

BOWES HUTCHINSON'S C OF E VOLUNTARY AIDED SCHOOL



POLICY DOCUMENT

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

BELIEVE, ASPIRE, THRIVE, TOGETHER

Date Revised: October 2024

Date for Review: October 2027

Signed:_____

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Introduction

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. Worship offers the children and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian ethos. It reflects the mission statement and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. Pupils, staff and parents of all faiths (or none) are welcome to worship. Our school as an Anglican faith community celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other and that collective worship is an educational entitlement for all. In worship we create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live.

Our collective worship provides the pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- worship God;
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- celebrate: Christian festivals; British values; school values; achievements;
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- develop a reflective approach to life and reflect on Christian values
- develop as a community based in Christian values;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed

At times, worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- consider moral issues in a Christian context and to;
- enhance social understanding;
- explore beliefs drawn from the children's own cultural heritage;
- contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
- be inclusive in nature.

The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place daily in a variety of groupings in the school hall, classrooms and, on occasions, outside.

We follow the seasons of the Church year and within this significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday and Easter; Pentecost and other days such as Candlemas are celebrated occasionally.

Officiating ministers attend the school for the first three Thursdays of the month to lead collective worship. The fourth Thursday of the month, collective worship is held in St Giles' Church.

Whenever worship takes place it is planned to promote thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

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Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from both within school and from the local Church Community. Children are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year. Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship and are given guidance on our worship policy.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on relevant Christian, moral and spiritual issues, drawn from a variety of sources, thereby enriching their experience of life. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in Worship according to what is most appropriate to the season/theme, and the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils. Throughout their time at our school children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as dance and drama alongside traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to Jesus and God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship. Children are encouraged to evaluate collective worship in order to help us all develop our spirituality.

A legal note

By law, Collective Worship must:

- be provided for every child every day;
- reflect the school's Trust Deed.

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the head teacher.