



Benedict Biscop CE Academy

WORSHIP POLICY

Review Date:	Autumn 2018
Next Review Due:	Autumn 2020
Person in Charge:	Headteacher/RE Leader
Governance:	Chair of Governors

Pastoral Care/Spiritual Development

The quality of relationships between all members of school, staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of a church school. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. Jesus was clear in his instructions to the disciples on this matter.

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.

‘This is my commandment: love each other’ - John 15:17.

Everyone associated with the school is made in the image of God and is to be loved. This is the commandment from which Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy derives its policy for pastoral care.

We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that Christian love will pervade all aspects of life at Benedict Biscop School. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environment is created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the school is organised and the policies are written and implemented.

Legal Requirements

The Education Act of 1988 re-emphasised the obligation laid on schools to provide a daily act of worship.

Worship may be organised at any time during the school day. It is not necessary for the whole school to meet together for the worship. It may be organised for separate groups.

It is the right of every parent to withdraw from acts of collective worship. However worship is central to the life of our school and there is no guarantee that pupils can be withdrawn from the Christian ethos of the school.

Teachers also have a right to withdraw from worship, however the Academy expects teachers, whose National Society contracts include Clause 12 on 'having regard to the Christian character of the school and its Foundation', to take part in collective worship.

In the Academy arrangements for collective worship are made by the Directors/ Trustees, after consultation with the Headteacher. Within the governing body, the foundation governors have particular responsibility for seeing that the character of the school is reflected in the worship.

Definition

Collective Worship and assembly are not the same, although collective worship may be part of an assembly. Collective worship is defined as worship appropriate to a group of individuals, possessing a range of beliefs, believers and non-believers.

Foundation of the School

- Benedict Biscop is a Church of England Academy
- Worship in Benedict Biscop Academy is denominational with an Anglican Foundation
- Worship in Benedict Biscop Academy reflects the Funding Agreement replacing the Trust Deed.

- Worship in Benedict Biscop Academy is within the framework of the principles and practices of the Church of England as set up in the Funding Agreement [2012] and supplemental agreement (2016) replacing the Trust Deeds of the National Society.

Rationale

At Benedict Biscop Academy we believe that:

- One of the most important marks distinguishing Church Schools from others should be the importance placed on the spiritual life of all members of the school community – pupils, teachers, governors and nonteaching staff. This shows itself in the attention paid to the ethos of the school, the careful planning and delivery of the RE curriculum, but above all in the quality of the worship offered in school.
- At Benedict Biscop Academy there is an integral partnership between the content and conduct of school worship and the ethos of the school. The staff and pupils share together in worship in order to support the promotion of Christian values as stated in the Mission Statement.

Therefore:

- Our worship allows all members of the school community [staff, pupils, parents and governors] to see themselves as being unique and special individuals. Such an understanding encourages children to relate one with another in a supportive, rather than destructive manner. This respect is a reflection of the ethos of our school.

Aims of Worship at Benedict Biscop CE Academy

- *To encourage belonging and believing in the Christian Faith*
- *To meet the legal requirements*
- *To highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension through experience of worship*
- *To introduce pupils to the worship of the Church of England*
- *To gain in knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith*
- *To enable pupils to make use of silence as a time for reflection, contemplation, meditation, and if appropriate, prayer*
- *To enable pupils to become aware of the many questions which relate to life*
- *To enable all members of the school community to participate in the sacramental life of the Christian church*
- *To acknowledge the things which have meaning, value and purpose for the pupils as individuals, as well as for the school and the wider community*
- *To develop a sense of community within and beyond the school, developing community cohesion*
- *To celebrate achievements, special occasions and special events in relation to individual pupils within the school, to the school as a whole, or to the wider community*
- *To celebrate and take note of the life of the school in the presence of God*
- *To look out to the wider world*
- *To acknowledge and pay respects to difference and diversity*
- *To explore the beliefs of others*
- *To allow children an opportunity to appreciate the use of symbolism and religious language to express feelings and belief*
- *To contribute to the general development of pupils*
- *To encourage respect and care for God's creation*

Objectives

- *To consider spiritual and moral issues and explore their own beliefs*
 - *To understand the importance of prayer*
 - *To experience what worship is and what people do when they worship*
 - *To reflect and think more deeply about important issues*
 - *To foster a sense of awe and wonder at creation*
 - *To learn appropriate responses and forms of prayer*
 - *To encounter beliefs, prayers, symbols and songs from the Anglican tradition in an appropriate manner*
 - *Learn the important and famous prayers of Christianity and the Anglican Church*
 - *To experience different forms of Christian worship and worship material*
 - *To affirm values and commitment and reinforce positive attitudes throughout the school*
 - *To present basic Christian religious concepts and develop understanding of religious symbols and language* ▪
- To learn about the place and significance of the Bible*
- *To celebrate the Festivals and Saints days of the Church year*
 - *To share in Church life and Christian practice*
 - *To outline Christian values and develop a sense of community both within and outside the school* ▪
- To develop and reflect on the values of the school*
- *To share the achievements, joys and difficulties of all members of the school community*
 - *To discover how believers from other faiths worship*
 - *To celebrate values and attitudes shared with other members of other faith communities*
 - *To develop the ability to reflect on moral and social issues*
 - *To acknowledge and become aware of the needs of others*
 - *To celebrate and give thanks for God's world*
 - *To respond through active involvement in the presentation of the worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered*

Entitlement

At Benedict Biscop CE Academy we believe that collective worship is an important part of every child's spiritual development, therefore every child has the right to participate.

Equal Opportunities

Our school worship is about sharing what is meaningful and significant in our lives. It is about sharing common concerns and responsibilities and developing positive attitudes and values. It is about affirming the equality of each individual in God's sight, whatever a child's gender, ethnicity, physical, mental ability or socioeconomic status.

Special Educational Needs

The staff and governors at Benedict Biscop CE Academy are committed to ensuring that every child in the school will derive some benefit from collective worship whatever their academic ability.

To ensure that, materials are appropriate to a range of abilities, aptitudes and interests which would be shared with visiting clergy, where appropriate.

The Rights of the Parents to Withdraw their Children

Directors/Trustees/ Governors of Benedict Biscop CE Academy recognise the parents' legal right to withdraw their child/children from collective acts of worship. However, in choosing to send their child/children to a Church of England Academy the Governors hope that parents are thereby committing themselves and their child/children to participate in all those activities that reflect the school's Christian ethos,

If a parent requests that a child be withdrawn then they should be made aware of:

- Worship is part of the corporate life of the school. It is the point where everyone comes together.
- The child will miss out on many aspects of school life, particularly where events such as Harvest and Christmas take place in the context of worship.
- Worship is part of the ethos of the school and is also about sharing common values
- Worship is an educational activity to which children are free to respond or not, and an understanding of and experience of worship is an essential part of religious education.
- Withdrawal from worship will not remove the child from the Christian ethos of the school, class prayers, sing and praise or the Christian outlook on subjects such as personal development, science or art, where spiritual values are constantly raised.

The school procedure for withdrawing pupils is:

If parents exercise the right to withdraw their child/children from acts of worship then the following arrangements will apply:

- The pupil/pupils will be in the care of a member of staff.
- The pupil/pupils will be on the premises (KS2 Group room) and produce work on a topical theme.

Arrangements for other faiths:- As above if parents wish to withdraw their child/children from collective worship.

Links with Spiritual Development

Collective Worship can contribute to spiritual development as follows:

- It can celebrate all that is good and express thankfulness for the joy of being alive.
- It can provide an opportunity to reflect on experience and to search for the joy of being alive.
- It can stimulate a sense of awe and wonder.
- It can give time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space.
- It can provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the 'darker' side of life.
- It can help value a non-material dimension to life.
- It can give time for reflection on their own beliefs and values, and those of others.

Collective Worship can contribute to Moral Development as follows:

- It can help promote an understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
- It can promote respect for people and property.

- It can help pupils to appreciate how their actions can affect others.

Collective Worship can contribute to Social Development as follows:

- It gives the opportunity to celebrate together as a community.

Collective Worship can contribute to Cultural Development as follows:

- The celebration of own and others' religious and cultural traditions.

**Guidelines for Collective Worship at
Benedict Biscop Church of England Academy School**

The timing and organisation of daily Collective Worship can be flexible – it may take place at any time of the school day.

Collective Worship may be a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups.

- At Benedict Biscop Academy the focus of worship will be Christian and in accordance with the Funding Agreement and Supplemental agreement. It will reflect the traditions of the Church of England.
- The content of daily worship at Benedict Biscop Academy is Christian, following the Church calendar with one community worship each week led by clergy, celebrating achievement.

Objectives of our Acts of Worship

- To reflect the character of the school community and be at the heart of school life.
- To provide opportunities for silence, for reflection, for experiencing and expressing awe and wonder.
- To emphasise our Christian identity.
- To take into account the age, aptitude and family backgrounds of the pupils.
- To be educational in helping the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.
- To foster a sense of community within the school, including a sense of shared values, identity, outlook and purpose.
- To encourage belonging and believing in the Christian Faith
- To provide a knowledge of religion, of both Christian and other world faiths. ▪ To encourage sensitivity towards other people's beliefs and values.
- To have close links with the whole curriculum.
- To be pupil-centred, and relate to pupils' own experiences and concerns.

- To participate in praise to God by providing opportunities to celebrate in songs, hymns, readings, quiet contemplation and other ways.
- To develop values such as courage, love, consideration, pity and sacrifice.
- To provide opportunities to reflect on and celebrate a wide range of educational achievements.
- To develop contacts with parish and wider community through involvement in leading worship.
- To share, celebrate and take note of common concerns and experiences - neighbours, social, national and international issues, school events.
- To reflect on significant experiences of life such as loss, joy, birth, beauty, wonder, fear, anger, thankfulness and mystery.
- To voice rules and standards, how to treat others, self-discipline, good and evil.
- To share, celebrate and take note of the experiences of individuals within the school – loss, successes, welcomes, goodbyes, new siblings, illness.
- To celebrate the curriculum in the presence of God.
- To reflect on elements of faith – Bible stories, observing the cycle of the Anglican year, seasons and beliefs.
- To reflect on God and on prayer – finding God in the world and the nature of God.
- To look at the world – at pattern, change and order.
- Themes will be pursued usually over a week, sometimes over a longer period, with consideration being given to continuity.

Content

Pupils are encouraged to ‘take part’. This means that the act of worship must be one to which the pupil is capable of responding even though on a particular occasion some of the pupils may not feel able actively to identify with the act of worship.

Psalm 100 says that we should, ‘Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.’

- There will be times when the worship is quiet, contemplative and serene and at other times it will involve loud music, laughter and dance.
- A balanced programme will provide a varied format of prayers, readings, songs, drama and other activities as well as drawing on a wealth of liturgical material, which is part of the Anglican tradition of worship.
- The Bible is used as a source book for inspiration and learning. ▪

Collective Worship follows the pattern of the Anglican Church Year.

Components of Collective Worship

- Story: from Christianity – from other faith traditions – novels – storybooks – children’s fiction – biographies – ‘true-life’.
 - Music: song – traditional, hymns, carols, chants, folksong, children’s songs.
 - Recorded music – as accompaniment – ‘recital’.
 - Drama, dance: prepared, improvised. ▪
- Art: slides – picture – sculpture.
- Prayer: formal, traditional – Lord’s Prayer, Grace Prayers learnt or listened to from the Christian tradition – Common worship, Collects, Celtic, other school / pupil prayers – arising from work or thoughts prepared in advance or elicited during worship. ▪ Silence – meditation – reflection.
 - Developing the skill of mindfulness.
 - Pupil involvement – taking a lead / musical / drama and role-play.

Organisation and Management of Collective Worship

The co-ordinator responsible for Collective Worship is Laura Crane. In collaboration with the Principal, the role of the Worship Co-ordinator is to lead policy development, provide guidance and support to colleagues, manage, audit and organise resources so they are available to colleagues, monitor the effectiveness of worship provision and keep in touch with recent developments and publications including the internet, attend and lead appropriate Professional development sessions.

Weekly class worship

Class worship takes place once every week. During this session the class teacher will lead worship which has been planned and resourced by the worship co-ordinator (Laura Crane). This provides the opportunity for every teacher to lead Worship and contribute to the Christian Ethos of the school. Class worship allows a more intimate atmosphere where pupils can participate in a smaller and more intimate group. During this time, staff set an exemplary model for pupils to follow and the pupils to be an example to others, in the way they live and act.

1Timothy:4:12

‘Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.’

Worship can include a story, music, singing, mindfulness, prayers, sharing and questions. Class worship is recorded in the RE floor book and will be monitored by Laura Crane and the RE pupil group.

Organisation of Acts of Worship

Acts of worship at Benedict Biscop CE Academy are organised and take place in a variety of ways: ▪

Worship takes place in school every day and in St Matthew’s Church on special occasions.

- Prayers are said each evening by each class and grace is said before meals.
- There are separate Key Stage acts of worship as well as whole school worship.

- The children are encouraged to lead and participate in worship. This can include providing prayers, plays, dance, rap or leading the whole worship.
- There is a weekly shared worship led by pupils and Rev. Dave Tolhurst to which the whole community are invited to participate. The pupils have access to all resources and time to prepare to ensure confidence and clarity.
- There is a Eucharist Service termly led by Rev. Tolhurst and Rev. Thorp and Y6 pupils.
- Representatives of outside agencies e.g. NCH, Help the Aged are occasionally invited to lead worship as are members of other churches to ensure ecumenism.

The weekly organisation of collective worship is as follows:

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Principal or Vice Principal.
Tuesday	Sing and Praise –whole school led by Laura Crane and Kirsty Worth.
Wednesday	Class worship- planned by Laura Crane and led by individual class teachers. Rev. Thorp leads Foundation Stage Worship
Thursday	KS1 worship led by Foundation Stage and Key Stage Teaching staff. KS2 worship led by member of KS2 teaching staff.
Friday	Whole school shared worship led by pupils and Rev. Dave Tolhurst for the extended community. Celebration Worship of talents and achievements, with extended community invited to attend.

Planning and Record Keeping

The planning sheet is completed termly in consultation with all staff and clergy. A timetable is drawn up for shared worships, special events, leaders and visitors.

The themes used are linked with the curriculum wherever possible and take into account the Church calendar.

Flexibility is allowed for instant reaction to events in the news/disasters/celebrations/sorrows/ joys etc

Records are kept in the form of a large floor book which is kept at the front of the hall/postinina. The worship floor book is kept in the hall and it is the responsibility of the person leading worship to complete the record and ensure it is up to date. Feedback for evaluation is provided by staff, pupils and clergy.

Resources

Resources are stored in the resources room. These include plays, books, slides, posters, stories, tapes, prayers. Loan boxes of artefacts are also available from Durham and Newcastle Diocese Resource Centre at Percy Main. Music and words may be copied in accordance with the Christian Copyright Licence.

The school visits St Matthew's Church at Christmas and other special occasions. St Peter's and Sunderland Minster are also venues for special worship services and celebrations.

Year 6 children take part in the Diocesan Leavers' Service in Durham Cathedral in the summer term, to share worship with other Diocesan schools; this is led by the Diocesan Board of Education.

Other resources may be obtained with the agreement of the RE Subject Leader and the Principal.

The RE subject Leader, Headteacher and the clergy of the Wearmouth Deanery are available to give advice and support to staff and visitors where the planning and delivery of collective worship is concerned.

Environment

Worship takes place in the Postinia, school hall and classrooms.

There is a worship table in the school hall, which reflects the theme of the week's worship by the use of posters, photographs, prayers, artefacts etc. It is changed weekly.

The atmosphere is created by the use of appropriate music and candles. A cross is also used as a focal point, and other Christian symbols when appropriate.

Staff are seated around the room and are participants of the worship.

Each classroom has a worship display - a focal point for stilling and reflection in their classroom.

The postinia is an area for quiet reflection, prayer and Worship [small groups] which may be used by school and community members. This area has a beautiful stained glass window designed by the children to celebrate our heritage [Benedict Biscop World Heritage Bid].

All of these things in the school environment enable all staff, pupils and visitors to come to worship God in reverence.

John:4:23+24

'A time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. ²⁴ God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.'

Themes

Worship is the central activity in the life of the school. Christian values are built into the school's ethos and teaching and are reflected in the cycle of themes on which our daily acts of worship are based. A copy of this cycle is available for all parents on request.

Features of Collective Worship:

- Sense of awe and wonder.
- Sense of transience and constant change.
- Sense of pattern, order and purpose (everything's all right).
- Awareness of and relationship with the natural world (wind, fire, light, water, stone, wood, darkness).
- Awareness of personal worth, uniqueness and identity.
- Awareness of community, its demands, values, rituals and celebrations.
- Awareness of achievement.
- Celebrations and joy.
- Awareness of loss, sadness, suffering.
- Awareness that life involves choices - selfish, right, wrong, good, and evil.

Characteristics of Worship

- Narration/stories,
- Creeds,
- Commandments,
- Rituals,
- Signs and symbols,
- Drama, dance, mime, music,
- Feasting and fasting,
- Focal points,
- The broad traditions of Christian belief are wide ranging and contain themes already explored in context of collective worship – The Universe, Human Nature and Existence, Social Justice and Peace, Celebrations and Festivals, Beginnings and Endings.

Some Principles to follow:

Collective Worship should:

- Be religious.
- Be inclusive.
- Be curricular.
- Be educational.
- Be reflective.
- Help inspire a sense of believing and belonging.
- Contribute to the religious education of all pupils.
- Have a sense of occasion.
- Be shaped to the needs of the pupils and community.
- Contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the children.
- Follow Liturgical order

The Separation of 'Worship' and 'Assembly'

It is appropriate at the end of worship or before worship starts that information, birthdays or favourable news of individuals or groups may be announced. These times will be separated from worship by music, pause, or by a change of leader.

Where the act of worship is designed to send pupils and staff away in a reflective mood, notices will come first so as not to distract from the worship atmosphere.

Disciplinary matters will not be dealt with at this time and those concerned will be reassembled at a different time.

Staff

Acts of worship are for the whole school, staff as well as pupils.

Those who lead the worship should do so in a way that allows everyone present to take part with integrity. The staff's talents, experiences and insights will be used to help with the planning, delivery and evaluation of worship. All staff lead worship on a regular basis.

Professional development for staff will be provided on a regular basis and will focus on:

- agreement and understanding about the gains and purposes of worship so that a consistent approach is followed
- support for staff who lead worship either whole school or class worship
- developing a partnership working with the Wearmouth Deanery Clergy.

Staff Development/Training is provided for staff from a number of providers including: LA, Diocese, National Society, and clergy Directors/Trustees/governors.

Visiting Clergy/Guests

Visitors bring different perspectives into the school and they can participate by:

- Leading the worship
- Introducing their charity works
- Providing a personal viewpoint on faith and life issues
- Linking the school to the community

Visiting clergy / guests are encouraged to lead worship if appropriate.

They are made aware of the school policy on collective worship, arrangements agreed with the head teacher and the content agreed.

Visitors will thus know the parameters in which they can work and know exactly what is required of them. These **may** include:

- The theme of the week.
- The format of worship.
- Attendance at a previous worship.
- Freedom with the format of worship.
- Information as to whether staff or pupils will be involved.
- A brief on ages and background of the pupils including abilities and relevant information on Special educational needs of children if appropriate
- Duration time of worship.
- Equipment and resources available.

A formulated letter of invitation with the above details will be sent to each visitor.

Staff participate in worship led by visitors to ensure that the school take part together and discussion can take place afterwards with the pupils and an evaluation made.

Funding

Provision will be made to ensure resources are of the highest quality and reflect the importance of worship within the life of the school. There is an annual budget for resources to ensure that they are regularly assessed and updated increasing the range available.

Assessment and Review/Evaluation

The Principal, worship co-ordinator and staff on a termly basis will evaluate the acts of worship. Worship will be monitored to ensure that:

- Agreed and planned content is being covered.
 - A variety of approach and methodology are used. ▪
- High standards and quality are maintained.
- Staff have been well supported by the worship team – Principal, Worship Coordinator and School Chaplain.
 - Worship has been lead by a variety of leaders.
 - Evaluation of parents and pupils reactions