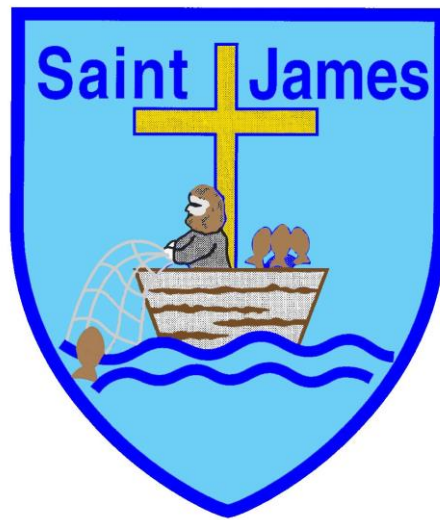


# Altham St. James' C.E. Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

Our mission statement is at the heart of all we do:

***Living our lives as Jesus wants us to***

- Always be the best you can be
- Respect the world and everyone in it
  - Love, forgive and reconcile

***“Love each other as I have loved you” John 15:12***

***“Everything is possible with God.” Matthew 19:26***

At Altham St. James’ Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary 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 deeds of the school.

The school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with St. James’ Church, Altham and Blackburn Diocese. Altham St. James’ School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. The school encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

At Altham St. James’ Church of England School, Collective Worship is at the heart of school life and the Governors see it as an essential part of all pupil’ education. Collective Worship contributes to 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 the school. At Altham St. James’ C of E School we bring together all stakeholders to promote our Christian ethos and vision and ensure that children flourish. Worship is an extension of our vision, we build a firm foundation based on faith and knowledge that empowers children to be the best that they can be.

**Definition of Worship**

An Act of Worship takes place in the context of a gathering of some or all of the school community, which aims to foster the spiritual, moral and cultural development of those present. Through Worship we connect with God both individually and as a Christian family. It is an opportunity for us to praise together, celebrate together, pray together, be still together and reflect together.

Worship at Altham St. James’ aims to provide children with a wide range of approaches, experiences and opportunities to worship God. At the same time it celebrates diversity, while contributing towards a sense of cohesion, stability and shared values of the school, society and the wider world. Through Collective Worship pupils are introduced to the key beliefs and aspects of the Christian faith and are helped to explore them.

These include:

- The nature of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- The nature of human beings as children of God

- 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, love, redemption, goodness, compassion and charity
- The central place of the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus as a source of inspiration and guidance
- The importance of prayer.
- The central symbols of Christianity.
- The cycle of the Church's year

### **Broad Aims of Worship**

The main aims of Worship at Altham St. James' CE School are:

- To establish, explore and reinforce some of the common Christian Values of the School community
- To share with the participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at a level appropriate to the age and maturity of the children, thereby giving them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework
- To value the Bible as a source of knowledge about God and Jesus and as a source of inspiration and guidance
- To enable the school community to participate in Worship by fostering a sense of wonder and awe at the beauty, mystery and power of the world they live in
- To heighten pupil's awareness of questions relating to the ultimate mysteries of life and the beliefs held and the commitments made by themselves and others in response to such questions
- To provide the experience of and develop the sense of a caring community within the school; the local community and the wider global community
- To promote the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- To celebrate the values and worth of the School community and all who belong in it, including the sharing of the gifts and talents of our children
- To help develop respect, understanding and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others
- To provide opportunities for reflection, meditation, contemplation and prayer
- To respect and care for God's creation by encouraging a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues
- To help the children develop an understanding of both the nature and language of Worship including symbols and imagery

### **School Organisation of Collective Worship**

To fulfil the above aims the school has adopted the following patterns of worship:

Monday 9.10 - 9.30 led by Mrs Woods or a member of staff

Tuesday 9.10 - 9.30 led by a member of the clergy/ member of the Parish

Wednesday 9.10 – 9.30 Prayer and Praise led by Mrs Bellard

Thursday 9.10-9.30 Class Worship in Class

Friday 9:10-9:30 Celebration Worship

As part of all collective worship, the children are encouraged to vocalise their own prayers.

On the last Thursday of every month there is an 'Open the Book' collective worship led by members of the parish to which family and friends are invited.

Once a month, there is an 'All age worship' (Angel) service in the school hall after school. Members of the school family and local community will be invited to this service.

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 and frequently involves teaching and learning activities such as discussion and question and answer. Pupils may be read to or instructed or they may be asked to listen to readings; give their opinions or asked to think about and respond to a stimulus such as a work of art. Worship enhances the spiritual development of all our pupils encouraging them to connect; give; learn; take notice and be actively involved. It stimulates curiosity, poses challenges and develops confidence.

We recognise that in our School we may have children from a variety of faith backgrounds or no religious background at all. Great care is taken during Worship to ensure that all children feel valued and special and that integrity as human beings is consistently upheld.

Collective Worship at Altham St. James' is an inclusive activity. Worship is planned by the Headteacher in conjunction with the teachers. A termly plan of assembly themes and resource covers a four year cycle. Meetings are held to discuss, plan and evaluate worship as well as discuss major festivals/special acts of worship and pupil participation. We also welcome visitors to celebrate with us and lead Worship. Planning is flexible and allows for the 'Wow' factor in Worship.

We have extremely positive links with our local Church, Clergy and congregation. The School participates in major festivals in the Church with special Services. Parents and friends are invited to these services. All our Year 6 pupils are presented with a Christian keepsake (bible and handheld cross) from the Church and Governors during their leaver's service.

### **The Legal Requirements for Collective Worship**

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.

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 house groups or in classes or tutor groups, but not faith groups. Worship may take place at any point in the school day. Worship should normally take place on the school premises, but may take place in Church on special occasions.

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 cannot insulate pupils from the religious life of the school. Parents may, if they wish, withdraw their children from Collective Worship. As stated in the ERA Section 9 (3): “If a parent of any pupil in attendance at any maintained school request that he may be wholly or partially excused – from attendance at religious worship in the school – that pupil shall be excused accordingly until the request is withdrawn.” Parents who have any concerns about the provision and practice of Collective Worship are strongly encouraged to contact the Head Teacher. Should children be withdrawn adequate supervision will be provided to ensure their safety during the period that Worship takes place.

However, as this is a Church School, the governors would expect that parents in choosing St. James’ are thereby committing their children to taking a full part in the Worship of the school.

### **Complaints about the provision of Collective Worship**

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.

Reviewed September 2024