

All Saints C.E. Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Reviewed: December 2022
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All Saints CE Primary School Policy for Acts of Collective Worship

Introduction

Daily worship and regular prayer are at the heart of life at All Saints School. Together they play a formative role in the life of our community by providing regular opportunities for the whole school, both staff and pupils to worship God, share beliefs, respond creatively and reinforce the Christian values that underpin our vision:

Seeking God in all we do

All Saints is a vibrant, compassionate community which provides a rich and varied curriculum that

**** promotes high standards, inspiring learners to embrace the future***

**** develops self-expression and confidence through creativity***

**** helps shape positive and respectful citizens***

**** enables all to live life to the full.***

Proverbs 3:5-6 is used in guiding pupils to understand 'Seeking God in all we do':

'Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;

In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your path straight'.

As a Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School our acts of worship policy follows the statutory requirements common to all schools, as set down in the 1988 Education Reform Act (now consolidated in the 1993 Education Act). It is rooted in the beliefs and practices of the Church of England, as established for the school under its trust deed, and following the advice of the Diocese of Chichester's Board of Education.

Background

Our school community is made up of children and families who attend All Saints Church and other churches, as well as some children of other faiths and denominations, and some with no experience of faith at all. The majority of our acts of worship take place within school but we also worship together in church for festivals of the church year and for significant events in the life of the school. The school values the Parish Church as a special and sacred place and our services in church are intended to strengthen the links between church and school.

Worship

Christian worship is the honouring of God. In worship we are made aware of God's presence in order to grow in his knowledge and love. Through worship we show our desire to please God, recognising him in praise and thanksgiving and sharing our concerns for ourselves and others. Worship is something we participate in and not something we watch.

Anglican Tradition

The school uses the acronym '**Blessed**' to identify its Anglican tradition:

Biblical – all teaching is rooted in the Bible

Liturgical – school worship follows a familiar pattern of the liturgy

Eucharistic – school Eucharist is held for older pupils as an extension of Collective Worship on special occasions

Symbolic – through use of elements such as cross, water, bread and wine and use of different colours to mark different seasons of the church's year

Seasonal - celebrating events in Jesus' life and church history in the annual calendar of festivals, seasons and saints' days

Ecumenical – leaders from different churches lead worship and this is representative of the background of the children who attend All Saints

Diverse – leaders from different backgrounds lead worship in their own style

Aims of Collective Worship

In keeping with the vision and aims of the school, Collective Worship at All Saints aims to

- Put God firmly at the heart of our school life and to help the pupils to understand that God is with us throughout the day, in whatever we do and say
- Provide an opportunity each day for quiet reflection on God's presence with us, both in school and in our world
- Promote Christian values through Bible stories, moral stories, prayer, music and drama
- Help the pupils to recognise the power of prayer as a means of communicating with God
- Contribute to the pupils' spiritual development and to help them to build up their relationship with God
- Foster a sense of awe and wonder and to celebrate all that is of value in life
- Introduce the pupils to the varied traditions of worship found within and beyond the Church of England
- Help the pupils to discover the qualities within themselves and others which provide a sense of purpose and meaning to life
- Ensure that all pupils feel at ease in our acts of worship, secure in the knowledge that they can participate at their own level
- Inspire pupils to reflect and respond creatively to express their thoughts resulting in memorable opportunities and outcomes for worship

Through sharing these experiences in Collective Worship All Saints School explores and strengthens the common Christian values that we share. Gathering together in a celebratory and participatory way helps build a loving, caring community where those Christian values are fully lived out and demonstrated in relationships across all members of our school.

Organisation

The whole school meet together every day for a 15 minute Act of Worship, led by a senior leader, other staff, a class, a group of pupils, the Vicar of All Saints, leaders from other local churches, our Open the Book teams or a visiting speaker. One worship a week celebrates the children's achievements where the children are encouraged to celebrate their talents and achievements. This helps us to cherish ourselves and others as unique and wonderfully made.

The usual pattern to weekly worship is:

Monday – SLT

Tuesday – Class Worship

Wednesday – Open the Book / Song worship

Thursday – Clergy and other church leaders

Friday – Celebration and achievement

The whole school meets together at All Saints Church to share in services for special times within the year including All Saints Day, Christmas and Easter and at the end of the year for a Leavers' Service. Different year groups or Key Stages help prepare and lead these services.

The Eucharist

Years 3, 4 5 and 6 pupils attend a Eucharist Service at special times within the school year such as Advent, Lent and Pentecost. The service begins with the full school following our regular pattern of worship and then the younger children leave just before the sharing of the Peace. Fr Russell prepares the children for the experience of the Eucharist and explains the significance of the service.

Prayer and Reflection

Prayer is central to the life of the school. A weekly prayer theme enables children to explore prayer in class linked to the worship focus. The Lord's Prayer and the Prayer of St Richard are used and sung throughout the school. There is a school prayer which is said frequently throughout the week, reflecting on all that we do, think and say as a gift for God each day.

A dedicated, central reflection area enables children personal time to engage with prayer and worship themes. Creative responses are promoted and welcomed. Prayer spaces and pop-up prayer opportunities are used to focus and consider certain points in the Church's year or for particular events in the life of the school. These provide an opportunity for children to learn to reflect and pray in a personal way and provide time to contemplate. Prayers are shared in classes at appropriate times of the day such as gathering or sending out time. Children join in with a thanksgiving prayer before lunch each day.

Content

Each Act of Worship follows the traditional liturgical structure of the Anglican Church and consists of:

Gathering: A call to worship and traditional Anglican greeting

Engaging: This is the part of the worship where the attendees are asked to join in with something. This might include; listening to a story or a prayer or a song, watching a play or joining in with a dance or activity, thinking about something. This is delivered in a variety of different ways suitable to the topic and age range of the children. Visual stimuli, audio visual resources, drama and other interactive pupil participation are used as appropriate.

Responding: This is the part of the worship where the attendees are given a time to reflect personally on the idea or theme we have explored or reading we have listened to. This often includes a quiet time for reflection, prayer or song.

Sending out: Attendees are reminded of the theme and given encouragement to take forward these ideas into the life of the school, living out the Christian Values to 'Seek God in all we do'.

A focus for worship

To provide a focus for worship a seasonal hanging is used on the table where the candles are placed. The school community friendship candle is then lit. Other items of focus are added as fits the theme.

A large, open box cross is used creatively to display and capture items along the worship journeys. It is central to visually celebrating the seasons of the year including, Harvest, Advent, Epiphany, Lent and Easter. Pupils contribute to the creation of this centrepiece.

Planning and approach

Worship journeys reflect our learning journey approach to the wider curriculum. Themes build up over a number of weeks so that pupils link their experiences in worship, deepening understanding. Planned over each term, worship experiences follow the church year. There is a focus on enabling pupils to understand the Bible timeline through worship. A variety of resources are used to plan appropriate material, including original material. Supporting resources are provided through Understanding Christianity, Roots and Fruits, Values for Life and other worship materials. The content is designed to reflect and reinforce the Christian vision and values of the school and covers the main seasons, feasts and festivals of the Christian year. All acts of worship are biblically rooted with Christian teaching at their heart.

Planning of worship is led by the SLT and RE lead. Special celebrations are planned and organised by teachers and pupils. Church leaders explore the theme in focus in their own style.

Creative engagement and response

Our creative and visual approach to worship aims to inspire engagement and response. Follow up activities and invitations for reflection are frequently provided. Displays around the hall, within the special cross and in the central reflection area, act as a visual reminder as the journey develops.

Large scale celebrations often draw the worship journey to a conclusion and involve classes and groups of children in leading special acts of worship. By exploring themes in depth, extended over a number of weeks, the worship journey can be reflected upon and evaluated by adults and pupils.



Song Worship

The pupils enjoy singing a wide range of worship music from a range of styles. They enter with a worship song which often reflects the current theme, and join in singing as the school gathers.

Pupils have many favourite songs. A clear favourite is our own school song 'The Dove of Peace' which was written by Year 6 to capture and reflect our vision and values.

Pupil involvement

Children are actively encouraged to participate in the planning of worship. Classes are fully involved in the planning of key services through: writing their own prayers, selecting songs, creating reflections and suggesting ways to engage the attendees through drama, dance, creative writing and other visual representations of their key message. Class led worship includes: Harvest – Year 4, All Saints Day – Year 5, Christingle – Year 2/3, Pentecost – Year 5, Leavers Service – Y6.

Areas around the school are used for special worship including the school grounds ('Jerusalem Journey'). Reflection stations are occasionally created in classrooms and outside, and are used to extend whole school worship.

Children from across the classes form the Spirit Team, who help to plan and lead class worship.

Church and Community Links

The school values its links with the church and parish of All Saints and more widely through links with ministers and leaders from other Christian traditions and denominations. Regular visits are made by church leaders from Christian Life Centre, Brighton Road Baptist Church, Lifespring Church, Southwater Elim Family Church, and St Mark's.

The Open Door group from All Saints have a special relationship with school and are invited to a special Christmas celebration each year.

Open the Book teams draw together members from different churches. They lead a dramatized worship once a fortnight, involving pupils of all ages.

Inclusion and withdrawal

Worship is a communal event and as many staff as possible attend. Parents are invited to services at the church.

Worship has a central place in school life but parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from this activity. Before reaching a decision to exercise this right, parents are encouraged to discuss the issue fully with the head teacher.

All children attend the daily Act of Worship, unless withdrawn by their parents.

Evaluation and Monitoring.

Information to evaluate the impact of Collective Worship is gathered in various ways including feedback from pupils, parents, staff and governors. Staff and governors talk with pupils about their experiences of worship and seek to understand its impact over time. The impact of collective worship is monitored through regular feedback from children and staff. Reviews are carried out by the RE lead and governors.