



## Mark First and Pre-school CE Academy Collective Worship Policy January 2022 (Updated January 2024)

We create a love of learning where everyone feels respected and encouraged to reach their full potential.

The biblical link to our vision is *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"*. Philippians 4:13. Just as Paul gained comfort from trusting and believing God, with the support, strength and love of God we too can thrive and succeed.



The Christian values at the heart of our vision

'Collective Worship in a Church school should enable every child and adult to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for wisdom, knowledge and skills, hope and aspiration, dignity and respect, and developing community and understanding of living well together.

### Policy Statement

In Mark First and Pre-school CE Academy worship is central to the life of school. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

At Mark First and Pre-school CE Academy collective worship aims to be inspirational, invitational and inclusive and will lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

Through Collective Worship children will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Children will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian and other faiths calendar. Children will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

### Legal Requirements

The Local Governing Body have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation

Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

### **The right of withdrawal**

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements.

### **Guiding Principles**

Collective worship in Mark First and Pre-school CE Academy aims to:

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Support pupils and adults in their spiritual growth.
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support children in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief
- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers, introducing them to some well known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process supporting and taking on increasing roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

### **Development of the policy and links to other policies and documentation**

We ensure that the principles for collective worship are reflected and applied in our policies and practice including those that are concerned with:

- Pupils' personal development and wellbeing
- SMSC and PSHCE
- Staff recruitment, retention and professional development
- Behaviour management
- Home School Agreement

We also ensure that information about collective worship is included in the school prospectus and / or on the school website.

### **Leadership of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is led by: The Executive headteacher, Head of School, a member of staff, a whole class, small group of children, a member of the local church, individual visitors, teams- eg, Visitors from other churches and faiths, NSPCC, members of local community, Fire Service, RNLI, BARB, Dogs Trust etc

## **Planning**

- Collective Worship is planned in conjunction with the staff and the cycle of the Church year.
- Members of the school community, including children support the preparation of worship
- The Christian values of the school are identified in the School Promise and celebrated through collective worship
- Explicit links are made between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school
- A variety of materials are used for Collective Worship including: websites, artefacts, stories, drama scripts, artwork, music, film clips, focal points e.g. a picture or coloured candle, assembly planning material, Roots and Fruits
- Opportunities are provided for children and adults to explore faith in today's world by sharing experiences with visitors, reading stories and sharing pictures/artefacts associated with other faiths
- Spiritual growth through prayer, stillness and reflection is nurtured through use of the reflection box, coloured and reflective candles, imagery and use of artefacts.

## **Organisation**

- Collective Worship is organised to take place daily for 20m
- Collective Worship takes place in the School Hall, but sometimes in a classroom
- Teachers often take children to the Outdoor Classroom, for spiritual or reflection opportunities as well as learning Forest School skills
- The worship space is made special by use of the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year, Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a liturgical response, the children are seated
- The school often visits the Church for special celebrations throughout the school year including Christingle

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

All members of the school community listed below are responsible for upholding the principles and actions of this policy:

- The governing body
- The headteacher and the senior leadership team
- Clergy and church partners
- Teaching and support staff
- Children
- Parents and carers
- Visitors

## **Staff development and training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receives appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. The school works closely with the Diocese, the Wessex Learning Trust and other neighbouring schools for training opportunities

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

- Foundation governors have responsibility for monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship
- The children are asked about their experiences of Collective Worship
- Monitoring and evaluation of worship has led to its strengthening and development over time

## **Disseminating the policy**

We ensure that this policy is known to all staff and governors, parents and carers and, as appropriate, to all children. This policy is available on our school website.

Headteacher signed:

Date:

Chair of Governors signed:

Date: