

**WEST BERKSHIRE  
STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON  
TUESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2019**

**VENUE: THATCHAM BAPTIST CHURCH WHEELERS GREEN WAY THATCHAM  
RG19 4YF**

**Present:**

**Group A – Other Faiths Members**

Revd David Taylor (Thatcham Baptist Church)

**Group B – Church of England Members**

Mrs Val Bolan (Church of England) and Mrs Mary Stagg (Church of England)

**Group C – Teaching Association Members**

Bernard Eggleton (NASUWT) and Clare Hawkins (NASUWT)

**Group D – WBC Councillors**

Councillor Billy Drummond (WBC), Councillor Tony Linden (WBC), Councillor David Marsh (WBC)

**Professional Adviser**

David Rees

**Guests:**

Rachel Manley, Maria Pratico and Rabbi Zvi Solomons

**Also Present:** Janet Giddings (Appeals Officer)

**Apologies for inability to attend the meeting:** Councillor Peter Argyle (WBC), Mobasshir Mushtaq (Muslim) and Robin Sharples (Church of England)

**1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

David Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed apologies were received from: Cllr Peter Argyle, Mobasshir Mushtaq and Robin Sharples.

**2 Membership**

**2.1 Rabbi Zvi Solomons (Group A)**

SACRE Members discussed and agreed with Rabbi Zvi Solomons that he should join WB SACRE to represent the Jewish faith. At the meeting on 6 March 2019, Rachel Manley and Maria Pratico were invited to join WB SACRE. An Individual Decision will be signed by Dominic Boeck, Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Young People at West Berkshire Council in December 2019 to formally appoint Rachel Manley, Maria Pratico and Rabbi Zvi Solomons as members of WB SACRE.

**3 Election of Chair and Vice Chair for Academic Year 2019/20**

**3.1 Election of Chair for Academic Year 2019/20**

Councillor Billy Drummond nominated David Taylor as Chair. This was seconded by Val Bolan. David Taylor accepted the role.

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## **3.2 Election of Vice Chair for Academic Year 2019/20**

Councillor Billy Drummond nominated Bernard Eggleton as Vice Chair. This was seconded by Val Bolan. Bernard Eggleton accepted the role.

## **4 Presentation from Sue Ball on Collective Worship**

Sue Ball is the RE and Collective Worship and PSHE/British Values Link Governor at Thatcham Park Primary School. Members were shown the attached powerpoint presentation on Collective Worship. Sue explained that Collective Worship happens daily in schools as part of the school day and is distinct from assemblies. For that reason, Ofsted are likely to observe Collective Worship during their inspections.

Participation from pupils is encouraged and the slide "Call to Worship" was co-created by Year 5 and 6 pupils.

Small groups from local faith primary schools are invited to attend regular sessions at Bucklebury Church to explore RE using hands-on techniques including music, drama, writing and 'laying the table'. It may be possible for these sessions to be expanded to invite children from community schools to attend.

Sue advised that schools should have a Collective Worship Policy which would give clear expectations, particularly from visitors.

Penny Judge from Thatcham Park Primary School introduced a learning tool the school used to teach RE; a class basket. A new theme each term, currently courage, is introduced in assembly on a Monday, the local vicar discusses the theme on a Tuesday, pupils are then given time to reflect on and express their own views. Pupils store items in the basket from home that are relevant to the theme which can be shared with the class. Reverend Mark Bennet is keen for class baskets to be funded in more schools.

David Taylor asked Members if they had any questions for Sue Ball and/or Penny Judge. Maria Pratico asked if the children knew what they were doing. Penny said at this stage they were planting seeds, getting them to think. It was a safe space to share ideas and not be ridiculed. She added that teachers often found it difficult to introduce RE topics so it helped that this was a pupil-led activity.

David Taylor thanked Sue Ball and Penny Judge for their presentation. A copy of the presentation and the handouts distributed at the meeting are attached for information.

## **5 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 6 March 2019 and 11 June 2019 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **6 Actions (not covered elsewhere)**

### **6.1 Examples of SACRE newsletters**

David Taylor showed Members a sample newsletter from Bracknell Forest Council. Anne Andrews, Oxford Diocese, was happy to forward a copy to WB SACRE for editing before publication.

Rachel Manley advised the Oxford Diocese Board of Education produced a similar newsletter that was distributed to local schools.

Clare Hawkins and David Rees volunteered to edit the newsletter to include content relevant to West Berkshire. Clare advised she would be attending a SACRE meeting at Bracknell Forest Council on 13 November 2019 where she could find out when the newsletter would be available for editing, and email those dates to Janet Giddings.

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## **6.2 RE Undergraduates**

Clare Hawkins offered to introduce 5 RE undergraduates to WB SACRE to enrich their studies. David Taylor confirmed the next meeting would take place on 25 February 2020 at the Council Offices in Market Street. Clare said she would invite them to attend.

## **7 Matters arising from the Minutes**

David Taylor had met Donna Fox, Principal Adviser for School Improvement at West Berkshire Council. They agreed WB SACRE should have a presence on the education portal, managed by Vicky Pearce.

David Taylor raised concerns he and Members of SACRE had regarding the non-existence of RE at Park House School. Donna Fox offered to discuss this with the Headteacher, Derek Peale, as they had a good working relationship. Councillor Tony Linden was happy with this progress as RE is a legislative requirement. Councillor David Marsh said Park House School was in his Ward and so offered to make an informal visit to the school where he would casually mention his involvement with SACRE and enquire as to the current provision of RE. Clare Hawkins said she believed the Headteacher genuinely felt RE was covered in the subject Character and Values.

## **8 Schools**

### **8.1 West Berks RE exam results**

Exam results are not published by subject. Janet Giddings will contact secondary schools in West Berkshire to request this information.

### **8.2 Primary Schools/Network – David Rees**

David Rees offered to forward to Members the Minutes of the Primary School Network Meeting held on 8 October 2019. Coincidentally it was arranged on the same day as another RE meeting which was subsequently cancelled.

Members discussed the need for a central online resource for RE teachers.

David Taylor expressed concern that, although they were welcome, meetings held at Thatcham Baptist Church only attracted attendees from schools in the vicinity.

### **8.3 Secondary Schools/Network – David Taylor/David Rees**

A discussion took place about the provision of RE in schools. David Taylor recently visited Trinity School who had recruited 2 new members of staff. RE was offered as an option which meant it wasn't compulsory in Years 10, 11 and 6<sup>th</sup> Form. A GCSE option was available. Clare Hawkins explained that Progress 8 was a secondary school accountability measurement of a pupil's progress from Year 6 SATs to Year 11 GCSEs. Short courses were not included in Progress 8 scores which could influence a school's decision to include them in the curriculum. David Rees advised the short courses fulfilled the statutory requirement to offer RE.

The Secondary School Network Meeting was held on October 2019 at St Bartholomew's School, Newbury, with 3 attendees. Those present discussed RE GCSE provision, mixed GCSE results and shared experiences. It was felt that children needed to know why they were studying RE.

## **9 Annual Report - David Taylor**

David Taylor presented the Annual SACRE Report 2018-2019. Val Bolan thought the Crossing the Bridges Directory had been put on hold, as discussed at the SACRE

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meeting in June 2019. David agreed to remove the reference to Val from the text. David Rees added that Crossing the Bridges was 3 years old and that someone needed to take the lead to check contact details and maintain a master copy. Templates were still available for faiths to complete but needed updated once submitted.

Bernard Eggleton said it was important to keep an attendance list for each meeting to ensure compliance with SACRE membership rules.

Val Bolan thanked David Taylor for the report.

**Action: Janet Giddings to keep a record of attendance for SACRE meetings.**

### 10 2019-20 Budget and Action Plan Update

David Rees presented the Action Plan, explaining the focus was on:

*B. Core Business: Religious Education,*

*4. Contact primary schools who do not attend networks, to arrange visits by SACRE members.*

David said it was important to let schools know what support was available.

*5. Continue to work with secondary schools not yet complying with the law, especially Park House School*

David Rees acknowledged the work started by David Taylor commenting he had been very proactive.

Online resources were available via NASACRE.

### 11 Hub

21.2 Real People, Real Faith Video Project update – David Taylor/David Rees

David Taylor advised members the recent Westhill Bid was successful enabling a professionally filmed video project to proceed. Children would have the opportunity to ask faith leaders questions from the syllabus. The project would be launched in July 2020. The bid was highlighted in the recent NASACRE Briefing No. 23.

### 12 Next Meeting Dates to Agree

22.1 Tuesday 25 February 2020, 4.15pm, West Berkshire Council's Offices

Agreed by Members; venue confirmed as the Committee Room, Ground Floor.

22.2 Tuesday 12 or 19 May 2020, 4.15pm at a primary school?

The preferred date was 19 May 2020. Rachel Manley offered to host the meeting at Yattendon Primary School, RG18 0UR.

### 13 Any Other Business

Rabbi Zvi Solomons asked if there were plans to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day on 25 January 2020. Clare Hawkins said she was aware of school visits planned to the newly built Holocaust Memorial Centre in London.

Action: Janet Giddings to advise Members of local arrangements.

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

SACRE – 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019

SUE BALL

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

- Happens every day
- Whole School / Key Stage or Class
- *'In a Church school, the offer of a Christian understanding of the world and the place of humanity in it will be reflected in worship. In particular, it will be reflected in the everyday life of the school, quietly respectful of the beliefs of others and of other faiths, but confident in its own faith.'*

*From 'The Way Ahead' (3.28)*

- Church school worship should be central to the life of the school. All schools have pupils with widely differing experiences of worship in their own faith and many will have no experience of worship outside school. It is our task to provide pupils with a secure context in which to experience Christian worship and reflect upon the impact of worship in their own lives and the lives of the people around them.

## COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:

- These are the schools for which the SACRE has responsibility and the current legislative framework was originally set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act and reiterated in the 1996 Education Act. Summarised the main points are as follows:
- There must be a daily act of worship for every pupil. This can be at any time of the day in any normal school grouping. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, after consultation with the governing body to ensure this happens. Except in special circumstances, and after consultation with governors, the act of worship should take place on school premises.
- Collective worship is distinct from assembly which can be a gathering for a wide variety of reasons. The majority of worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, meaning it should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief. It can contain non-Christian elements or on occasions contain no Christian elements, provided that throughout each term, the majority of the worship complies with the broad traditions of Christian belief.
- Worship must be appropriate to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. Worship must not be denominational.



# IDEAS



■ <https://www.worshipworkshop.org.uk/>



# FIRST STEPS IN WORSHIP

## Call to Worship

- Peace be with you - *And also with you*
- *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, The love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all*
- Come and listen to the word of God , *for He will fill us with joy.*
- **THINK:** *Which religions welcome their members to an act of prayer of worship? How do we greet visitors in our school?*

Handout: First Steps in Worship

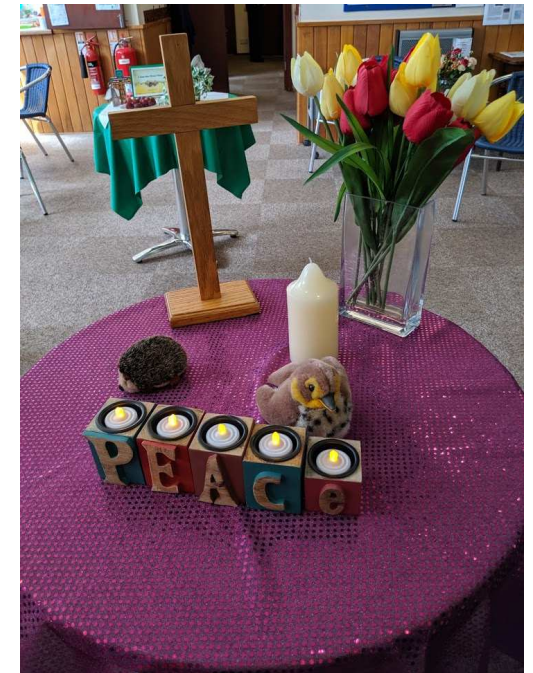


# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP WORKSHOP

- Year 4, 5 or 6 children trained to lead worship
- Five activities: writing prayers/ drama/ laying the table/ planning worship using the website and using the psalms to create a new song



# LAYING THE TABLE



# MONITORING

- [https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/school\\_worship/school-worship-bible-monitoring/](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/schools/school_worship/school-worship-bible-monitoring/)

Three aspects to our monitoring:

- Attributes and Theology (this includes planning);
  - Personal impact;
  - Community impact.
- **Who monitors?**
  - Just as, in a church school, worship is to be experienced by the whole community, so worship should be monitored by a range of people from the community which will include governors, teachers, parents and children. This may well necessitate some level of training so that monitoring is consistent and to ensure that the evidence collected will be helpful in making evaluations.



<b>Worship Monitoring Criterion grid:</b> use this grid to help create a focus for monitoring of worship. Use one group (or possibly two groups) of statements as a focus for monitoring activity. A group is all the statements in one box. If two people monitor the same act of worship each could choose a different group.		
Elements and Theology—Liturgy	Personal response	Community Response
<u>Worship:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is an expression of the school's Christian vision</li> <li>is invitational and creative</li> <li>contributes to and develops the Christian vision, values and ethos of the school</li> <li>is inclusive and accessible to all who participate and promotes dignity and respect</li> <li>is given priority by school leaders</li> </ul>	<u>Pupils:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>articulate the impact of worship on themselves and relate the school's vision and associated values to their own attitudes, behaviour, relationships and positive choices</li> <li>reflect on local, national and international events</li> <li>are given opportunities to respond to disadvantage, deprivation and the exploitation of the natural world</li> <li>explore compassion and concern for justice</li> </ul>	<u>The School Community:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>relates worship to the school's Christian vision and associated values</li> <li>puts great value on the place of collective worship</li> <li>demonstrates courageous advocacy in service to others including charitable and other social actions in response/connection to worship themes</li> <li>is enabled to participate with integrity and dignity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhances spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of participants provides opportunities for prayer, spiritual reflection, stillness, praise, song, story</li> <li>respects and at times acknowledges other expressions of faith</li> <li>gives an opportunity to consider British Values</li> <li>encourages pupils' aspiration and resilience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>are encouraged to explore the value of personal prayer and reflection as part of their own spiritual journey</li> <li>respond positively to opportunities for spiritual growth and development and encounter opportunities for progressively deeper exploration of spiritual questions</li> <li>appreciate the purpose of prayer and reflection in formal, informal, personal and public settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is given opportunities to consider spiritual, moral (and ethical), social, and cultural issues of direct relevance to the school</li> <li>joins confidently and sensitively in prayer and regularly contributes appropriate prayers to worship.</li> <li>experiences worship and prayer which contributes to the spiritual development of its members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>includes Biblical material and Jesus' teaching</li> <li>reflects local practice and incorporates features of other Christian traditions</li> <li>reflects the seasons (festivals) of the Church year</li> <li>provides opportunities to explore global life through appropriate links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>appreciate the relevance of faith in today's worlds and the importance of the freedom to express this faith in worship</li> <li>understand the central position of Jesus Christ and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Christian faith</li> <li>identify clearly the (some) distinctive features of different Christian traditions in worship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is offered a rich experience of worship which includes a range of leaders, involving pupils, staff, clergy and representatives from different Christian traditions, together with a variety of settings for acts of worship</li> <li>responds positively and participates willingly in worship</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is inspiring and transformational.</li> <li>provides opportunities to gather, engage, respond, and depart in a variety of ways</li> <li>is lively and includes a range of creative opportunities e.g. music, silence, art, poetry, dance, drama</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respond positively, participate willingly and enjoy contributing to collective worship</li> <li>take responsibility for particular aspects of worship in an appropriate way for their ages</li> <li>regularly plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is included in planning and leading acts of worship</li> <li>encourages partnerships with the local church</li> <li>Seeks training for all leaders of worship, including clergy</li> </ul>

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# Collective Worship Guidance and Sample Policy 2017

There has been no significant change in the law about collective worship since the Education Reform Act of 1988 or the Education Act of 1996.

## Collective worship: The facts of life

### *Church Schools, Free Schools and Academies:*

It is important at the outset to make it clear that the following explanation of the legal requirements does not apply to voluntary aided and controlled church schools. They have to provide daily worship like all other schools but they do not come under the remit of the SACRE for collective worship advice. They should seek guidance from their diocese.

Obligations in relation to collective worship for academies should be set out in their funding agreements.

### *Community schools:*

These are the schools for which the SACRE has responsibility and the current legislative framework was originally set out in the **1988 Education Reform Act and reiterated in the 1996 Education Act**. Summarised the main points are as follows:

There must be a **daily** act of worship for **every** pupil. This can be at any time of the day in any normal school grouping. It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher, after consultation with the governing body to ensure this happens. Except in special circumstances, and after consultation with governors, the act of worship should take place on school premises. **Collective worship** is distinct from **assembly** which can be a gathering for a wide variety of reasons.

The **majority** of worship must be **wholly** or **mainly** of a **broadly Christian character**, meaning it should **reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief**. It can contain non-Christian elements or on occasions contain no Christian elements, provided that throughout each term, the majority of the worship complies with the broad traditions of Christian belief.

Worship must be **appropriate** to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. Worship must **not** be denominational.

**The basic requirement is that there should be an act of collective worship for all registered pupils every school day. (Section 385.1 EA 1996).** There are only two exceptions to this: parents have the right to withdraw their child(ren) from all or parts of collective worship and pupils in school sixth forms are permitted to decide for themselves whether to attend or not.

**None of this legislation applies to special schools.**

### *Exceptions*

In some schools, for religious reasons, collective worship that *'reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief'* is deemed to be inappropriate for its pupils. In such cases it is possible for a school to apply for a *determination*. The procedure does not lift the duty to provide daily collective worship; it allows for the requirement that collective worship should be *'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'* to be lifted. Applications for determinations are made to the relevant body by the head teacher after consultation with parents and the school's governing body. Traditionally it has been a function of the SACRE to receive and 'determine' whether such requests are valid, either granting or refusing them and this still applies in the case of community schools without a religious character. The body now responsible for performing this function for Free Schools and Academies is the Education Funding Agency (EFA). All determinations last for five years.



## Good practice in Collective Worship

### *Aims and Purpose*

Collective worship should be beneficial to the whole school community. It should therefore aim to bring the school community together, in an attitude of reverence and reflection.

Creating effective and meaningful collective worship involves paying attention to:

- the importance of atmosphere
- the respect of pupil and teacher integrity
- the promotion of spiritual (not synonymous with religious), moral, social and cultural development. This may include
  - a recognition of the uniqueness of each individual
  - helping pupils to develop the capacity to transcend the limitations of the physical world
  - helping to lift the horizons of pupils beyond the materialistic
  - being creative
  - considering ultimate questions about the meaning of life in general and pupils' own lives in particular
  - developing positive attitudes and hope.
- a range of experiences

The expectation is that school worship will be inclusive, participative, challenging and educational, drawing on a wide range of religious traditions without compromising the religious or non-religious backgrounds of pupils (and staff), whilst giving those for whom it is appropriate the opportunity to worship God.

This is possible because the legislation allows for a considerable degree of flexibility. The word *collective* implies something significantly different from *corporate* which was the word used to describe worship in schools prior to 1988. *Corporate* is generally understood to mean worship which is the voluntary response of a corporate body of believers. *Collective* worship is unique and different. It gives us the opportunity to do just that - to collect together, to meet together. **It is a collection of differences** – different faiths, different cultures, different ages and different backgrounds. It is a focal point of the day in any school community where all ages can/might meet one another, share together and establish a shared sense of identity.

The invitation to choose to provide worship which is either wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character opens up opportunities for variety and breadth which enables the inclusion of secular material and teachings and stories from other religious traditions. Reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief suggests an approach which is not exclusive, something which reflects plurality and focuses not on doctrine or traditions of worship but on belief that is broadly Christian.

### *Planning for worship*

Creating an appropriate atmosphere in the space to be used for worship is important. This might be in the classroom with a single class or a larger space with more children representing a wider diversity. Sometimes when the whole school is assembled, staff use this as an opportunity for things other than worship – which of course means this is not 'whole school' worship. Whether in classroom or school hall the transition between other aspects of the day and the act of worship needs to be facilitated. Creative ways need to be found. Symbols and artefacts can work really well to bridge and mark the transition. Candles, music, pictures and many other things can be used to signify the beginning of worship. To light a candle for a specific person or purpose significant to the school community/key stage/year group/class on that day marks a moment of togetherness, readiness to be together in a different way, to worship. For older children known prayer or prose patterns that are communally said together can achieve the same.

## Suggestions for Worship

- **Prayer** is as simple and honest, as liturgical and responsive as you want it to be. The range of resources is enormous but it's worth remembering that possibly the best resource is the children themselves when they freely write/offer their prayers in their own words.
- **Singing/music:** there are amazing resources available. Kevin Mayhew ([www.kevinmayhew.org.uk](http://www.kevinmayhew.org.uk)) is one of the top publishers of resources of music books and CDs. New songs written every year that are appropriate for collective worship. It is important never to get trapped into relying on the old ones from yester-year or deciding that all the old songs are part of the past and not relevant to the present day in school worship. *Out of the ark* ([www.outoftheark.co.uk](http://www.outoftheark.co.uk)) music and *Redhead Music* ([www.redheadmusic.co.uk](http://www.redheadmusic.co.uk)) are both popular resources with schools – go to their websites for songs for Easter or Harvest or everyday assemblies and music for all occasions. They also publish other songwriters for both KS1 and KS2, offering rich material to facilitate excellent musical worship. Although musicians in the school are of great value in supporting worship, there are obvious benefits to using CDs: they can be used in any room or corner in which you may find yourself whether it be the computer area, classroom carpet corner or the hall with the whole school and, of course they can be available simultaneously for different groups gathered in different parts of the school for worship. Using actions and repetitive action routines, often choreographed by pupils themselves, allows everyone, even those who cannot read the words or speak English, to join in and have fun.
- **Story telling:** Schools are good at selecting stories from a wide range of sources, including religious texts, to use in collective worship. It is important to remember that stories specifically from religious traditions are used within faith communities not just to teach moral messages but to communicate something of beliefs about God. When used in inclusive collective worship, their origin should be made clear and that they are sharing the perspective of a particular religious group. That doesn't devalue their use because children and adults who do not share the particular religious faith can still find something of value in a good story. The Bible, for example, can be a rich resource for collective worship. There are so many different children's or youth versions of the Bible appropriate for use in collective worship for all different ages. The Street Bible by Rob Lacey is an example which brings the Bible alive with prose that conveys the meaning with an approach that will resonate with children who want to be surprised by the Bible making such sense and impact rather than old language and irrelevance to life. The Bible offers stories of adventure, journey, poetry or songs of lament, creation, friendship, parables and miracles, fights and famines.
- **Art:** art, religious paintings and pictures offer a rich resource for collective worship, particularly with the ease of access we enjoy through the internet. There is an example of a school which used the painting of *I stand at the door and knock* to great effect to get children to ponder what it was they would allow into their lives and what it was they would keep out and to which the door would be kept shut. This was a secondary school act of collective worship and it resonated with so many of them as they later discussed what it was that they needed to allow in and keep out.
- **Visitors** provide information on causes and organisations, personal testimony and interview opportunities. They can be an enriching source of ideas. It is wise to brief them carefully and share the school's understanding of collective worship. Some visitors might lead an act of worship; others will contribute to worship which is being led by someone else.
- **Stillness/Silence:** there are few, if any, moments in which complete stillness can descend on a school community without a test or exam being in progress. In collective worship silence and stillness create powerful moments for thinking and listening. 'Drop thy still dews of quietness till all our strivings cease' is a truth to be experienced by the whole school community as they face the usual busy, urgent, rolling programme of learning and achieving. The gift of silence is a gift that can be learnt and practised in any school and collective worship. It is best learnt when it is not the predictable pattern of every assembly but skillfully used with symbols such as light or water or candle flames and a guided intention of how to use the time of stillness.

- **Celebrations/Remembrances:** Collective worship provides opportunities to celebrate the key festivals that are part of the cyclical yearly pattern of worship. Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Eid, Divali, Vaisakhi or Passover – celebrations are all important, and so much of living faith is about celebration and fun. Collective worship must represent the fun as well as the stillness and reflection.
- **Ritual but not habitual:** the best collective worship is where there are repetitive symbols, songs or signs that single out the time of collective worship as a special recognisable time for the school community but it should never become so repetitive that it becomes predictable and boring. There is a necessary tension between predictability and creativity, between safeness and adventure during the times that the school sets aside for collective worship each day.
- **Other activities** can legitimately be called worship. Amongst these are:
  - reflection on the meaning of life
  - pondering ultimate questions
  - developing a sense of transcendence
  - responding to a challenge
  - learning from the experience of others

What follows is a sample collective worship policy. It includes a wide range of ideas that schools might want to include in such a document. It needs to be personalised and not all the elements included here will be found in all such policy statements.

## An Example of a Collective Worship Policy in a LA Maintained School

*Schools may use this example as a basis for their policy, if they wish. School policies have to be ratified by the governors every time they are amended. Some details which need to be amended more often than a policy is reviewed are better placed in an appendix which does not need to be governor approved every time it changes. References are made to an appendix throughout this example policy.*

The collective worship policy at \_\_\_\_\_ School pays due regard to statutory requirements, and has taken account of the guidance offered by the local authority through its SACRE. Collective worship is a valued and valuable part of school life and is taken seriously, because it shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

### Aims of collective worship

Collective worship in \_\_\_\_\_ School aims to provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to:

- experience a variety of styles of worship
- celebrate together e.g. festivals, school values, individual achievements
- build a sense of community/foster corporate identity;
- develop a reflective approach to living which sometimes encourages understanding of and invitation to prayer;
- look beyond the physical, material and measurable
- worship God or reflect on human values;
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
- 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

### Statutory requirements

By law, Collective Worship must

- take place for every child not withdrawn by their parents (post 16 students can withdraw themselves) every day
- be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils
- take place on the school premises, except on occasions, with agreement of governors

Therefore, at \_\_\_\_\_ School our collective worship reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. Not every act of collective worship must comply with this; just the majority so we can include material from other religions and non-religious world views.

### Collective Worship and the Curriculum

Collective worship time is distinct from curriculum time given to any subject including religious education. However, in \_\_\_\_\_ School, we aim to enable collective worship and aspects of children's classroom learning to be mutually supportive.

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.

### **The Management of Collective Worship**

The Headteacher is responsible for the provision of collective worship, supported by and after consultation with the governing body. The following arrangements exist to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate collective worship:

1. HT/DHT/delegated teacher draws up a rota for leading collective worship and themes for each week.
2. HT/DHT/delegated teacher 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.
3. 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.

*(Schools may wish to include a 'job description' for the collective worship co-ordinator/team in an appendix to their collective worship policy. Ideally this should not be the same person as the RE subject leader)*

### **The Organisation of Collective Worship**

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings in the school hall, or one of the multi-purpose rooms, or the classroom.

Acts of worship usually last for approximately 15 minutes, although it is recognized that this time will be shortened or lengthened when it is appropriate.

*(A description of the variety of groupings may also be included here or in an appendix)*

### **Leadership**

Every member of the school staff, pupils and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year. *(The appendix might include details such as a weekly leadership pattern)*

### **Planning Acts of Collective Worship**

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, as well as the balance between Christianity and other faiths.

Termly planning sheets *(could be included in the appendix)* list themes, special occasions and events, but there is flexibility to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. Weekly planning and recording sheets *(could be included in the appendix)*, enable the monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship.

Visitors are welcomed 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.

### **The Act of Collective Worship**

We use a variety of styles, active and interactive methods and a range of resources 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.

Where prayer is included in our acts of worship it is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to 'God' rather than Jesus as this is inclusive of the beliefs of our non-Christian religious pupils. We hope that pupils who prefer not to pray will use these moments to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Collective worship should not be confused with assembly. We often take the opportunity of pupils gathered together to share announcements and notices. Using a variety of strategies e.g. music, silence etc. we indicate clearly to all present when worship begins and ends.

### **Withdrawal**

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.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship and staff (and students in the sixth form) are also free to withdraw from involvement in this aspect of school life. We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the Head Teacher 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. Those pupils who are withdrawn from worship are cared for by a member of the school's staff; parents may provide suitable activities for children so withdrawn.

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**Worship Monitoring Criterion grid:** use this grid to help create a focus for monitoring of worship. Use one group (or possibly two groups) of statements as a focus for monitoring activity. A group is all the statements in one box. If two people monitor the same act of worship each could choose a different group.

Elements and Theology—Liturgy	Personal response	Community Response
<p><u>Worship:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is an expression of the school's Christian vision</li> <li>• is invitational and creative</li> <li>• contributes to and develops the Christian vision, values and ethos of the school</li> <li>• is inclusive and accessible to all who participate and promotes dignity and respect</li> <li>• is given priority by school leaders</li> </ul>	<p><u>Pupils:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• articulate the impact of worship on themselves and relate the school's vision and associated values to their own attitudes, behaviour, relationships and positive choices</li> <li>• reflect on local, national and international events</li> <li>• are given opportunities to respond to disadvantage, deprivation and the exploitation of the natural world</li> <li>• explore compassion and concern for justice</li> </ul>	<p><u>The School Community:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relates worship to the school's Christian vision and associated values</li> <li>• puts great value on the place of collective worship</li> <li>• demonstrates courageous advocacy in service to others including charitable and other social actions in response/connection to worship themes</li> <li>• is enabled to participate with integrity and dignity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enhances spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of participants provides opportunities for prayer, spiritual reflection, stillness, praise, song, story</li> <li>• respects and at times acknowledges other expressions of faith</li> <li>• gives an opportunity to consider British Values</li> <li>• encourages pupils' aspiration and resilience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are encouraged to explore the value of personal prayer and reflection as part of their own spiritual journey</li> <li>• respond positively to opportunities for spiritual growth and development and encounter opportunities for progressively deeper exploration of spiritual questions</li> <li>• appreciate the purpose of prayer and reflection in formal, informal, personal and public settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is given opportunities to consider spiritual, moral (and ethical), social, and cultural issues of direct relevance to the school</li> <li>• joins confidently and sensitively in prayer and regularly contributes appropriate prayers to worship.</li> <li>• experiences worship and prayer which contributes to the spiritual development of its members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• includes Biblical material and Jesus' teaching</li> <li>• reflects local practice and incorporates features of other Christian traditions</li> <li>• reflects the seasons (festivals) of the Church year</li> <li>• provides opportunities to explore global life through appropriate links</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appreciate the relevance of faith in today's worlds and the importance of the freedom to express this faith in worship</li> <li>• understand the central position of Jesus Christ and God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Christian faith</li> <li>• identify clearly the (some) distinctive features of different Christian traditions in worship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is offered a rich experience of worship which includes a range of leaders, involving pupils, staff, clergy and representatives from different Christian traditions, together with a variety of settings for acts of worship</li> <li>• responds positively and participates willingly in worship</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is inspiring and transformational.</li> <li>• provides opportunities to gather, engage, respond, and depart in a variety of ways</li> <li>• is lively and includes a range of creative opportunities e.g. music, silence, art, poetry, dance, drama</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• respond positively, participate willingly and enjoy contributing to collective worship</li> <li>• take responsibility for particular aspects of worship in an appropriate way for their ages</li> <li>• regularly plan, lead and evaluate acts of worship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is included in planning and leading acts of worship</li> <li>• encourages partnerships with the local church</li> <li>• Seeks training for all leaders of worship, including clergy</li> </ul>



## Collective Worship Monitoring Record 1

*The material recorded in this form must be discussed with the Headteacher before it is shared with anyone else such as governors or working party.*

Context	
Date: 11/11/2019	Theme/Season/Festival - Remembrance
Age/Group Whole School	Led by
Environment/Atmosphere/Liturgy	
School Hall – music playing and children come in quietly showing respect	

Focus of Visit – from Criterion Grid	
<b>Worship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>enhances spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of participants provides opportunities for prayer, spiritual reflection, stillness, praise, song, story</li> <li>respects and at times acknowledges other expressions of faith</li> <li>gives an opportunity to consider British Values</li> <li>encourages pupils' aspiration and resilience</li> </ul>	Comments
Pupil Comments	
See Separate sheet	
General Comments / Content	

Next Steps – if appropriate	
Step	Action
	1.

Notes:

Context: Use these to give some background to the notes, this will show a link to the worship planning. The categories may not quite match the ones that you use in your school. Over time, the background gives an indication of the variety of experience offered to the school. Attach a copy of any planning.

Environment: This comment compliments the other contextual information and can provide evidence of impact as well as providing a guide to consistency in the use of liturgical

elements, music, focus images or table and ritual aspects such as lighting a candle; it may be useful to add pupil views of the impact of these things.

Focus of Visit: this is taken from the Outline Criterion Grid. The **area** is *one* group of statements from the grid. This ensures that whoever is doing the monitoring can concentrate on a limited range of evidence.

General Comments / Content: it *may* be appropriate to make a comment on content for age appropriateness, relevance etc. Do not just repeat the planning. Add any other comments that you may feel helpful. These might relate to another part of the Criterion Grid, particularly statements that require evidence over time.

Next Steps – *if appropriate*. Next steps should only be added after discussion with the Headteacher or Worship Coordinator.



## **Annual SACRE Report 2018-2019**

**(Sep 2018-Aug 2019)**

### **What is a SACRE?**

The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education has several aspects to its role. It:

- Advises the local authority on matters relating to collective worship and religious education
- Advises on methods of teaching and resources for religious education
- Decides whether or not to grant determinations to those schools which apply to have daily worship which is other than of a broadly Christian character
- Identifies the need for a revised religious education syllabus

To help with this endeavour the West Berkshire SACRE works with NASACRE (the National Association of SACREs). It has also joined with five other neighbouring SACREs to form the Pan-Berkshire SACRE Hub in order to undertake more significant projects than it could manage alone.

This report sets out a brief summary of the work of the West Berkshire SACRE over the academic year 2017-2018. The minutes of the meetings which give more detail can be found at

<http://decisionmaking.westberks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=354&MeetingId=4097>

The make-up and terms of reference can be found at the same address.

For more information about the role and business of the SACRE please contact:

The Clerk – Linda Pye: [Linda.Pye@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Linda.Pye@westberks.gov.uk)

Adviser – David Rees: [david@reesuk.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:david@reesuk.onmicrosoft.com)

Local Authority Officer – Rachel Manley: [headteacher@yattendon.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@yattendon.w-berks.sch.uk)

## **Membership**

This year has seen a lot of change in our membership. Councillors Sheila Ellison and Carol Jackson-Doerge, Advisers Alison Harris and Keith Harvey, and Mary Harwood all stepped down during the year. Grateful thanks was expressed to them for their hard work and commitment to SACRE.

Rachel Manley (Head Teacher at Yattendon Primary School) and David Rees (Reading RE Adviser) took over as Local Authority Officer and RE Adviser respectively. In addition, six more new members joined us during the year. Three had served on the committee previously: Mary Stagg (Group B), Maria Pratico (Group B) and Clare Nolan (Group C). The other three were Councillors Peter Argyle, Tony Linden and David Marsh.

David Taylor and Bernard Eggleton continued to serve as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Other active members included Val Bolan and Mobasshir Mushtaq, and we welcomed other occasional visitors.

## **Meetings**

Three meetings were held this year: 6 November, 6 March and 11 June. The first two were held at Thatcham Baptist Church and the third at Theale Green School.

Each of our three meetings was attended by a different Council Officer to take the minutes. Whilst we have appreciated this work being covered, for the sake of consistency and good communication it would be much more beneficial if a permanent Clerk were allocated to us as before. The minutes of our March meeting were lost before they could be delivered to the Committee, which was disappointing to say the least.

## **Actions and Budget**

As planned, we held three primary teachers' network meetings during the year, two run by Alison Harris and one by David Rees. These were well attended and much appreciated by teachers. David Taylor attended the existing secondary network meetings. We also continued to pursue those secondary schools not complying with the law over RE provision, and saw some encouraging developments, though not as much as is needed.

The planned discussion of Collective Worship was postponed until November 2019 when we could discuss this with Sue Ball. Our aim to contact primary schools who do not attend the network meetings proved too ambitious this year.

It was good to hear from Julie Webber about RE at Theale Green when we met there. During the year we also continued to encourage schools to use the *Crossing the Bridges* directory, and discussed initiatives taken by the Berkshire Hub (see below). We also heard about support for pupils fasting for Ramadan during exams.

We renewed our subscription to NASACRE during the year which had lapsed.

## **The Hub**

SACRE Chairs and professional advisers to the SACREs continued to meet each term to discuss work undertaken at hub level. During the year the hub recently won a Westhill Award to produce a series of videos interviewing representatives of different faiths in their places of worship, to be used in schools.

## Collective Worship

It has not been necessary to renew any determinations during this year. A determination is permission for a school to provide daily collective worship which is not 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.

## Public Examination Results

In 2019 there were ??? entries for GCSE Religious Studies. There was a ??% pass rate, with ??% achieving grade 4 or above, as compared to ??% nationally. This represents an improvement?? on last year's performance.

There were ?? entries for A level Religious Studies: There was a ??pass rate, with ?? achieving grade C or above.

## Membership of West Berkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education 2018-2019

Representing	Member	Meetings attended
<b>Group A</b>	<b>Christian denominations and other religions</b>	
	Mr. Mobasshir Mushtaq	1
	Revd David Taylor	3
<b>Group B</b>	<b>The Church of England</b>	
	Mrs Valerie Bolan	3
	Revd Mary Harwood	1
	Mrs Mary Pratico	1
	Mrs Mary Stagg	3
<b>Group C</b>	<b>Associations representing teachers</b>	
	Mr Bernard Eggleton	2
	Ms Clare Nolan	1
<b>Group D</b>	<b>The Local Authority</b>	
	Councillor Pamela Bale (to May 2019)	0
	Councillor Billy Drummond	0
	Councillor Sheila Ellison (to May 2019)	2
	Councillor Carol Jackson-Doerge (to May 2019)	0
	Councillor Peter Argyle (from May 2019)	1
	Councillor Tony Linden (from May 2019)	1
	Councillor David Marsh (from May 2019)	1
<b>Clerk</b>	Stephen Chard	1
	Janet Giddings	1
	Linda Pye	1
<b>Professional RE Adviser</b>	Alison Harris (to March 2019)	2
	David Rees (from March 2019)	1
<b>LA Adviser</b>	Keith Harvey (to March 2019)	2
	Rachel Manley (from March 2019)	1



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