

## **Hornby St Margaret's CE Primary School**

“It is the aim of the school to develop the academic potential of each child: and to cater for the social, moral, physical and spiritual requirements of the individual in a happy and secure Christian environment.”

### **Collective worship policy**

Worship involves the acknowledgement of a divine being with whom we can have a relationship and to whom we are able to express our innermost selves. It is the medium by which we can respond with praise and adoration to his awesomeness, and the process by which we are able to develop a language to enable such response.

At Hornby School, we see our worship together as central to our life and work within the school family. It provides a vehicle whereby together we can share and explore our feelings and our concerns and where we can learn something of the awesomeness, love and grace of God. Our time together provides an opportunity or a space where children and adults may be helped to experience the presence of God, but where each person has the freedom to choose his or her own response. Worship is and must remain a voluntary act of will for each individual, young and old.

In this Church of England Voluntary Aided School, collective worship is in conformity with the rites, practices and doctrines of the Church of England as laid down in the Trust Deed.

Collective worship contributes to our mission statement and to the aims and ethos of the school and the Christian education provided. Our worship is a celebration and exploration of the values of our school.

The governors see worship as integral to our school life and the education of the whole child and as such have undertaken to provide adequate resources and to ensure that it will be of the highest standard.

The worship and prayer life of our school is not limited to daily acts of worship, but opportunities will be taken at other times to use prayer and meditation, e.g. graces said before mealtimes, prayer at the end of the day or specific to a topic, a need or curriculum activity.

#### **AIMS**

- To develop knowledge and understanding of the Christian Faith.
- To create an environment where children and adults will have the opportunity for worship and for reflection.
- To provide an experience of worship which is enjoyable and which allows children and adults to experience the presence of God.

- To contribute to the child's spiritual and moral development.
- To provide children with a language for worship and within the liturgy and doctrine of the Church of England.
- To celebrate and build up the life of the school in the presence of God.
- To encourage a closer relationship with God as the trinity.
- To develop links with the local churches and with the wider local Christian communities.

## OBJECTIVES

Within the Church of England tradition there is scope for a variety of approaches. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the worldwide Christian Church.

Pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian Faith and helped to explore them including:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- The nature of human beings as the children of God, part of his creation and, though sinful, destined for eternal life.
- Jesus as the Son of God who, through his life, death and resurrection, broke the power of evil and restored humanity's relationship with God.
- The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance.
- The importance of prayer.
- The central symbols of Christianity.
- The cycle of the Church year.

## CHURCH SCHOOL LINKS

Our school is situated close to the parish church of Saint Margaret, providing a tangible link with our Christian and Anglican heritage. We welcome opportunities to strengthen links with the church. When appropriate and invited, we contribute to services held at

church and similarly we value the opportunity to hold special school services within the church, e.g. at Christmas, Christingle, Easter and end of the year.

At other times, when appropriate, we invite clergy to celebrate a festival, e.g. Easter, Pentecost, Harvest, etc. We introduce the children to Anglican liturgy in a simple form which may be used at such times, and we welcome the contributions of the vicar to our regular Wednesday worship.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND ASSEMBLY

The school meets together for worship on three days each week, each class having its own worship time on the remaining days.

Worship times are seen as distinctive and care is taken to maintain the distinctiveness by keeping school business to the beginning or end of worship. We see it as important that children recognise there is a difference in purpose when we meet together.

The provision of collective worship conforms to the diocesan policy upon which this policy is based and may at times take place in church as above.

## SCHOOL WORSHIP AND RE

When planning our worship, we try to link themes with areas of study wherever possible. We seek to put into practice and develop some of the ideas explored through RE lessons. Such themes which may happily be developed further through worship are:

- Prayer
- Creation
- Christian festivals
- Some Christian personalities.
- Values for Life

These represent only a small selection. There are many more.

## ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY

This may vary from year to year but is broadly within the following pattern.

Worship times will be led by the headteacher, teachers and incumbent. While all teaching staff are expected to be present for collective worship, other members of staff are free to attend if willing and available.

Our Friday worship time allows children to reflect on the week past, its mistakes and achievements. It is an opportunity to celebrate the curriculum by bringing their achievements before God as an offering.

“All things come of thee O Lord and of thine own do we give thee.”

Any formal school business and notices are kept outside the actual worship time and are therefore dealt with at the beginning or end of the session. Parents’ rights of withdrawal do not apply to time set aside for school business.

From time to time children will lead acts of worship, undertake Bible readings, lead prayers, perform drama or music, or be encouraged to share their own experiences. Open prayer is used sensitively and children are encouraged to contribute voluntarily. They are encouraged to engage sympathetically with the prayers made by others.

Worship times are planned to last approximately twenty minutes, although timings may vary.

Parents are welcome to attend school worship and are specifically invited to special times, including Harvest, end of year, or those led by visiting speakers, e.g. NISCU.

We welcome visiting speakers and those from our local community who feel able to contribute in some way to our worship, e.g. representatives of organisations including Tear Fund, Children’s Society, local charities’ representatives, missionaries and Christian Union.

Radio broadcasts are incorporated where appropriate. We see such programmes, e.g. “Together” and “Something to Think about” as providing an opportunity to learn of the practices and beliefs of the wider church/school community.

Care is taken to provide an environment and atmosphere conducive to worship by:

- Arrangement of seating
- Varying the activities
- The use of music
- The use of silence
- The use of visual stimuli
- Careful (prayerful) preparation
- Focus on the Bible, prayer book, cross, etc. (A small table and appropriate liturgical cover are used to link with the wider Anglican community.)

## ORGANISATION OF CONTENT

The content of collective worship will comprise a fourfold approach:

- The observance of the Church year
- Planned themes (varying lengths)
- Celebration of curriculum work and the life of the school
- Stand-alone acts of worship, e.g. a liturgical service for Lent, responses to world events, appeals.

## METHOD

Aspects of worship may be adult or pupil led. Worship will usually include a time for prayer, meditation and reflection, a Bible reading and music. It may also include some or all of the following:

- A shared experience
- Rehearsed or improvised drama
- Story
- Visual aids

## RESOURCES

There is a comprehensive range of resources to assist the delivery of RE and collective worship. Additional resources may be borrowed from the Blackburn Diocesan Education Office. Consideration will be given for the provision of additional resources via annual budget planning and the School Improvement Plan.

The Worship and RE subject leader also attends Diocesan termly Cluster meetings for advice on resourcing and worship topics.

## MANAGEMENT AND REVIEW

The provision for school worship and planning will be in conjunction with the teachers. This policy is subject to review and consideration by the Governors' Curriculum Committee and will be reviewed regularly following the rolling programme.

The provision of school worship will be evaluated via the worship file.

## PARENTAL RIGHTS OF WITHDRAWAL

Parents of pupils in VA schools and voluntary academies are permitted, by law, to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or collective worship given at the school and any such request shall stand until such time that the parent's request is withdrawn. Parents need to recognise that there can be no withdrawal from the Christian ethos of the school.