

## **Dishforth C.E. Primary School Collective Worship Policy**

### Introduction

The staff and governors at Dishforth C. of E. Primary School see the main purpose of the school as that of providing excellent education, both academic and social, in a Christian context for all its pupils.

Collective worship is central to the life of our church school, and its church school distinctiveness, and is held on a daily basis. Worship offers both children and adults an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. Collective Worship is held in accordance with the teachings of the Church of England and fulfills the legal requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

We recognise that within our school there are a variety of beliefs, attitudes and standpoints and that if it is to be meaningful, collective worship will have to be sensitive to this, providing opportunities for all to share in worship in a way that makes sense to them. 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, inclusive and reflective in nature.

### Statement of Withdrawal

The main aim of collective worship at Dishforth C. of E. Primary School is for it to be meaningful and relevant for all pupils, for those with a faith background and for those with none. It is, therefore, hoped that few parents will feel that they have to remove their child from collective worship as this breaks down the unity of the school.

Parents do, however, have the right to remove their child without any explanation. As a school we pride ourselves on good communication with parents and actively encourage dialogue concerning collective worship so that misunderstanding and confusion as to its nature can be avoided.

If families wish to withdraw their children from worship the headteacher is not responsible for providing alternative worship but does ensure that these children have adequate supervision.

## Aims

Collective worship is central to the life of Dishforth C of E Primary School.

Our primary aim for collective worship to educate all our children through the school's Christian ethos, enabling children to develop an awareness of what it means to be a community committed to serving and caring for each other, God and our environment. In so doing we hope to create an atmosphere in which our children are invited, rather than compelled, to explore issues for themselves, reflect upon and learn from their own experiences and the experiences of others, develop sensitivity and a sense of wonder, awe and mystery for the world of which they are part.

Our collective worship aims to provide children and adults with the opportunity to:

- worship God
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- celebrate Christian festivals, school values and achievements;
- reflect on the Anglican foundations of our school.
- reflect the cycle of the Anglican year and celebrate special occasions and seasons in the Church's year and the life of the community ;
- explore and evaluate their own beliefs;
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- learn about the core values followed by Christians
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community based in Christian values;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed;
- make collective worship a worthwhile and enjoyable experience for all;
- consider spiritual and moral issues and offer opportunities for social, moral and cultural development.
- experience a whole curriculum that should promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development of pupils and collective worship that must be wholly or mainly of a Christian character which means that it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Evaluation strategies currently used by staff and the named school governor for assessing the outcomes of collective worship are:

- Observation of the children's attentiveness and level of interest shown during Collective worship.
- Classroom feedback from pupils, written and verbal.
- Consultation on the Collective Worship Policy.
- Parents' comments, written and verbal.
- Observation of the children's general behaviour in and around school and to one another.

Monitoring and evaluation of collective worship informs planning for future worship.

## Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Our school worship is about sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives. It is about sharing our common concerns and responsibilities and developing positive attitudes and values. It is about affirming the equality of each individual in God's sight, whatever a child's gender, ethnicity, physical or mental ability. The staff and governors at Dishforth C of E Primary School are committed to ensuring that every child in the school will derive some benefit from collective worship whatever their academic ability.

Every attempt is made, therefore, to ensure that materials used are appropriate to a range of abilities, aptitudes and interests.

## Responsibilities

The school has a named Collective Worship co-ordinator who is responsible for

- overseeing the long term planning for collective worship, and its implementation
- monitoring and evaluating the impact of collective worship
- Reporting to the Governors on the practice of collective worship
- Updating the Collective Worship policy

The school has a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship, who monitors the policy and practice of collective worship.

The Governing Body guarantees the provision of, and distinctively Anglican character of collective worship.

All teaching staff have a responsibility for guaranteeing the provision of, and planning for class collective worship.

In key stage 2 pupil groups also take responsibility for planning class collective worship and for setting up the hall for whole school collective worship.

### Organisation of Collective Worship

In accordance with statutory requirements, at our school collective worship is placed at the centre of the school's daily life. Children experience a daily act of collective worship, which, as the Education Act states, 'is wholly or mainly of a broad Christian character, the main emphasis being on the broad traditions of Christian belief.' Worship is organised on a whole school, key stage and class basis and is led by staff, visitors and the pupils themselves.

In our school the process of worship takes place through a variety of media, song, story, drama, music, poetry etc. It takes place through class assemblies as well as adult-led worship time.

At present our Collective Worship covers themes linked closely to the Christian values and the Christian calendar but is flexible enough to cover the beliefs and practices, attitudes and customs which Christians share with those of other faiths. Our collective worship is flexible enough to enable planned themes to be changed in order to cover important world or national events whenever these may arise.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using candles and music, the collective worship boards and our worship tables. At the beginning of our collective worship three candles are lit (the Trinity), an altar cloth in the appropriate colour for the Church's is laid out, and a cross and bible are placed on the table.

Grace is said by the children before lunch and a prayer is also said in each class at the end of the school day. The children are taught the importance of prayer and are actively encouraged through the structure of collective worship to reflect meaningfully during collective worship.

### Visitors

One of the ways our school fulfils its Christian character is by inviting the Vicar from Baldersby St James Church, and other representatives from local religious and community groups, (eg the Padre from Dishforth Army base, representatives from Christian Aid) into school to lead worship each half term.

Visitors must follow the procedures as stated in the school's Visitors policy.

### Resources

Resources available to support collective worship include - These can be found in the Headteacher's office

### Planning and Record Keeping

Planning is kept for Collective Worship and can be found in the Collective Worship File.

### Conclusion

Collective worship at Dishforth C of E Primary School, as far as we are aware, complies with all recent requirements and wherever possible acts upon the advice from relevant educational bodies.

Our school collective worship offers the opportunity to interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides a time to celebrate achievement and worthwhile or positive behaviour. It builds up our common life.

Reviewed May 2017

Next review: July 2019