

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies used in collective worship at St Margaret's CE Primary School

It is based on the principles of a policy first developed in 2002 through a process of consultation with teaching staff and governors. It was approved by the governing body.

The policy will be periodically reviewed

## **PRINCIPLES**

The Governors recognise their responsibility in ensuring that there is a daily act of worship for every child. The responsibility for the day to day organisation is delegated to the Headteacher. The daily act of worship is Christian in nature and takes place either at the start of every school day or after the first teaching session. It is appropriate to the ages and aptitudes of all the children such that they can all take part and respond. Governors respect the right of parents to withdraw their child from worship.

## **AIMS**

- To provide opportunity for children to worship God
- To consider spiritual and moral issues
- To explore the child's own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response through listening and joining in worship
- To develop community spirit
- To promote a common ethos and share values and reinforce positive attitudes

## **PRACTICE AT ST MARGARET'S**

We recognise the importance of creating the right atmosphere for worship. Children enter and leave the hall in a quiet way whilst music is played. Children are in a relaxed but ordered and secure environment where they are encouraged to respond. Most children in Year 6 sit on benches, whilst the others sit on the floor in a horseshoe shaped for the 20 minute act of worship. There is a table at the front of the hall which is set up daily to reflect the nature of the act of worship. It always has placed on it a cross and praying hands made out of olive wood from the Holy Land, as well as candles which are lit when it is felt appropriate.

The whole school gathers together in the school hall on four days of the week for collective worship. On a Wednesday the infant and junior departments meet separately, at different times, for their own acts of worship.

We aim to provide a variety of approaches to the acts of worship, using technology and visual aids to engage the children and also to vary the type of collective worship so that different aspects of school life can be recognised and valued.

The core Bible based assemblies are built around a termly or half-termly theme, such as the disciples of Jesus, The Lord's prayer, Love, Bible texts, God's creation, kindness, hope. Themes are chosen by the Headteacher and Deputy and RE faculty who jointly plan the term's programme of worship and share out responsibility for the sessions. In 2008/9 there is a link between all assembly themes and linked reflection areas within classrooms, eg. kindness, hope, friendship, thankfulness, forgiveness and trust. Whenever it is

felt appropriate any outside speaker is invited to contribute to the theme. Typically these assemblies will feature singing, time for reflection, something to look at and think about and the involvement up front of some of the children and a time of prayer.

Celebratory assemblies focus on the children's achievement and take a number of forms. Each class once a term will either take a full class assembly to which parents and friends are invited, or on a smaller scale share with the school some of the work they have been doing in their class. Once every half-term Headteacher awards are given to one child in every class nominated by class teachers. Merit point certificates are also given out at 5 weekly intervals to celebrate children's achievements within school. At the end of every term there is a Music assembly that lasts for up to an hour. Occasionally when the hall is unavailable the act of worship takes place within classrooms organised by class teachers. All celebratory assemblies will include singing and a prayer, often written and spoken by the children.

The school welcomes the involvement of other people in taking assemblies. Members of the clergy regularly come into school and take assemblies as well as people representing other charity or Christian churches in the community.

### **SPECIAL ACTS OF WORSHIP**

At the start of every term separate services are organised for infant and junior children at St Margaret's Church taken by St Margaret's Church staff. These participatory services are child centred and planned in advance by school and church personnel

At Harvest, Christmas and Easter, special services are held in school to which parents are warmly invited and attend in significant numbers. The Rector always attends and takes part in these services

### **RESOURCES**

Worship songs are digitally stored and projected. Artefacts are gleaned from a variety of sources.

### **EVALUATION OF WORSHIP**

A variety of approaches are used to evaluate worship. Children are encouraged to talk to staff about the contents of assembly and most do in an enthusiastic way. Moodle, an interactive virtual learning platform is increasingly being used by children to post their views of assemblies on it as part of discussion forums. The team organising assemblies always discuss their effectiveness after the occasion and use the information to inform future planning. Governors have the opportunity to attend assemblies when visiting the school and talk to children about their content and impact on their spiritual lives.