



## Collective Worship Policy

**St Benedict's C. of E. VA Junior School**

Benedict Street, Glastonbury, Somerset, BA6 9EX

Tel: 01458 831811, Fax: 01458 832261

<http://stbenedictscofevajuniorschoolglastonbury.co.uk>

Email: school164@stbens.school

Headteacher: Mr P. Ranger

**Dream, Believe, Achieve.**

Review Date: December 2025

## **Introduction**

Church of England Primary Schools have a responsibility and mission to serve the needs of the children and their families in the parish. Church Schools and their Trust Deeds regulating worship were determined originally in the nineteenth century when society was very different from today. Today families will come from a variety of faith backgrounds or none and it is important to introduce children in the school to worship in a way which is inclusive rather than exclusive. Thus it will be important to offer opportunities for prayer and reflection in ways which enable children to join in or to remain alongside the worship without feeling left out. Our Intent is that Worship at St. Benedict's should be Invitational, Inclusive and Inspiring.

## **The Anglican principles on which the worship of the school is based**

In church schools the act of worship must be in accordance with the school's trust deed. The trust deed is the original conveyance of land for the school and usually states that the land or property was given or bought in order to provide 'religious instruction and worship according to the principles and practices of the Church of England'. All church schools are, therefore, church foundations, which is why they have foundation governors.

## **Our Vision and Values**

At St. Benedict's, we believe that every child should have the opportunity to embrace 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10), regardless of their background, learning differences, creed or culture. Our patron, St. Benedict, was renowned for his sense of community and we seek to offer all at St. Benedict's a warm, hospitable welcome. Glastonbury is a diverse, eclectic community with many different faiths and we aim to be inclusive and respectful of all these, whilst retaining a distinctly Christian ethos. Our values: Community, Resilience and Kindness, are woven into our Collective Worship and underpin our reflection and discussions.

## **Legal requirements**

It is a statutory requirement that all schools hold a daily act of Collective Worship. In church schools this act of worship must be in accordance with the School's Trust Deed.

The governors of a church school, in consultation with the Headteacher and RE Co-ordinator must draw up a Collective Worship policy in accordance with the provisions of the school's trust deed. In drawing up this policy, regard must be given to the age, aptitude and background of the children in the school.

All parents may withdraw their children from worship providing they have notified the Headteacher of their desire to do so. This right should be included in the Collective Worship policy and school website. If a child is withdrawn, the school is required to provide a safe alternative.

The school will respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from collective worship provided they communicate this wish to the Headteacher in writing. If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any aspect of religious worship at the school, then this must also be conveyed to the Headteacher in writing (this means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in acts of prayer when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)

In a controlled school, staff retain the right to withdraw from worship. In an aided school staff are expected to attend.

### **Philosophy, Aims and Objectives**

Why Collective Worship? Collective Worship aims to:

- Strengthen and support the school community and celebrate each unique individual member made in the image of God;
- Give expression to, reaffirm and practise the values of the school community;
- Allow reflection and response to fundamental questions of life and those things that are of eternal concern and value to human beings;
- Celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals;
- Contribute to the spiritual, moral social and cultural development of pupils;
- Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others – a recognition of the vulnerability of self and others;
- Provide members of the school community with the opportunity to:
  - Praise and reach out to God,
  - Experience stillness and quiet,
  - Respond to Christian language and symbolism,
  - Experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation. These might include: praise, seeking forgiveness, asking on behalf of self and others and quiet reflection,
- Help pupils begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship
- Provide a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future.

### **Structure**

Our organised worship for the week reflects the different types of worship that we as teachers consider best suit the children at St Benedict's.

- **Monday**- Whole School Collective Worship- led by Headteacher and based on a BIG Question which will promote discussion and reflection throughout the week.
- **Tuesday**- Whole School Collective Worship (held in St Benedict's Church) - led by Rev. David MacGeoch/Rev. Kieron Rowley or the Open the Book team of Visiting Christians.
- **Wednesday** - Whole School Collective Worship- with an emphasis on praising God through songs/hymns.

- **Thursday** – Class/Year group Collective Worship - a personal, informal occasion with time given for the children to express themselves and reflect on their own beliefs; this will often link to the BIG Question.
- **Friday**- Whole School Collective Worship- Celebration Praise reflecting on the week that has passed and celebrating achievement.

### **Planning**

The content and methodology of collective worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in the planning.

How should worship be planned?

- Observing the cycle of the Church's year and selecting themes appropriate to this and the pupil's aptitude and ability.
- How worship reflects the Anglican heritage, i.e.
  - Using the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning;
  - Reflecting upon Christianity symbols and their use in worship (for example, bread, wine, chalice, cross and crucifix are symbols which lead to an understanding of the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection);
  - Observing the cycle of the Church's year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost. This, with holy days, can provide the framework for a changing pattern of school worship;
  - Learning traditional prayers and songs/hymns which express the essential beliefs of Christians throughout the ages;
  - Providing opportunity to discover the value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship;
  - Recognising that the Anglican Church has a strong commitment to ecumenism which may be expressed through the range of visitors who are invited to lead or attend collective worship;
  - Experiencing the bond of community which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinions. This could be expressed through the range of visitors who are invited to lead or attend collective worship.
  - Sharing a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in the welcome offered to all pupils (inclusivity) and the celebration of shared values and beliefs.

### **Monitoring**

The Collective Worship will be monitored by:

1. Discussion at staff and governor meetings (minutes to be kept with the collective worship records). This discussion will include:

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- Review of content and methodology;
- Suitability for age, aptitude and ability, variety of styles, groupings, leadership;
- Links to curriculum and classroom experience;
- Resources and budget;
- Inset

2. Review of job description and role of Collective Worship Co-ordinator.
3. Attendance at worship by foundation governors for monitoring purposes.
4. Are the requirements of law being met?

Date approved by Chair of Ethos Committee: 15/12/2023

Signed: H Roper (Helen Roper, Chair of Ethos Committee)