

POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

This policy should be taken as part of the overall strategy of the school and implemented within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Church of England School.

Rationale

This policy has been formally adopted by the governing body, in consultation with the Headteacher and is consistent with the overall aims of the school.

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for pupils to:

- reflect on our chosen Christian Values of compassion, peace, endurance, thankfulness and friendship, values of a broadly Christian Nature and their own beliefs.
- create and participate in shared experiences of celebration, praise, worship and thanksgiving to God
- develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- respond to the worship offered

To provide an opportunity for children to worship in accordance with the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, the Trust Deed of the School and the recommendations of the Diocesan Board of Education.

Aims

To encourage children's natural sense of wonder of God's creation and to develop their qualities of curiosity, celebration and gratitude which form the foundation of worship.

To offer an opportunity for experiential understanding of worship in a way that is individual and appropriate for them and which allows them to function comfortably contemplating:

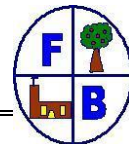
- The meaning of life,
- Responding to challenge,
- Experiential exploration of a religious idea,
- Celebration of learning about religion and
- Learning about the experiences of others

For younger pupils this religious identity will be derived from their family; older children may start to move more to a matter of personal conviction.

Worship must be structured so that each pupil can be happy either with the notion that the activity is an adventure into something which he or she identifies with, or is the exploration of something which is worth considering and exploring at a more distant, cautious level.

Guidelines

An act of worship will take place each day. Sometimes these will involve the whole school but on some days separate acts will be held for individual classes. Prayers are read at the start of lunchtime by either the class teacher or pupils.



At the end of each day the school prayer will be recited by all pupils before they are dismissed to their parents.

Distinguishing between assembly and worship.

DES circular 1/94 clearly separates the two, the gathering of the school community in an assembly is educationally an important activity, but it does not have to take place every day. Worship does have to be a daily act.

Worshipping Together

When the school meets together worship will be planned to be relevant, meaningful and inclusive of all and will allow for a variety of responses, from awareness and appreciation through respect and commitment to devotion and adoration. These acts of worship will be taken by members of staff, the Vicar, by carefully chosen visitors and by the children themselves.

Once per year each class will have the opportunity to lead a worship. The aim is to allow the children to be responsible for organising worship in their own way. There is a Beginners' Service at the start of the academic year for new Reception Children held in the village church and the Year Six children will also plan their final school Leaving Service. Parents and families are invited to join us for these services as well as services to celebrate special events such as Christmas, Harvest, Easter and Advent School/Church Day.

In addition worship will be held at the Parish Church of St. Michael, Flax Bourton, every second term. The school will also, where possible, take advantage of invitations to share our worship in the Diocesan Cathedral at Wells and other appropriate venues such as Barrow Gurney church.

Worship will follow topical themes, including reference to our five chosen Christian values (compassion, peace, endurance, thankfulness and friendship) and will also take account of the major festivals of the Church year. The aim will be to provide continuity and progression in considering issues and opportunities for children to develop spiritually over a period of time.

The RE lead provides a whole school with a termly Worship Plan to ensure all major festivals are covered along with themes.

Organisation

Collective worship will usually follow a recognisable format:

- a greeting taken from the Anglican tradition ('Peace be with you')
- the lighting of our 'Trinity candle' to signify that this is a 'special time' dedicated to worship.

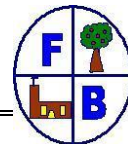
The worship element will be part of an assembly lasting for about fifteen minutes. It may also include elements of the wider curriculum, incorporating P.H.S.E.

There may be a hymn/song in an appropriate place which, wherever possible, will relate to the theme of the worship.

There will be a quiet time for reflection or a prayer. Prayers may be taken from collections of prayers, teacher's own resources or children's work. The worship leader may also use the Lord's prayer (which is displayed in the hall).

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"Aiming High, Respecting Others, Having Fun"



Worship will have a clear focus and will often involve pupil participation. Elements used in the assembly may include music (CDs, DVDs, singing, recorders etc.), listening to stories, Bible stories and other relevant passages, use of movement, mime, drama, artefacts and audio-visual material.

Any notices will be clearly separated from the act of worship. This is differentiated by the extinguishing of the candle/s before the notices so it clearly shows worship is over.

Equal Opportunities

The Education Reform Act 1988 makes provision for pupils and teachers to withdraw from Collective Worship. Parents wishing to exercise this right are asked to express their wish in writing to the Headteacher, school will then provide alternative provision.

Conclusion

Children should see the Act of Worship as a place where teachers and pupils may express joy and thankfulness, share concerns and experiences and affirm the beliefs and values of the school community and the Christian Church of which they are a part.

Headteacher:

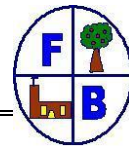
Signed:

Date:

Chair of Curriculum and Standards Committee:

Signed: (Chair of Governors)

Date:



Notes for visitors to the school

We welcome you to our school, to share our worship and praise time with us. In order for your visit to be a positive experience we would ask you to consider a few practical details. Near to your visit please confirm the time, date, venue and duration of the worship. Make sure that you know the age group, the number of audience, likely abilities and make any visual aids large enough to be seen from the back of a hall. Please discuss the timing and content of your talk with the member of staff responsible for visiting speakers, so that the children can be made familiar with your starting points.

The following notes are designed as an aide memoire and are given to all visiting speakers. Many of the points below will be obvious, however as talking to large numbers of people can at times cause apprehension, the points given below are intended only to set the calming atmosphere to which the children are accustomed.

The children should enter the hall quietly, sit down and be ready to listen to appropriate music for the assembly.

The greeting to the children is **"Peace be with you,"**
to which the children will reply... **"and also with you"**

This greeting is part of the Church of England Service ritual and as such reaffirms our connection with the church.

There is a trinity candle which should be lit and placed on a table at the front of the hall. Again because of possible danger, the candle should be lit by an adult. However at the end of the service it may be extinguished by one of the children. Select one of the children to read the trinity prayer as the candle is lit.

There is a screen hung on the front wall of the hall this may be used for data projection.

The worship time together is part of our pastoral role; please thank the children for inviting you to share this time with them. During our worship time together we hope that the children will learn about what it means to take religion seriously and how people can work together in a supportive society.

We are a school that supports and values equal opportunity; please encourage all children to be involved.

Our pupils come from a variety of backgrounds, not all of which are Christian. Please try to help the children to explore religion in an appropriate way. We would like them to see what it is like to take a belief seriously.

Please take time to talk to the children, they may be shy and will be hesitant to ask questions until they are sure of your response.

Young children often have difficulty with the adult skill of sight reading. If you would like a child to help in any way, please explain clearly what you would like the helper to do after which a member of staff will be happy to assist you by choosing a 'volunteer'.

Please be careful not to undermine the school in any way, (e.g. the school meals syndrome - 'We all know how horrible (maths, school meals etc.) are'.

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Please accept our sincere thanks for volunteering to visit the school to talk to the children. Outside speakers bring a new dimension to our time together and the children gain a great deal by being able to share their worship time.