

St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Documentation Information and Control

Worship Policy

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Persons responsible for review: The Governing Body in consultation with the Head Teacher

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St. Paul's C of E Primary School

Worship Policy

I WILL be sanctified, says the LORD, in those who come near me,
and before all the people I will be glorified. *Leviticus 10.3*

DRAW near to God and he will draw near to you. *James 4.8*

Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless his holy name! *Psalms 103.1*

1. Rationale

- 1.1 St Paul's School was established in 1862 to serve Almighty God and the community by providing, within a biblical Christian ethos, a broad, balanced, and engaging education and learning experience.
- 1.2 St Paul's School is an inclusive school in which, through the provision of a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum and within a caring and supportive environment, each pupil is motivated to develop and flourish as he or she acquires skills for life and a love of learning.
- 1.3 In St Paul's C of E Primary School collective worship shall be, as required by law, an integral part of the school's life.
- 1.4 Children and staff shall meet together for an act of collective worship each day.
- 1.5 The pattern each week includes whole school, phase or key stage group, or a class times of worship.

- 1.6 It is recognised that some parents or carers may exercise their right to withdraw their child(ren) from such acts. In the event of that happening the school shall supervise the pupil(s), engage him or her or them in a purposeful activity and do all that can be done to ensure that he or she or they do not feel isolated.
- 1.7 From the practice of Moses (*see Exodus 33:7-23*) we learn that worship entails (1) seeking and (2) speaking. It is the presence and power of God that is sought. And it is to him that words and songs are spoken and sung. Such prayers and songs express our need of and dependence upon God.
- 1.8 The content of acts of collective worship therefore, in accord with the Trust Deed of the school, shall be wholly and exclusively Christian, making full and systematic use of the Bible, with other relevant material to support Biblical truth.
- 1.9 All acts of worship will be conducted in such a way that the integrity of each individual is respected. It is recognised that for some participation will be tentative and exploratory whilst for others it will be a natural outcome of their belief and a time when they enjoy communion with God.
- 1.10 William Temple, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, defined worship in the following words:
- Worship is the submission of all our nature to God.
It is the quickening of conscience by His holiness;
the nourishment of mind with His truth;
the purifying of imagination by His beauty;
the opening of the heart to His love;
the surrender of will to His purpose -
and all of this gathered up in adoration,
the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable
and therefore the chief remedy for that self-centredness
which is our original sin and the source of all actual sin.

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 Collective Worship, as an essential element of the wider curriculum, shall be a means of enhancing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- 2.2 All acts of Collective Worship shall be distinct from those times of corporate celebration during which the gifts and talents of pupils, individually and corporately, are acknowledged and affirmed and the successes of the school made known. This distinction shall be carefully maintained especially when celebratory assemblies follow or precede acts of collective worship.
- 2.3 The aim of all acts of worship within the school shall be the worship of and communion with Almighty God, whom we acknowledge to be our Creator, Provider and Saviour.
- 2.4 The essential elements of Christian worship include adoration, confession, thanksgiving and prayer, offered to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ.
- 2.5 To hear of God's love and deeds encourages spiritual growth as participants grow to understand the character of God and his will for mankind.
- 2.6 Acts of collective worship stimulate personal engagement and response, and provide opportunities to be still and reflect as well as to praise and pray.
- 2.7 Acts of collective worship also help participants develop an awareness of how the Bible may be used to discover who God is and what he has done.
- 2.8 Appropriate Bible passages shall be read and referred to when the wider community, along with the Church of Jesus Christ, celebrates the major festivals of the Christian year (*e.g. Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and Harvest*).
- 2.9 Acts of collective worship help participants discover how the Bible helps people, individually and corporately, to reflect upon and grow in under-

standing issues of concern to mankind (*e.g care for the created order, family-life, and peace amongst nations and peoples*).

2.10 Acts of collective worship promote an understanding of virtue and growth in the experience of forgiveness, humility, love, trust and reconciliation.

2.11 Acts of collective worship encourage a sense of unity and identity amongst pupils, and between pupils, staff and the wider community.

3. Organization

3.1 The Trust Deed states that the governor responsible for Worship shall be the officiating minister of the parish of St Stephen and St Paul, Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne.

3.2 The organisation of acts of collective worship shall be shared between members of staff, with the Head Teacher having overall responsibility.

3.3 Since God requires us to worship him in spirit and truth (*John 4.23-24*), the use of an artefact or symbol in an act of worship shall be carefully monitored to ensure that the will of God is neither ignored nor undermined.

3.4 Since the Church of England it is but a part of the visible Church of Christ on earth, when appropriate, members of other churches may be invited to participate in an act of worship.

3.5 Because a pupil(s) may come from a non-religious, another Christian, or a non-Christian religious tradition, the School shall ensure that the love and respect Jesus Christ enjoins us to show others is shown.

3.6 Traditional responses and prayers which express essential Christian belief may be used along with extempore prayers.

3.7 The pupils of St Paul's School will be taught who God is (*see Psalm 23*), God's will for us (*as summarised in the Ten Commandments*) and those things for which God would have us pray (*see the pattern prayer known as The Lord's Prayer*).

- 3.8 Special acts of worship, to which parents and carers will be invited, will take place in school at Christmas, Easter and Harvest.
- 3.9 Special acts of worship on Christmas Day, Education Day, Mothering Sunday, Easter, and at Harvest take place in the church of St Stephen and St Paul, as well as each Lord's Day. The link between the church and the school is important. The church prays regularly for the pupils, their parents / carers, the staff, the governors, and the community which the school serves
- 3.10 The Head Teacher shall ensure that the themes for worship each term are planned, and adequately resourced with music and teaching aids that are appropriate for the understanding and conceptual development of the pupils.
- 3.11 The Head Teacher shall:
- (1) ensure that the plans and records of worship are up to date;
 - (2) support and enable colleagues to plan and lead Key Stage and class worship
 - (3) lead the staff in the development, implementation and review of this policy.
- 3.12 Class worship, whilst allowing for more variety, shall provide opportunities for pupils to share their strengths and weakness, their differences, and their difficulties.
- 3.13 When appropriate, pupils will be encouraged to read and pray and participate during acts of worship.
- 3.14 All acts of collective worship in St Paul's School shall help children (1) be healthy, (2) enjoy and achieve, and (3) make a positive contribution.

4. Review

The governors shall review this policy every other year.