

# St. Michael's CE Primary School Sydenham



## Collective Worship Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on: *Autumn 2023*

Signed (Chair): *Beryl Fielder*

Scheduled Review Date: *Autumn 2027*

# Collective Worship Policy

## Introduction

The daily act of Collective Worship is a legal requirement in all schools. At St Michael's it is a Christian worship and it is based on a Christian and Anglican foundation. Daily collective worship is embedded in the school life and it provides the opportunity to come together as a school community to promote the Christian values, vision and mission statement of the school, which is *"For every child to live an abundant life."*

## Christian Values

Value Education is strongly embedded in the curriculum and the teaching of Christian values is an integral part of the teaching and practice at collective worship. The values are explored from a religious point of view during collective worship. The values advocated are embodied in the New Commandment that Jesus gave us *"... As I have loved you, so you must love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples."* John 13.34-35.

**The aims of collective worship are to provide an opportunity for everyone in the school to:**

- ◇ Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- ◇ Reflect on the attributes of God
- ◇ Reflect on the teaching of Christ
- ◇ Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- ◇ Share each other's joys and challenges
- ◇ Celebrate special times in the Christian Calendar
- ◇ Foster respect and unity
- ◇ Deepen spiritual awareness
- ◇ Understand about how to keep themselves safe as children of God through their use of technology, stranger awareness and personal privacy.

## The key elements of an act of worship

A well-planned collective worship timetable outlines the themes for the year. It matches significant events in the church calendar as well as identifying times to teach values explicitly. The colour of the tablecloth used in the collective worship represents the liturgical colour of the season in the Christian calendar. We also use the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) school materials to address issues relating to rights and human citizenship.

Daily collective worship includes teaching of the Christian values (Mondays), Teaching of the Bible (Tuesdays), Church Collective Worship (Wednesdays), Praise and Worship (Thursdays), celebrating good attitude to learning and children displaying good values (Friday). Parents are invited by text to the celebration worship on a Friday.

Collective Worship assemblies are led by different members of staff and children in Year 6 take a lead role in leading the daily worship. There is a consistent approach, which reflects the Anglican tradition. Children are leading significant part of the assemblies and share responsibility to plan significant services such as the Eucharist Service.

Music and visuals on the interactive whiteboard are used to encourage an atmosphere of calmness and respect for God's presence when entering the hall for collective worship. A cross, a Bible, and candles form a visual focus. When the children enter the hall, music plays to create an atmosphere conducive to the worship. The worship starts with greeting and a candle prayer whilst the candle on the worship table is lit. The candle prayer is followed by a short talk, a reading from the Bible, reflection time (silent prayer), final prayer and a blessing.

Singing forms an integral part of collective worship, in particular at the praise and worship assemblies. During this worship, children have the opportunity to be lead singers.

Significant dates in the church calendar are celebrated during collective worship, such as All Saints' Day, Advent, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Palm Sunday, Ascension, Pentecost, Harvest, Mothering Sunday and Year 6 leavers. Eucharist services are held at least twice a year (if not more) – at Christmas and Easter and parents are invited to these services.

The Trinity is regularly taught, especially in the Summer term, with the celebration of Pentecost and stories of the early church. The children are developing their understanding of the Holy Spirit as the presence of God with us.

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs.

### **Centrality of Prayer and Reflection**

Prayer plays a very important role at collective worship, using a range of prayers, including the Lord's Prayer and the St Michael's School Prayer (*May God's love shine in our lives as we care and share and learn together.*). Children have the opportunity to do silent prayers during quiet reflection time as well as write prayers in their special place in the classroom or the communal area. At the beginning of the lunch hour, grace is said by either an adult or child in each class. In each class, prayers are said at the start or end of the day. On Thursday, children's prayers are taken to the church and dedicated to God as part of the Church worship, the prayer which is read has been written by the prayer leaders.

### **The leadership and management of worship.**

The Headteacher is responsible for the overall leadership of collective worship, in liaison with the RE leader. The themes for collective worship are planned in advance, allowing a range of stakeholders including the faith committee and pupils to be involved. The themes are linked to the school values, significant dates in the church calendar and important Christian themes such as parables, miracles, truths of God, God's promises and the fruit of the Spirit. A range of leaders, including staff, clergy and children are involved in the delivery of collective worship, offering the children a rich experience of worship.

### **The role of Faith Committee and Faith Group**

Monitoring and evaluation of collective worship is managed efficiently by the Adult Faith Committee and the Children's Faith Group as well as the Governing Body of the school. The Children's Faith Group is a delegation of children from Year 2 to Year 6 as well as two Year 6 prayer leaders. The group is led by the R.E. Leader and they meet half termly. Their function is to work alongside the Adult Faith Committee in undertaking learning and ethos walks and looking at Collective Worship in the school. They also have a responsibility to feed back to the Adult Faith Committee on aspects of Collective Worship from the point of view of the children.

The Faith Committee frequently visit the school and have formal and informal meetings with various members of staff and children. When observing collective worship, the Faith Committee plays a significant part in the observation by highlighting ways to make the experiences better for all children.

Their role of the Faith Committee also includes:

- To provide a forum for a robust professional discussion amongst a group of stakeholders.
- To keep under review the collective worship policy and advise on the implementation of the policy.
- To foster and develop links between the church and the school.
- To keep the governing body informed of the above.

The role of the Children's Faith Group includes

- To provide a pupil voice regarding the Christian ethos of the school
- To support the Faith Committee in role of monitoring the distinctiveness of the school
- To play a part in the delivery of key church services

## **Legal requirements**

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly, but as this is a Church school it is expected that all pupils will attend. The request to withdraw should be made to [schoolmail@stmichaels.lewsiham.sch.uk](mailto:schoolmail@stmichaels.lewsiham.sch.uk)

## **Review**

The faith committee will review this policy every three years.