



## Title: Collective Worship Policy

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Buckingham Park Church of England Combined School is a Voluntary Aided School serving the whole community. We aim to provide the highest quality all round education, for each and every child, in partnership with parents, within the context of a Christian community. In short, 'Excellence, through God who strengthens us'.
- 1.2 The Collective Worship policy at Buckingham Park Church of England Combined School reflects the school's Trust Deed, and has taken account of the guidance offered by the Diocese of Oxford.
- 1.3 Collective Worship reflects the mission statement and is central to the life and ethos of the school. It shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

### 2. Aims of Collective Worship

- 2.1 Collective Worship (known as 'Worship Time') aims to provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to:
  - worship God and reflect on Christian values;
  - experience a variety of styles of worship;
  - celebrate together e.g. festivals, school values, individual achievements;
  - develop a reflective approach to living which encourages understanding of and invitation to prayer;
  - look beyond the physical, material and measurable;
  - consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
  - build a sense of community/foster corporate identity;
  - participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship;
  - feel safe and affirmed in doing any of the above.

### 3. Statutory requirements

- 3.1 By law, Collective Worship must:
  - take place each day for every child not withdrawn by their parents;
  - reflect the school's Trust Deed;
- 3.2 Collective Worship at Buckingham Park will reflect the traditions of worship within the Church of England, whilst being invitational, inclusive and valuing of people from all backgrounds and positions of faith.

#### **4. The Contribution of Collective Worship to aspects of the Curriculum**

- 4.1 Collective Worship time is distinct from curriculum time given to any subject including religious education. However, we aim to enable Collective Worship and aspects of children's classroom learning to be mutually supportive.
- 4.2 Collective Worship provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in line with school policy. To achieve this it addresses a wide variety of themes and topics, uses diverse stimuli and resources and provides pupils with opportunities to 'respond' at their own level.

#### **5. The Management and Organisation of Collective Worship**

- 5.1 The Governing Body is responsible for the provision of Collective Worship, supported by and in consultation with the Headteacher. The following arrangements exist to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate Collective Worship:
- i. The headteacher draws up a rota for leading Collective Worship and themes for each week.
  - ii. The headteacher observes at least 6 acts of Collective Worship (from a range of formats) per term to ensure that they comply with school policy and the law.
  - iii. Teacher, pupil and, where appropriate, parental views are collected annually to evaluate the quality and impact of Collective Worship and to identify ways in which it might be improved.
  - iv. Governors are invited to attend Collective Worship as part of their regular visits to school
- 5.2 Collective worship takes place in the school hall or the classroom. It generally occurs at the start of the school day, but occasionally will occur at other times. It is always designed to promote thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

#### **6. Leadership**

- 6.1 Every member of the school staff, pupils, the Vicar of St James' Church and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year.

#### **7. Planning Acts of Collective Worship**

- 7.1 The content of all acts of Collective Worship is considered carefully to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils.
- 7.2 Termly planning sheets list themes, special occasions and events, but there is flexibility to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. Weekly planning and recording sheets enable the monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship.
- 7.3 Visitors are welcome to lead Collective Worship from time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

## **8. The Act of Collective Worship**

- 8.1 We use a variety of styles, active and interactive methods and a range of in our acts of Collective Worship. Leaders make decisions about these elements according to what is most appropriate to the content, the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils.
- 8.2 Prayer is usually included in our acts of worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate (for example: 'I am going to say a prayer. If you want to make this your own prayer you may join in by saying 'Amen', or you may choose just to listen to the words'). Our prayers are addressed to Jesus and 'God' reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. We hope that pupils who prefer not to pray will use these moments to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

## **9. Withdrawal**

- 9.1 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 and reflective in nature, and never coercive or indoctrinatory.
- 9.2 Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the Headteacher in writing so that school records are accurate. We also appreciate opportunities to speak with parents and staff who have concerns about Collective Worship, always keen to develop our understanding of sensitivities and to overcome difficulties where possible.

## **10. Monitoring the policy**

- 10.1 The Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team will monitor the policy through regular updates at Governing Body meetings. The policy will be reviewed on a 3 year rolling basis.