Policy for Collective Worship

Based on Guidelines from the Diocese of Blackburn

(updated September 2026)

St. Paul's Church of England Primary School

We praise you, God, we praise you, for your Name is near; people tell of your wonderful deeds.

Psalm 75:1

Curriculum Intent Statement

The intent of our curriculum is that all children achieve the very best that they can in both academic and non-academic subjects and that we develop children's talents and interests too. We aim for all our children to achieve their full potential, including disadvantaged, EAL and SEND pupils and all pupils will have access to the full range of subjects in our school. All subjects follow the National Curriculum and there is clear progression, year on year, towards children achieving the National Curriculum standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Developing proficiency in, and a love of, reading and language is central to our curriculum. Our curriculum is tailored to our children's needs and so there is more weighting on reading, writing, communication and language, online safety, and personal qualities such as being able to persevere and be resilient when challenges arise. We explore justice and tolerance with our children, teach them to live co-operatively and respectfully alongside others. St Paul's places enjoyment of learning at the centre of our curriculum. Our curriculum also aims high because, despite some deprivation in Nelson, we want our children to be highly ambitious and achieve their very best. The intent of our curriculum closely matches our church school values of: love, joy, perseverance, respect, forgiveness, justice and hope.

Mission/Vision Statement

Our vision at St. Paul's CE Primary is to provide the best education and care that we can for our children, their families, for our staff and for our diverse community. We aim to provide a loving school environment grounded in our strong Christian faith, following Christ's example alongside British values. We will achieve this through our own school values of: love, joy, perseverance, forgiveness, respect, justice and hope – which underpin everything we do. We will nurture each unique child to achieve their potential to : love God, love themselves, love others, love learning.

"Nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God." Romans 8 verse 39

Collective Worship is an essential part of the children's and school community's spiritual, moral , social and cultural development.

1. Fundamentals.

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

The school's ethos statement is:

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at all levels.

The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Collective Worship contributes to the working out of our Mission Statement and the aims and ethos of the school, and therefore to the Christian Education we provide. It also contributes to the celebration and exploration of the values of our school.

Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupils' education. As such we are concerned to resource it properly and ensure that it is of the highest standard. The worship and prayer life of the school is not limited to the legally required daily acts of worship. Opportunities will be taken to use prayer and meditation exercises in the curriculum generally and at the end of (morning and afternoon) sessions as well as graces before lunch.
Our central indoor and our outdoor prayer spaces are available for children to access at break times.
Children have an opprtunity to leave prayer request in a box on the Worship Table, contribute to the central indoor prayer tree and leave a ribbon at the Love Locks and Ribbons board on the Key Stage 2 Yard. Children have the opportunity to lead prayer both in whole school and class worship. An Ethos Encouragers group comprising of children from Y2 up meet each regularly to evaluate worship, discuss new ideas and plan for the future. They are also involved in leading weekly worship.
Each classroom has a worship focus point. Children are encouraged to use these areas independently for prayer often writing prayers to be left in the areas.

Staff are also involved in prayer during the first staff meeting of each half term and at our Wednesday afterschool reflection and prayer time. Staff are encouraged to share items for prayer both professional and personal. The governors and staff have a full Eucharist together on the first INSET day of the new academic year.
Parents and the wider community are encouraged to request prayers by speaking to staff or by our contact us form on the website.

The Church of England heritage forms of worship within our denomination differ and these differences enable us to provide a varied range of approaches to worship whilst remaining true to our Trust Deeds. As well as drawing on our denominational heritage, we also occasionally expect to draw on the rich tapestry of practice in the world-wide Christian Church.

Whatever the approaches, we expect that pupils will be introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and helped to explore them. These would include:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
- The nature of human beings as 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 values of forgiveness, selfless love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity as well as our particular school values (love, joy, perseverance (which includes resilience), forgiveness, justice (which includes tolerance), hope (which includes ambition and equal opportunities for all, making the most of the talents God gave us. and respect (which includes for all in our school and wider communities whatever their world view). Our school values have been carefully selected to reflect the school, church and community at St Paul's.
- 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.

We have strong links with St. Paul's Church and Rev Guy Jamieson leads whole school worship regularly as well as meeting informally with staff and parents. One Year group per week usually worships in church on a Wednesday.

Currently we are not able to hold whole school worship in church due to the capacity of the church. Groups of children also visit church as part of their RE and this includes a worship element. Children are also encouraged to attend special services at St. Paul's (outside of school) often taking part.

We also have links with Rev James Booth Baptist minister, Rev Nick Murray and Rev Tracey Hallows. The Bethany Children from Tanzania and their style of worship also makes a contribution to our worship during the year.

The school meets together for Collective Worship but there will be times when we assemble together for other purposes, e.g. important notices and announcements. Such 'assembly' times are legally distinct from Collective Worship. As an oversubscribed school where all parents have actively selected to send their child to a Christian faith school, we do encourage all children to be included in collective worship and we make our Christian ethos very visible to parents visiting/ contacting us with a view to enrolling their child at St Paul's. We have a diverse community, with many Muslim children, whose families are all happy for them to participate in collective worship. We are sensitive to differing beliefs and tell children and parents that, if they object to any words in Christian songs or parts of prayers, to just miss out those words or miss saying "Amen" to the prayer. (We have, as yet, never had any parent take issue with our policy but would always be sensitive to queries and comments.) Our collective worship is wholly Christian but we often maximise on opportunities to acknowledge the commonalties between Christianity and other faiths as well as respecting the differences.

The legal requirements for Collective Worship in our school

Collective Worship in Church Schools is governed by both the 1944 and 1988 Education Acts as well as by the Trust Deed of the School. The Collective Worship provided by the school must be in accordance with the Trust Deed, or in accordance with the tradition before we became an Aided school.

Daily Collective Worship has to be provided for every pupil. This worship may take place in various groupings such as the whole school, separate Key Stage groups, year groups or in classes, but not faith groups. Worship can take place at any point in the school day.

Worship should normally take place on the school premises, but may sometimes take place in Church.

The Worship and Religious Education provided by the school is in accordance with the Church of England Foundation. This Foundation is also reflected in the curriculum and the whole life of the school community. Since the conduct of the school as a whole reflects the Church of England ethos, removal of pupils from Worship and or Religious Education (as parents are legally entitled to do) cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school. It is hoped that any complaint will be resolved informally by the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Governors, and possibly with advice from the Diocese or District. However, if the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved, then formal procedures come into play and the matter will be adjudicated by a specially constituted sub-committee of the Diocesan Board of Education acting on behalf of the Bishop of the Diocese.

The provision of collective worship conforms to Diocesan policy and Worship in the school, while reflecting our denomination, will take into account the levels of development of pupils. There are close links between Collective Worship and Religious Education and it may be that some elements of the syllabus are covered in worship.

2. **Responsibility for the policy**

   The Head Teacher (Jo Roberts) and Collective Worship Coordinators (Heather Jeffery lead and Karen Hawkins shadow with music overview) are responsible for the implementation and delivery of the policy following advice from Blackburn Diocese and consultation with Governors and staff. The policy was approved by the governing body.

3. **Statement and broad aims**

   Collective Worship is the time when the whole school comes together to place God at the centre of our daily lives. It is an opportunity for all the School to be together and develop/reflect on their personal relationship with God. We aim that Worship is inclusive and accessible to all children and members of our school family.

   It enables the school community to:

   - **Explore – questions, our values and common themes that are important to us all.**
   - **Encounter – a faith that is alive.**
   - **Experience – the joy of celebrating God's love.**

4. **Organisation and delivery**

   Daily Collective Worship is provided for approximately 20 minutes.

   Though worship is not designated as curriculum time under current DfES regulations, it is a major aspect of the whole curriculum provided by the school. Worship is a vehicle for exploring aspects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education, British values and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussions and answering thought provoking questions. Pupils may be read to or instructed or they may be asked to listen to readings or to think about and respond to a stimulus such as poetry a work of art.

Worship is also concerned with the celebration of the curriculum, with pupils displaying or recounting details of what they have learnt. Frequently pupils are involved in leading worship or performing through dance, drama or music. When any such activities occur, they may be counted as teaching time even though they take place within worship. It is appropriate that, in a Church school, worship and learning is seen as a seamless whole even though, for the purposes of recording teaching time, we distinguish between the two.

Parents and Governors are given regular opportunities to attend worship usually on a Friday or at special events. Parents are messaged when their child is involved as it is currently not possible to fit all parents who would wish to attend an act of worship in the school hall.

Worship Pattern

In normal times, worship takes place daily at 3:10pm. All classes participate in daily worship.

Rev Guy and other visitors plan their own Tuesday worship, linked to the theme for the term. We also have other incumbants from the area visiting to deliver worship to our children.

Day	Worship
Monday	Whole school collective worship delivered by the Headteacher on the half termly value
Tuesday	A visitor (usually a vicar/minister) will deliver worship
Wednesday	This is class worship and often links to Picture News covering current world affairs and topics.

Thursday	Prayer and praise
Friday	Celebration worship

NB. Other visitors to school will be added into this worship pattern as appropriate via liaison with the Head Teacher or Collective Worship coordinator.

Children enter the hall quietly listening to background music, which creates a worshipful atmosphere. The opening words for the Worship time are usually displayed and children respond to these words at the beginning of the worship and the candle on the worship table is lit by a member of the Ethos Encouragers who are always involved in leading and helping with worship.
Special services may be lead wholly by the children eg Harvest, Remembrance Day, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and the end of the school year. We attend Church during the term and also for Education Sunday. Holy Communion takes place annually.

5. Content and approaches.

The content of Worship is based around St Paul's school Christian values, children's needs and significant events in the school community/ world and events that link to the church calendar and are biblically rooted. Worship themes are planned on a half termly basis and follow our Values of Love, Joy, Perseverance, Respect, Forgiveness, Justice and Hope. The Children's Ethos Encourager group meet with the Headteacher and Collective Worship coordinator to make suggestions for the following half term. They also evaluate the previous half term and make suggestions about how we could improve. They bring suggestions from their peers to the meeting. They usually pray during this meeting.
The HT leads planning worship with input from Ethos Encouragers, the Worship Co-ordinator and staff.
A range of approaches is used to provide a rich variety to school worship. These include : adult and child led Worship sessions, Bible readings, storytelling, Drama, use of powerpoint, shortfilm/news clips, role play, art work, music, question and answer sessions, appropriate visitors and the use of visual aids. Taize style worship is also planned into our worship schedule.
If any notices or announcements need to be made they will be made at the beginning or end of the worship and made clear to the children that these are not part of the worship.
Each half term, a charity fund raiser is launched through one worship session. These charity fundraisers are chosen alongside the children with the Ethos Encouragers involved plus some whole school votes.

6. Resources.

A range of resources are available to support the delivery of worship. These include: Bibles, visual resources, pictures and books. These are located on the book shelves or in the RE cupboard on the KS2 Corridor. All staff have access to Picture News, Fischy Music and Out of The Ark Music . Staff are sign posted to the extensive range of materials online.
A very comprehensive range of music, songs and PowerPoint presentations are available in the 'worship laptop' folder on the central drive. These are added to after consultation with either the worship leader Mrs Jeffery and / or the Headteacher.
There is a computer and projector in the hall which enables images to be displayed and seen clearly by all. Staff are sign posted to the extensive range of materials online.
The Head Teacher allocates money on an annual basis to support the continued development of worship through the school budget.

7. Consultation Management, Recording and Review.

The role of the worship leader is :

- To plan and manage high-quality collective worship through the identification of themes and resources and to share these with the School Community.
- To co-ordinate a half termly plan for whole school worship.
- To liaise with clergy and visitors.
- To enable staff to attend courses/INSET as appropriate and encourage them to develop their skills in leading worship.
- To monitor the quality and content of collective worship.
- To evaluate collective worship to inform future improvements.
- To contribute to the school improvement plan for RE and worship.
- To enable pupil participation at different levels in acts of worship.
- To liaise with the governor with responsibility for RE and worship and report to the governing body.

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by the worship Leader/Headteacher or as necessary in view of government or diocesan initiatives.

J Roberts
Headteacher September 2026