

# Tas Valley Church Schools Federation

## Collective Worship Policy



**Approval Date:**

**Date Adopted by GB:**

**Review Date:**

**Person Responsible:**

## **1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1 Within our Church Schools, worship is an affirmation and celebration of our Christian ethos, where adults and children have the opportunity to learn, worship and grow in their understanding of God and of themselves. It is, therefore, the 'heartbeat' of everything that we do and an expression of our school's Christian vision and values.
- 1.2 Christians believe that we and our children are made in the image of God. Therefore, worship is a vital factor in this image becoming more real and meaningful. It should enable participants to develop an understanding of Jesus Christ and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## **2. The Legal Requirements**

2.1 We seek to comply with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20) which requires that:

- All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship.
- The daily act of Collective Worship should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Deeds of the school and the ethos statement in the Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- All acts of Collective Worship in Church schools must be Christian in character. Pupils can be grouped in various ways for worship such as the whole school, year groups, tutor groups, classes, or other combinations.
- Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.
- The daily act of Collective Worship will normally take place on the school premises, but all schools are able to hold their Act of Collective Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.
- Responsibility for the arrangement of Collective Worship in a Church of England school rests with the Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility for ensuring that Collective Worship is inclusive, inspirational and invitational.

## **3. Aims and Purpose**

3.1 In our Federation, Collective Worship aims to give the whole school the opportunity to:

- Engage in an act of community;
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God;
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts;
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes;
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar;
- Experience and respond to Anglican traditions and practices;

- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events;
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness;
- Be still and reflect;
- Share each other's joys and challenges.

#### **4. Anglican Faith and Practice**

- 4.1 The Federation adopts acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England.
- 4.2 We use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of prayer styles – many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.
- 4.3 We use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship. We use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and, whenever possible, we provide opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals.
- 4.4 As worship is a special part of our day, we provide a worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.
- 4.5 We actively seek to develop church partnerships to enhance our provision for collective worship. This includes the local Anglican church and other Christian denominations. We view our schools as part of the global church and aim to provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate the diversity of Christianity.

#### **5. Rights and Responsibilities**

- 5.1 As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

#### **6. Planning**

- 6.1 Planning for Collective Worship is led by members of the Senior Leadership Team. It follows the cycle of the Anglican year. The planning reflects our vision and values. Senior Leaders liaise with visiting speakers about the schools plans for Collective Worship, and individuals and groups are responsible for using this information as a basis for developing their own short-term plans for individual acts of worship. This approach is inclusive of pupils, who have regular involvement in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of Collective Worship.
- 6.2 Planning should refer to the Church of England Guidance for Collective Worship in Schools (2021) and be inclusive, invitational and inspiration in nature. It also needs

to consider the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Framework September 2023:

Inspection Question 3 - [How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?](#)

Collective worship should be shaped by the theologically rooted Christian vision of the school. In doing so the teaching of the Bible and the life of Jesus should support the understanding and exploration of the Christian foundations of the school. It should show impact on how it shapes the daily lives of everyone who attends it in school. It also is inherently connected to the school's understanding of what spirituality looks like in its context and how this is developed in collective worship. Many schools will consider this more fully in their Spirituality Policy.

## **7. Organisation**

- 7.1 An act of Collective Worship is held daily. This may involve the whole school, class or key stage groups. Where collective worship forms part of an assembly, we ensure that there is a clear distinction between the two elements of gathering.
- 7.2 Senior Leaders and other members of staff, together with groups of children, take turns to conduct Collective Worship. Wherever possible, a team from the local Benefice lead Collective Worship through 'Open the Book' once a week.
- 7.3 We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way expecting children to behave appropriately. We create a suitable atmosphere by using music, pictures or other artefacts to act as a focal point.
- 7.4 We use Friday morning Celebration as an opportunity to share children's work and to celebrate their successes. These culminate in an act of Collective Worship and play an important role in promoting the ethos of the school.
- 7.5 Wherever possible, we seek to invite parents to share Collective Worship (e.g. class assemblies, Church Services, etc.). Governors are welcome to attend acts of worship at any time.
- 7.6 We encourage and develop our pupils as spiritual leaders in collective worship by:
  - Pupils leading and contributing to prayers and reflections.
  - Pupils engaging in extendable prayer and their voice is valued equally in this time.
  - Pupils offering spiritual reflections to discuss back in their classrooms at an age-appropriate level after worship has finished: these are recorded in floor books or reflection books;
  - Pupils participate in still and quiet time in worship to pause and reflect on the key messages and be with their own thoughts.

## **8. Implementation**

8.1 As a Federation, we offer a rich and varied diet of daily collective worship on a weekly basis, in addition we also plan services of worship around key festival dates in the Christian calendar, such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter.

8.2 Our weekly diet of daily collective worship has developed to meet the spiritual needs of all who attend and includes the following:

- Whole school collective worship led by a senior teacher to explore core Christian values linked to the expression of our theologically rooted Christian vision;
- Class based collective worship that provides age appropriate, personalised exploration of key Christian themes and messages;
- Visitor led worship, by people from the church, Open the Book, to explore themed Christian messages or key Christian events and festivals;
- Pupil led worship to allow our pupils to grow and express their ideas, beliefs and become better spiritual leaders;
- Celebration worship where we seek to celebrate achievements of pupils who flourish in the widest sense in our school community and outside of it. The awards are linked to our vision and core Christian values to exemplify how they shape and support our daily lives;
- Singing worship where we learn, sing and praise through invitational songs and music linked to our Christian vision and values.

## **9. Resources**

9.1 Within our schools, there is a small selection of assembly books and artefacts which we regularly update and improve. We use videos, CDs and music streaming services to provide suitable music as children enter and leave the hall as well as to accompany singing. We also use on-line resources to enhance our Collective Worship. Leaders of worship, including clergy, have access to regular training.

## **10. Contribution to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development**

10.1 We recognise that, although SMSC development should be fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide a multitude of opportunities in this area. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

## **11. Monitoring and Evaluation**

11.1 We monitor and evaluate the impact of our Collective Worship by maintaining records of the activity and seeking feedback from adults and children as to their views on its impact and expression of the school's Christian vision. We make the criteria for successful worship available to all those who plan and lead it. Senior Leaders and

others will routinely observe and monitor acts of Collective Worship in line with these criteria. In conjunction with Foundation Governors, pupils will also evaluate the impact of Collective Worship on themselves and the wider school community.

## **12. Inclusion**

- 12.1 We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate. As when teachers prepare lessons, worship leaders take account of different learning styles and aim to present materials using multi-sensory approaches.
- 12.2 In some cases, pupils with additional needs may find whole school collective worship overwhelming to their sensory experience and as a result will undertake the content of worship in another place in school with a trusted adult. This will be appropriate for their needs.
- 12.3 Some pupils may attend worship for part of the session as they find some aspects harder to engage – e.g. the loudness of singing or an external partners delivering worship whom they are not familiar with. In these cases, pupils may have a trusted adult with them to support the in accessing aspects of worship and then withdraw the pupil at an appropriate time.
- 12.4 Some pupils will have a trusted adult supporting them in worship, so they feel confident to access and understand the content. These adults usually sit close by or on the floor with the pupil.
- 12.5 A range of adaptations may be seen to enable pupils to access worship – such as ear defenders, fidget resources and for some pupil's physical resources such as wobble seats or cushions.
- 12.6 For some pupils with different religious beliefs or those with no belief, they are respectfully included and invited to participate in the aspects of worship they are comfortable with. This may have been agreed with parents / carers prior to starting school. For pupils who do this, they are asked to be respectful of others around them and to use the time they are not engaging e.g. prayer to sit and contemplate their own thoughts or beliefs.

## **13. Implementation of Policy**

- 13.1 The Executive Headteacher is responsible for this policy which will be reviewed by the Governing Board every three years. The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

## **14. Review**

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years.

**15. Links to Other Policies:**

- Religious Education Policy
- SMSC Policy
- PSHE Policy
- RSHE Policy
- Spirituality in School Policy
- School theologically rooted Christian vision statement