



St John's CE Walworth Primary School

# Assembly and Collective Worship Policy



*September 2019*

### **Assemblies and Collective Worship**

The daily act of Collective Worship is a legal requirement in all Church schools and should always be Christian worship, reflecting the traditions of the Church of England, developing learners' understanding of Anglican traditions and practice.

St John's School is a Church of England school with strong links with the Parish Church of St John the Evangelist that stands next to it and shares the same site. There is continual interchange between the two. Many of the families that worship at St John's Church send their children to the school. The children in school use the church building for whole school assemblies every Friday, where classes take it in turns to share their ideas on the 'Thought for The Week', for special services/End of Year assemblies and fortnightly School Mass. Children are prepared in school for confirmation, which takes place in May every year. There is a pronounced Christian ethos in the school and it is the intent of all concerned that this will remain so.

This Christian ethos is without doubt strengthened by the assemblies that take place in school each day with an act of collective worship as its integral part. In these assemblies children are given the opportunity to consider and reflect upon religious and moral issues that affect them in their lives now and will most certainly affect their lives in the future. They are taught the background to their faith through Bible stories and contemporary stories that contain situations they can identify within a Christian context. They are taught about their relationship with God through prayers for themselves and for others. Learn about other religions and what other people believe and so are able to compare their faith to that of others. The worship times puts all this into a Christian context; there is always time to remember others and their needs in prayer and at every act of worship the children take turns to say a prayer they have written, after which all say the Lord's Prayer. Tuesday is a celebration assembly, where four children from each class (two for outstanding behaviour and two for outstanding work) are awarded certificates for their outstanding achievements. There is an assembly, with an act of worship, every day and a timetable listing them is displayed in the hall, office, staffroom and PPA room.

### **Aims**

- To gather the children together to learn and share information about their faith and the religious beliefs of others. To praise and worship God and so develop their relationship with Him through prayer, their communication time with God, for others and for themselves.
- To foster a sense of awe, wonder, delight, joy and mystery and to encourage their natural curiosity to ask questions and find answers that will help them to understand something of God and of the world in which they live and its peoples.

- To help children formulate their own response to moral issues by assisting them in exploring the meaning of life and also to help them cope with and learn from life's painful experiences such as fear and suffering.
- To enable them to recognise their own worth and importance, to promote their social development in the give and take of life and to show them that life is a series of growth stages – physical, emotional and spiritual.
- To develop skills which may help them to respond appropriately to religious ideas.
- To create outstanding Collective Worship at all times, through a clear structure which includes creative and through planning and a formal system of evaluation.
- To consider some basic religious concepts by looking at how they have been expressed in sacred books, language and writing, symbols and art, daily living and different types of ritual.
- To help them towards an understanding of the different religious beliefs, life-styles and activities of other people and to compare these with their own beliefs, life-styles and activities.
- To introduce them to the lives of great men and women who have influenced or changed this world in some way either through their religious belief or moral and social concern.
- To stimulate an interest in the beliefs and practices of other religious groups.
- To provide opportunities through which they can share in and experience the festivals of other religious groups and cultures and so begin to question the meaning of such social occasions.

**During Collective Worship, opportunities will be given to:**

- Light a candle/s
- Sing, pray and give praise and thanksgiving to God;
- Reflecting on the attributes of God and on the teachings of Jesus Christ;
- Listen to and learn from the Holy Bible
- Include drama/video (sometimes)
- Promote and affirm Christian values;
- Celebrate special times in the Christian Calendar
- Share each others' joy and challenges; foster respect and unity;
- Deepen spiritual awareness and reflection;
- Experience services of the Eucharist, depending on the tradition of the parish church.

**Visits and Visitors**

Visits are made to other places of worship (including other faiths) in order to give the children first-hand experiences and for them to gain a greater understanding of how various religions and denominations of the Christian faith worship.

Visitors of other faiths are invited to come in and educate our children of their faith. Children are able to compare and contrast these with their worship.

At St John's, teaching and support staff are encouraged to share the vision and distinctive Christian ethos of the school and participate in collective worship. Willingness or otherwise to participate in school worship in assembly or in church will be an issue addressed in interview before they are appointed.

### **Procedures:**

\*children are provided with an opportunity to evaluate assemblies which will facilitate our work to continue to improve assemblies so that they are more relevant and accessible.

\*Class assemblies should follow a theme relating to the RE taught in class that week or a theme relating to the values of the school, or a theme relating to the British values or the thought for the week or topics learnt in class to celebrate their learning and progress.

\*Pupils say the morning class prayer at 9 am before registration.

\*Classes take turns in leading whole school Collective Worship in Church every Friday, except on occasions when we have a guest, leading our Worship.

\*Wednesday's hymn and singing practice focuses on the children's understanding of new hymns as well as learning them.

\*Children will be led calmly and quietly by a teacher or classroom helper into the hall or church where assemble is taking place. If possible, there should be music playing.

\*Children are encouraged to sit in silence once they are in the hall or church unless it is absolutely necessary to speak. Teachers and helpers should position themselves so that they can oversee all the children between them and deal with "situations" as they arise. It should be the policy clearly understood by children and adults alike that unless the situation is serious (i.e. a nose-bleed or a child distraught for some reason) matters of concern to the children will be dealt with after the assembly.

### **Equal Opportunities - Special Needs and Pupil Premium**

At St John's, all pupils have access to a wide range of activities which are age related, to support their knowledge and understanding of RE and Collective Worship.

**Review Date**  
**July 2020**