering an answer from year R then year 1 and then year 2 and so on.
 - Holding your answer in your head and see if you had the right idea as the story continues.
 - Expecting the unexpected and allowing for these obscure responses.
- Responding can be quiet – is this your preferred style? What will work best for the subject / children?
- Responding can be noisy – is this your preferred style? Can you successfully restore calm?
- Responding can be allowing the children to tell the story for / with you.
- If you are using a well-known Biblical story, rather than telling it all yourself ask the children what comes next, this is both engaging and responding.
- Can the response be an action rather than words? How can you show compassion to this person, show me in a mime?
- The response could be a spontaneous prayer said out loud to a partner or to everyone.
- Singing an appropriate song could be the best response possible.
- Responding might be private as we all listen to a piece of music or look at an image or at a candle flame.
- A collective response might be asking what we can do as a school to make a difference in the context of the theme, gathering the ideas and offering them to the school leadership might be appropriate, do ask first if this would be acceptable.
- Asking the children to show work that they have done in class the week before, you have to set this up in advance.

Ideas for sending or the conclusion

Based on the revised SIAMS inspection schedule for collective worship which references the “central attributes” of worship, Gathering, Engagement, Responding and in addition the Sending or Conclusion. What message will you **Send** the children out with. How do we

ensure the children leave the worship with a simple / single thought that could have an impact on the rest of their day or even their life?

Safeguarding

Make sure anything you ask the children to do as a response, does not put them at risk.

Some sending or concluding ideas:

Sending or the conclusion should be your starting point for every worship. Always ask yourself

- “What do I want the children / adults to take away?”
- “What impact do I want the content of the worship to have on the lives of the children and adults?”
- Remember that church schools are not church, remaining invitational and inclusive means that whilst we share the message of Christianity, school worship may not be a gathering of Christians. Sending them off to do God’s work or saying “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord” could be inappropriate and / or offensive.
- Some sending may be personal to the individual and some may be outward to others and involve a school wide response.

You could:

- Ask children to share a smile with someone they know or like.
- Ask children to share a smile with someone they don’t know or don’t like.
- Use a final prayer to sow the seed you want – make sure the language you use can be understood by children of all ages present.
- Empower the children “Remember, although you might be small or very young compared to us adults, you can change the world by what you do today.”
- Reference the way you gathered the children “Dear God, show us who you are and how you want us to be.” As you leave today, what have you learned about how God wants human beings to be? Does it affect you?
- Ask them to think how they treat others while they work, play in school and how they behave in school.
- Ask them to be courageous in defending others in class against unkindness from others.
- Ask them to spot others being kind and be courageous enough to tell them.
- Ask them to organise a chart in class to catch all the times when kindnesses are spotted.
- Ask them to look out for a charity that might need support.
- Ask them to think of ways in which the school could help others in the local or world community.
- **ASK THE CHILDREN WHAT THEY THINK THE SENDING MESSAGE SHOULD BE TODAY.**

APPENDIX 2

Collective Worship – Observation Form

St Blasius C of E Primary Academy

Leader: _____ Observer: _____

Worship Theme: _____ Date: _____

Grouping: _____ Length of worship: _____

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

Also see 'Questions to ask the children' & 'Points for consideration' (reverse)

CRITERIA	ASPECT	COMMENT
Central Attribute 1 Gathering	Is there a real sense of marking the start of a very special time in the school day? Immediate impact, relevant, welcoming, stimulates interest or dull, uninteresting, lacks focus.	
Central Attribute 2 Engaging	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.	
Central Attribute 3 Responding	Does the leader allow for a response from the children and adults – whether active or passive, noisy or quiet?	
Central Attribute 4 Sending	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.	
In addition		
Content	Clear Christian content and teaching Woolly, lack of structure, largely secular	

Comments from the children	Grade: _____ (See Descriptors)
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Pointers for consideration - *NB not a checklist.*

G a t h e r i n g	Music (entry/exit)	Appropriate / random, linked to theme, creates atmosphere, delivers a message.
	Welcome	Whether greetings exchanged and introduction made.
	Atmosphere	Extent to which Act of Worship is portrayed as special and important.
E n g a g i n g	Focus	Table, cloth, Bible, cross, candle, artefacts ICT / Visual / drama provides appropriate, linked relevant visual/factual information.
	Awe and Wonder	Sense given of marvel of world / creation.
	Conviction	Extent to which message is clear and compelling or words lack power and appear as paying lip service.
R e s p o n d i n g	Participation	Extent to which learners are involved in responding, partner talk, opportunities for some to participate directly.
	Singing	Whether there was an appropriate hymn / song, quality, enthusiasm of participation.
	Reflection	Learners are given time to pause and reflect.
	Prayers	Extent to which prayers are appropriate and learner friendly, whether learners are invited to respond.
S e n d i n g	Dismissal	Whether the person takes charge, smiles, engages with some learners, says 'thank you'.
O t h e r	Distinctively Anglican	Clear reference is made to the Bible and Anglican Christian teaching and belief e.g. the Trinity - God, Jesus and Holy Spirit.
	Inclusive	The worship reflects the multi faith / cultural nature of the world and feels inclusive to those of other and no faith.

a s p e c t s	Dynamism & Theatricality	Was it a performance rather than an Act of Worship?
	Open or Closed	Does the leader give room for the children to build their own meanings / connections / links or are they told what to think?
	Age Appropriateness	Are the language, concepts, ideas appropriate? Is it meaningful for the youngest yet appropriate for the oldest?

Questions to ask the children after worship:

1. Tell me 1 thing that you liked about today's worship?
2. Tell me 1 thing that would have made it better for you?
3. What was the worship about?
4. What did you learn from the worship?

APPENDIX 3

<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/25352>

