

St Paul's C of E (VC) Junior School

*"Promoting, Valuing and Celebrating achievement
in a Christian setting."*

Collective Worship Policy

Date:January, 2019.....

Review Date:

Author:

Approved by Governors:

"Prevent Duty: Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, we have a duty to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (Prevent duty). Protecting children from the risk of radicalisation remains part of our school's wider duty to safeguard children and young people. "Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism....Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs." (KCSIE, September 2016). We are alert to any possible signs which contribute to vulnerability such as family, friends or online influences as well as any changes in behaviour which could indicate a child may be in need of help or protection. We carry out risk assessments of vulnerable children and young people accordingly, work in partnership with other agencies and the family, and ensure staff are suitably trained and supported in keeping with our LSCB procedures."

This policy is written with reference to the Christian Foundation of the school

The daily act of collective worship is a legal requirement

“This policy should be taken and used as part of St. Paul’s Church of England School’s overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government aims and values as a Church of England school” It takes account of worship guidelines. ‘Church School Leadership’ – a Handbook for Headteachers of Church of England Schools.

Legal Requirements and Basic Provision

- all pupils (including those not of compulsory school age) should take part in daily collective worship;
- these requirements are a re-enactment of section 25 of the 1944 Act.

Rationale:

The nature of Collective Worship reflects the Christian foundation of the school, being mindful of the close links with the Church. Our daily worship is compatible with the educational purpose, moral value and Christian tradition of the school. It encompasses a vast array of styles and activities. The daily act of collective worship is the coming together of pupils in class, year, house, Upper / Lower Key Stage or whole school groups to have the opportunity for spiritual reflection and worship.

We have a daily act of collective worship to:

- Make a significant contribution to pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- Contribute to raising levels of attainment and increasing achievement
- Contribute to improved behaviour and pupil response across the school
- Help in enabling pupils to understand the nature of Christianity and what it means to take a religion seriously

Collective Worship relates to the school’s ethos through its use as a starting point for expressing the values which are important to ourselves, our families, our school community, the wider community outside, and the sharing of experience. It makes a contribution to the spiritual well being of all members of the school community. It is an attempt to give a broader definition of what religious worship is, and as an opportunity to lay foundations of response to personal values in later life. Collective Worship makes a major contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and worship at St. Paul’s is generally aimed at children in the Key Stage 2 age range.

Aims for School Worship

We aim to:

- foster a sense of fellowship
- create an atmosphere where those who wish to worship may do so
- encourage pupils in a reflective approach to life by giving time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space
- increase sensitivity towards, and awareness of, the search for meaning in the face of life's mysteries
- introduce pupils to various aspects (prayer, contemplation, stilling, hymn, drama, art etc) of religious worship
- develop self knowledge and spiritual awareness
- celebrate all that is wonderful about life – our school, local community and natural surroundings
- invite a response from the children which is appropriate to the occasion
- develop a sense of togetherness within the school community where there is a common ethos and shared values
- understand and respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs
- develop a sense of worth
- provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the 'darker' side of life
- ensure, as far as possible, that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the pupils
- provide an environment which is conducive to worship and adequately resourced e.g. literature, visual aids, music, artefacts and guest speakers

Any single assembly will only fulfil some of the following aims :-

- to create an occasion for public expression of the life and concerns of the school community which will reinforce the experience of being in a community and focus on its constituent elements and fundamental values, such as concern, interdependence, individuality, group responsibility
- by deliberately focusing on the importance of children's immediate experiences, to lay foundations for the adult expression of response to the special moment
- to provide an opportunity for the celebration of significant events, religious and secular, collective and individual
- to introduce pupils to appropriate experiences of traditional forms of worship, particularly those from Christian traditions
- to explore and celebrate aspects of religious worship in an open atmosphere
- to help pupils learn those skills which will help them to observe intelligently or, if they wish, enter fully into worship
- to celebrate the value of the contribution of the individual to the life of the school
- to stimulate response to that which is worthwhile
- to create a focus for the concerns and the delights of the community, through the evocation of a sense of wonder, joy, compassion, thankfulness, sorrow, regret, dedication, and so on
- to develop skills and attitudes of reflection
- to enhance aesthetic experience

- to create an occasion for the whole community of staff and pupils to share their common human experience and to encounter each other as people

Guidelines:

To ensure that:

- there is a daily act of collective worship for every pupil (no pupils are withdrawn except on parental request)
- the majority of acts of collective worship are distinctly of a Christian character and reflect the traditions of Christian belief
- it is educational
- it occurs at any time of the school day in a variety of groupings
- it is in addition to any secular assemblies
- prayer may be used for children to develop their own individual needs
- it will encourage reflection and response and a creative use of silence
- we are careful not to set up barriers to religious development by the use of difficult and archaic language.

Organisation

- Assembly will take place daily for 15 minutes, worship will form part of this (this is flexible to allow for visiting speakers, alternative use of hall area etc).
- The Rector or Curate will usually take assembly and worship weekly.
- Children and staff are encouraged to produce a class assembly during the course of the year and every opportunity is taken to encourage parents and younger siblings to attend. These events have been used successfully to reflect current work as a celebration of learning and discovery.
- Celebration of the main Christian festivals is observed, together with the broader spiritual development brought about by appropriate experiences. Assemblies can also be related to the religious education curriculum.
- Assemblies generally take place under a rota system: The rota system is decided at the beginning of the school year, together with dates for Class assemblies, Church Assemblies Leavers' Service, Christmas and other main events.
- It is the aim of the school to hold and to celebrate appropriate Christian festivals or significant events in the life of the school in the Parish Church. (Parents and younger siblings are also invited to attend these services).
- The time set aside for the act of collective worship should not be a time used for punishing children, although announcements may be made at this time;
- The assembly should be an advertisement for the shared philosophy of the life of the school
- Pupils are involved in evaluating the assemblies on a weekly basis
- There is a governor with responsibility for Collective Worship who monitors it annually and there is an open invitation for governors to attend any acts of worship.
- Resources are provided for Collective Worship but further resources may be borrowed from the Diocesan Resource Centre and a variety of websites

Role of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator:

- Collective Worship forms part of the School Improvement Plan and is evaluated annually by the co-ordinator.
- It is planned on weekly themes arranged termly and there is a four year rolling programme organised by the co-ordinator
- The co-ordinator organises and updates the resources
- The co-ordinator may organise training for staff in taking Collective Worship
- The co-ordinator arranges regular visits from representatives of other denominations who lead assemblies and they are made aware of the following :-
 - a) they should not preach controversial doctrines or political opinions
 - b) they should not proselytise or invite children to attend meetings outside school, without the permission of the parents
 - c) they should not deliberately raise the emotional temperature
 - d) they should not raise money unless it is the agreed policy of the school

Equal Opportunities

- All children have the right to Collective Worship in line with our policy for Equal Opportunities
- Due regard is given to the parental right to withdraw a child from collective worship and the rights of teachers regarding collective worship.

We wish to emphasise the importance of Collective Worship within St. Paul's C of E (VC) Junior School. It is distinctively Christian and makes a significant contribution to the life and wellbeing of the school.