The Policy and Procedures for Collective Worship

Our school helps us to walk with Jesus to be the best that we can be. Through God's love and guidance, we create an ethos of shared endeavour, friendship and co-operation to help us flourish academically, emotionally and spiritually.

"I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

Policy Author	Julie Green
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Equality Statement

At Baxenden St John's School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential - irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

School Promises

- Our school is a happy place where everyone can **enjoy** coming together and having fun.
- Our school gives children the time and opportunities to **discover** their own spirituality and the nature of God.
- Our school provides opportunities for children to **learn,** grow in their understanding, and develop their independent thinking.
- Our school supports and guides the children to **achieve** as much as they are able and to feel proud of themselves.
- Our school **celebrates** the wonder of our creation, the diversity reflected in our local community, and all that is good in the lives of the children and the life of the school.
- Our school nurtures the desire of all children to **create** things and thoughts, which are unique to them and to share them confidently with others.
- Our school seeks to **inspire** children, so they will carry with them a vision of all that is possible, throughout their lives.

Fundamentals

In our Church of England Voluntary Aided School, Collective Worship is in uniformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England as laid down in the Trust Deed, and by the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts.

Collective Worship contributes to our 'School Promises', Vision Statement and the aims and ethos of the school. Worship underpins the Christian Education we provide and also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the Christian values of our school.

Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils' education. We ensure that it is resourced properly, ensuring that it is of the highest standard.

Worship is shown as being a central feature of life, acknowledging God's glory and presence, responding to God as Creator and Redeemer. It is a two-way process expressing a relationship with God, with His response in love and action.

Worship is seen as a celebration of the life and concerns of the school, over-spilling into all areas of school life as well as providing guidance and pattern for future individual development. Values and beliefs are proclaimed in hymns, songs, prayers, literature, and collective action with an atmosphere created to assist reverence. It is designed to reinforce Christian values upheld by the Church of England, the World-wide church and the school. It contributes to the children's education and develops knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and other faiths. It also introduces children to the variety and richness of the Church of England traditions.

Pupils are introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian Faith and helped to explore them. These include:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through His life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God.
- The central values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity.
- The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance.
- The importance of prayer.
- The central symbols of Christianity.
- The cycle of the Church year.

Broad aims of Collective Worship

- To contribute to the mission statement and general aims of the school.
- To create an environment in which children and adults have the opportunity to worship.
- To develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith.
- To develop links with St. John's Church and introduce pupils to the worship heritage of the Church of England.
- To contribute to the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

Organisation and delivery

Worship is at 10.20am each day and broadly follows the following themes:

Monday – Whole school worship led by HT or DHT if HT not available.
Tuesday – Whole school OR Key Stage worship led by key stage leaders/class teachers & pupils.
Wednesday – Whole school worship led by the clergy.
Thursday –Whole school prayer and Praise led by Music Leader and/or Head teacher.
Friday – Whole school celebration led by HT/DHT

Every term, we aim to have a whole school worship in St. John's church, to which the local community and parents are invited to. This worship is led by the HT and 'God Squad', who plan and implement the worship with the help of a Christian volunteer.

Worship leaders are appointed on a half termly basis in each class. They support 'in class' and 'whole school/key stage' worship by lighting candles with welcome words or leading prayer and evaluating worship. They also promote British Values within each class.

Prayer leaders are also chosen each half term. They say the class prayers before lunch and at the end of the day. We encourage children to develop the skill of spontaneous prayer, led by the prayer leaders. Every child is given the opportunity to become a prayer leader during their time at Baxenden.

Christian symbols used during worship include a cross and 3 candles creating an atmosphere of reverence. The Worship leader begins with a greeting, these are changed and used at different times and perhaps new ones introduced. Music is always used to introduce worship. Other members of staff may lead worship and there are regular group or class presentations built into themes. Special guests are also invited as and when is appropriate.

Worship usually lasts for 20 minutes although this may vary. Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfE regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole school curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education and frequently involves teaching and learning, discussion, question and answer, drama and improvisation.

An extensive variety of hymns/songs is used along with prayers. The church year is celebrated, and different forms and ideas of worship are used. The calm and respectful atmosphere for worship is created by pupils and staff entering and leaving the hall quietly to music or silence.

Music and singing play important parts in the act of worship with all pupils and staff joining in.

Content and Approach

Worship is based on biblical teaching exploring aspects of faith and sharing of concern for others and is linked to the following Christian values with learning-related issues on how these impact on our lives today.

In line with our Christian values, we promote and celebrate the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, through weekly citizenship and achievement awards for children from each class. Each half term, the citizenship award will focus on a specific Christian value. Worship is based around a half termly Christian value, with ideas taken from 'Roots & Shoots'.

- Friendship
- Trust
- Thankfulness
- Perseverance
- Truthfulness
- Justice
- Generosity
- Compassion
- Courage
- Forgiveness
- Respect
- Service

We invite our families and wider congregation to worship with us in St. John's Church. Worship in church is planned across the school year to include as many of the following dates in the Church calendar as we can:

1. Harvest Thanksgiving
2. Advent
3. Christmas
4. Epiphany
5. Lent
6. Easter
7. Ascension
8. Holy Spirit/Pentecost
9. John the Baptist (saint after which the church is named)
10. Trinity

Worship is designed to help children reflect on their own lives, commitments and beliefs based on Christian values. There is a great emphasis on deepening children's awareness of the needs of others and the school has supported a range of charities, helping them to become 'courageous advocates against injustice'. We encourage and celebrate the children using their own initiative to raise money for charity, for example:-

- Bethany Children
- NSPCC
- Medequip4kids
- Macmillan
- Various national appeals (CinN, Sports Relief etc)

The school and church work and worship together. The school produces nativity plays and sketches which are performed in church. The school goes into church regularly each term as part of worship for festivals such as Advent, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Ascension Day. Parents and grandparents are warmly invited to attend these services. Visitors from the diocese are warmly welcomed into the school. Worship provides children with opportunities for leading and speaking, drama and performance skills, singing and group preparation and presentation.

On a termly basis, we aim to have a whole school worship in St. John's church, to which the local community and parents are invited to. This worship is led by the 'God Squad' and HT, who plan and implement the worship with the help of a Christian volunteer.

Consultation, Management, Recording and Review

The HT plans the half termly content of Collective Worship in consultation with the vicar. Major services are also prepared in consultation with the Vicar. Worship is recorded on a Worship planning sheet every half term. Teachers/ worship leaders/ pupils evaluate worship.

The Provision and Policy for Collective Worship will be reviewed regularly by the teaching staff, the Governing Body and the Vicar.

Parental Rights

Parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship, but parents are informed that removal of pupils from Worship or Religious Education cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school.

Conclusion

This policy is not a stand-alone policy and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Religious Education Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy