

Christ Church Primary School

Our School Vision:

'Starting the journey well'

As a Church of England community school, we
believe we can impact God's world for good,
grow in learning, love, wonder and faith and
seek together to flourish in the fullest way possible.

Collective Worship Policy

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Review Date: July 2023

Our Core Christian Values

Rationale

The vision statement of Christ Church Primary School informs the policy and practice of collective worship at the school. Collective worship is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian foundation values and ethos of the school.

Worship is central to the life and purposes of our school and will reflect the Christian understanding of God as Trinity. This will include belief in God the source of all being and life, belief in Jesus who reveals God's love by his life, death and resurrection and belief in the Holy Spirit who makes the presence of Jesus known in the world.

Aims

As a Church of England school in the heart of a diverse community in the east end of London, although we are distinctively Christian, we acknowledge and respect the many ways our children, parents, staff and governors approach God.

Through exploring Christianity, we want our children to promote our British Values of tolerance and mutual respect, fostering their curiosity. Our Christian values are at the core of everything we do; we foster spiritual and moral development within a caring multi-faith community. We teach our children to explore, identify and respect similarities and differences. We are all from God and will return to God. Although we are distinctively a Christian school, we acknowledge and respect that we all approach God in different ways. As a school we take pride in providing a learning environment where everyone in our school community feels welcome and where everyone feels happy to share their own beliefs, values and ways of life even if they are a person who does not follow a faith.

Reflection time during collective worship, allows the children to collect their personal thoughts and ideas. We enable children to develop and adopt skills to be mindful, understand the importance of self-care, being calm and reflective. This is a lifelong skill which will enable children to ground themselves and take care and prioritise their own well-being, mind-set and state of being. Taking time to understand their own beliefs and ideas.

We want our children to leave being religiously literate, to seek together to flourish in faith, wonder and love. The knowledge they learn we hope they will retain forever and form part of some of the lifelong skills they will implement throughout their lives.

Through collective worship in our school, we aim to:

- provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God.
- introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year.
- explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well-known Christian prayers, e.g. Lord's Prayer.
- strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school.
- celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God.
- encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them.
- foster a concern for others within the school and wider world.
- foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

Legal Framework

There must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude. (Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements are made to accommodate these children. Since this is a church school however, worship is central to its life and work and is regarded as a very important part of children's education.

Elements of Worship

The three elements of worship: **affirmation, celebration and response** are included in our daily acts of worship. Affirmation provides the children with the opportunity to affirm some value of ultimate worth, such as the importance of each person, which for Christians would be expressed in the image of God. The act of celebration is designed to mark what is affirmed through music, drama, reading, dance or acknowledgement of effort or achievement. Response is encouraged either collectively or individually through prayer or silent reflection.

The Daily Act of Worship

Worship is held every day. Every week we hold acts of worship for the whole school, emphasising the unity of the school, and, also, one class-based act of worship led by class teachers which is tailored more to the specific needs of different age groups. The school works closely with the team at Christ Church, Spitalfields, and wider local churches. Children are also encouraged to actively participate, leading parts of the worship and contribute with readings or prayers.

Worship is held in the hall, where there is a Bible and a wooden cross as a focal point. Three candles are lit to represent the Trinity at the start of each worship and as a sign of hope, peace and joy. Music is played as children enter and leave the hall to encourage an atmosphere of reflection. The Lord's Prayer is said regularly and also sung. A wide range of approaches are used in worship, including drama, discussion, reflection, reading, singing and prayer.

The children also attend services in Christ Church, Spitalfields each year: Harvest Festival, Christmas Carol Service, Lent, Pentecost and a service to celebrate the school's Founder's Day.

Parents are invited to join our Monday and Friday collective worship. As well as community celebrations held at Christ Church. Our regular pattern of worship is as follows:

Monday: celebration

Tuesday: church

Wednesday: singing

Thursday: school values

Friday: in-class (using Picture News) or community celebration

Themes

We have adopted six Christian values that form the basis of our vision and, therefore, impact on the planning of our worship and wider school life.

- *Autumn 1* - **Friendship**
- *Autumn 2* - **Peace**
- *Spring 1* - **Hope**
- *Spring 2* - **Forgiveness**
- *Summer 1* - **Courage**
- *Summer 2* - **Thankfulness**

Each value is looked at for a half term and worship is planned around this value, as well as being promoted throughout the school. Care is taken to ensure that understanding of each value is rooted in the Bible and the example of Jesus. Each value supports the school vision: Believe, Grow, Seek

We have added in significant dates in the Christian year and days of particular importance such as Remembrance Day. We are also able to respond to local, national or world events (or a need from the children), that merit reflection and prayers.

A range of resources are available to all staff from the Gloucester Diocese 'Values for Life' packs and on the Church of England and London Diocesan Board of Schools websites. Classes all have a special worship box that includes age appropriate Bibles and prayer books as well as a cross, a candle and other helpful resources and artefacts.

Role of the Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator is responsible for supporting staff in their planning of worship where necessary. The co-ordinator is also responsible for organising and replenishing resources and for monitoring all aspects of worship within the school.

Evaluation of Worship

The co-ordinator monitors whole school and class acts of worship throughout the year, alongside the head teacher and governors. The quality of worship in school is also evaluated by the children, staff and members of the Christ Church, Spitalfields team.

Faith ambassadors from the Upper school support the Co-ordinator in planning, evaluating and improving opportunities to develop the collective worship at Christ Church.

The school also works in partnership with other Church of England schools in Tower Hamlets and, also, the LDBS.

From time-to-time parents, staff and children are asked for their opinions through a questionnaire, in discussion groups and their views are taken into account in future planning of worship.

Review

The policy will be reviewed in July 2023 and presented to the school's governing body for approval.