'opening doors to the journey of life'

Love – Trust – Respect – Inspire

'COLLECTIVE WORSHIP' POLICY

for St Mark's CE Primary School

Document Name	Approval Date	Next Review Date
Collective Worship Policy V1.0 Review period: Every three years Responsible Person: Robert Stoner	March 2019 Robert Stoner	March 2022

The Governors have paid due regard to the impact of all aspects of equality in the approving of this policy

Review of policies

Policy headings:

1. Introduction: Mission Statement
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Our Mission Statement

Our school is founded on Christian values, principles and beliefs. We are a happy school in which pupils work hard and learn well within a nurturing and safe environment.

At St Mark's CE Primary School we recognise that all members of our school community – children, parents, carers, staff, volunteers and governors – are unique and valued for the contributions they make.

St Mark's CE Primary School is special because we aim to:

- Create an environment where children develop the confidence to think for themselves and enjoy their time at school.
- Encourage high standards, seeing all children as individuals and helping them to achieve their full potential.
- Develop an understanding of our four core values for the whole school community: Love, Trust, Respect and Inspire.
- Make learning an enjoyable experience.
- Develop in children a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them.
- Help children to become caring and responsible citizens who have positive attitudes towards the well-being of themselves and others.
- Develop in children respect for other people and their surroundings.
- Celebrate self-esteem and build up confidence by reacting positively to children and their work.
- Promote constructive relationships between governors, staff, parents, carers, volunteers and the church and wider community.
- Recognise and celebrate our Christian values, which permeate through all aspects of school life.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Matthew 22 v 37-39

The school is a member of the Saturn Education Trust; The Saturn Education Trust has been created by three primary schools in the Purbeck area of Dorset. The core aim of the Trust is to deliver better opportunities for the children in our local communities.

All schools within the Trust are committed to provide our children with excellent education; we are committed to nurture and inspire our children to achieve their potential; morally, spiritually, socially, culturally and academically; regardless of their educational needs and their social, economic or cultural background.

Delivering excellent education, whilst remaining small community focused primary schools, is however not an easy task. Small schools are under increasing funding pressure and support from the local authority is reducing. We do not have a multitude of staff to devote solely to lead the many and varied aspects of modern education. We therefore need to work in partnership with others, within and outside our schools, to have the capacity to excel.

The Trust's aim is to build education communities that 'Learn Together'. To achieve this, the Trust adopts three key strategies to enable the local schools to succeed:

Share:	We will share knowledge, skills and resources across the trust to ensure that we deliver and evolve the best practices, both educationally and managerially, in all schools.
Support:	We will design our processes, training and systems to deliver the support that all staff need if they are to continually develop and excel.
Challenge:	We will create a reflective culture that allows professionals to review the outcomes we enable our children to achieve, and to assess our effectiveness at delivering these outcomes.

The Trust's philosophy revolves around securing a thriving, vibrant future for local schools which might otherwise find it hard to excel in a world of increasingly scarce skills and reduced funding.

St Mark's CE Primary School Culture

- We enjoy celebrating our Christian foundation
- We encourage high standards and achievement for all
- We encourage children to be global citizens
- We work on our strengths and seek to continually improve
- We are proud of ourselves and our school
- We support each other
- We make learning an enjoyable experience
- We promote a positive, fair and happy atmosphere
- We build confidence and self esteem
- We feel safe to make mistakes and know that we can learn from these
- The core to every decision is: what's best for the children?

The culture of our school underpinned by our core values ensure that all children have their rights respected, including their fundamental right to come to school to work and play without being disturbed or disrupted.

Collective Worship

As a Church school, Collective Worship is an important time during which we can share in celebrating God's love and learning more about our Christian faith. We support children to understand the messages shared in the Bible;

'I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

Through stories, songs, drama, games and prayer, we aim to help the children to develop their spirituality, as well as becoming more understanding of the beliefs of others.
The Christian values we promote through collective worship are the foundation of our school ethos and are important for all of our pupils to learn, whether they come from a Christian background or not.
Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, but we encourage the involvement of all pupils so that their sense of belonging as a member of our school family can be strengthened.
Clergy and other church members regularly lead worship. We also visit St Marks Church for special celebrations, such as Christmas, Easter and Ash Wednesday.

There are plenty of opportunities for parents, family and friends to join the school in Collective Worship. We have a praise group who plan, rehearse and develop materials for shared acts of worship.

We also welcome visitors for class led worship and some special festivals and celebrations.

Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to respect individuality and celebrate diversity;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship.
- to provide an opportunity for personal and shared reflection.
- to celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, the local and international community and occasions of significance including festivals.

Collective worship

- We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God.
- Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we may also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Organisation of collective worship

- We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school.
- We conduct our Collective Worship times in a dignified and respectful way.
- We tell children that collective worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate manner. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns/songs.
- We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.
    - **Timetable:**
- **Monday**: Whole School - Led by The Very Reverend J Mann
- **Tuesday**: Singing Assembly - Led by Mr Robert Stoner
- **Wednesday**: Whole School (Church visitors - Open the Book, Wave Kids, local clergy)
- **Thursday**: Class Led Worship - Either class based or this is the Assembly during the week where each term each class shares their new learning with all in the school and those at home parents, grandparents, friends and carers are most welcome! (*Year 3 is making fortnightly visits to St Mark's for their class led worship*).
- **Friday**: Celebration and Bible Stories

- **Festivals**: We are very lucky to have close links with our Church, St Mark's in Bell Street. We visit regularly and where we can get all the parents in! We celebrate festivals and key events of the Christian Calendar.

- We take the themes of our Collective Worship times from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our Collective Worship times reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.
- Plan our Collective Worship as part of a series of themes which form part of an adaptable annual cycle. We use the IMAGINOR: Roots & Fruits Creative Collective Worship, alongside elements of Jigsaw, Jack in the Box and Oliver the Owl.
- Our Collective Worship times reflect the achievements and learning of the children.
- We encourage the children to participate by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes.
- Collective Worship times offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.
- St Mark's CE Primary School is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of all the children during Collective Worship times.
- We welcome the input of visitors to our Collective Worships e.g. 'The Children's Society', visiting clergy assemblies.
- Our staff involve pupils when acting out Bible stories during our `Open the Book` times; children participate in both Monday and Tuesday assemblies to support worship.
- We invite parents to assembly and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.
- Celebrations of special festivals or occasions may take place in the village church and we invite parents and members of our local community to attend.
- We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

Communal and Personal Reflection:

- Collective Worship at our school is a time when staff and children meet together and have the opportunity to reflect on the non-material dimensions of our lives together in the school community and as individuals.
- It is not regarded simply as a time to exchange information or deal with organisational issues.
- It is therefore important that wherever possible 1 member of staff per class attends Collective Worship.

Praise and prayer:

- We give children the opportunity to develop spiritually in the gathering together for Daily Worship to praise the awe and wonder of God and the beauty of the world God has created; to pray together, to learn about the teachings of both the old and New Testament with particular emphasis on the teachings of Jesus.

Life Application:

- Children are given opportunity to consider what is important in our lives, about beliefs and values, and application of their beliefs to practical situations in their lives.
- They are taught to understand and respect the beliefs of other cultures and religions.

Celebration & Achievement:

- Worship takes place through a variety of media such as Bible teaching, stories, songs, poetry, drama etc.
- Class led worship is often used as an opportunity to share experiences and achievements with the whole-school community and with parents and friends.

Family Community:

- Through our Daily Worship we aim to bring an awareness of what it means to be part of a community, which cares for each other, for God and for the environment. In so doing we hope that pupils will develop the ability to explore issues for themselves, be able to reflect upon and learn from experiences and develop a sense of awe and wonder about the wider world whilst understanding their role and responsibilities to their local community.

Equal Opportunities:

- Staff and Governors are committed to ensuring that opportunities for worship are relevant to all pupils and pay due regard to their ages, abilities and interests.
- We aim to recognise the equality of each child in God's sight, whatever the child's gender, race, physical or mental ability.
- Pupils currently take part in collective worship and often lead worship however each parent has the right to withdraw their child for religious reasons.

Special Education Needs:

- Staff and Governors ensure that materials and subject matter used in collective worship are appropriate for the range of abilities of all pupils in school so that understanding and engagement is accessible to all.

Right of withdrawal:

- We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Recording and Evaluation:

- Acts of Worship are evaluated in terms of children`s responses which are given by pupils weekly.
- Evaluation sheets are used to record children's reflections on the worship and their potential actions as a result of their understanding of the topic.
- The Praise Group work together to improve and enhance our worship – there is a Praise Group assembly per term.
- The Collective Worship leader collates all these responses and feeds back to the teams involved.

Monitoring and Review:

- It is the role of a named school governor (Reverend John Mann) with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.

- The governor concerned liaises with the Head teacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

Collective Worship will be monitored by;
Discussion at staff and governor meetings.
This discussion will include:

- ✓ Review of content and methodology:
- ✓ Suitability for age, aptitude and ability, variety of styles, leadership:
- ✓ Links to the curriculum.
- ✓ INSET.
- ✓ Review of the role of the Collective Worship Leader.
- ✓ Attendance at Worship by Governors for monitoring purposes.