

Ashford CE Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Approved by FGB: 4 March 2014
To be reviewed: Every 2 years

Collective Worship Policy

Principles

Our school is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school and works in partnership with our two local parish churches, St Hilda's and St Matthew's along with other Christian churches and groups. We aim to reflect the values, traditions and beliefs of the Christian faith and to demonstrate a continuing educational and pastoral concern within the life of the school and community.

Each member of our school community knows they are individually valued, unique and special to God and is committed to working together in a Christian spirit of co-operation, courtesy, care and consideration.

We see worship as a central part of school life and worship together daily, giving ourselves time to reflect, respond and revere.

This worship can be:

- Daily Worship In both Infants and Juniors.
At least once a week this is taken by a local church leader.
- Class Worship Each class worships together once a week where there are more opportunities for personal reflection.
- Celebration Worship Where the achievements of the children that have been entered into the Celebration Book and Golden Book are shared within the whole school worship. Class attendance is acknowledged. Staff achievement is also acknowledged when appropriate.
- Services in St Hilda's and St Matthews During the year we hold a range of services in our parish churches. Some are led by the children and others by the clergy. These include Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' services. Parents and Governors are invited to join us.
- Songs of Praise Once a week the whole school has Key Stage singing worship where they learn new hymns and faith songs.
- Prayer Each class has a prayer at lunch time and a prayer at the end of the school day. These may be led by a pupil or the class teacher.
- Prayer Tree All the children are encouraged to stop and write a prayer for the school prayer tree. These are periodically included in Collective Worship.

Collective worship takes place on a daily basis as a statutory requirement. This is either as a whole school, Key Stage or class worship as appropriate. They are wholly of a Christian character but can include discussions/ comparisons to world faiths and other religious festivals.

Aims of Collective Worship

To give our children opportunities to:

- explore and share Christian values and beliefs and to appreciate and understand their significance for those who hold them
- see the importance of Bible teaching in our daily life
- consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence

- think about the needs of others and to develop a sense of community, providing time to celebrate the example of members of the school and community
- reaffirm, interpret and put into practice the ethos and values of the school
- develop a sense of awe and wonder
- develop a caring attitude towards self and others
- come together as a school family

Although flexible, the format of Daily Worship should usually include:

- the children coming in and going out to music
- the lighting of a candle to set the atmosphere and indicate a special time for the children to reflect and think and remember that Jesus is the light of the world. {Any information that needs to be given to the children should take place either at the end or the beginning of Daily Worship when the candle is not lit.)
- a time for reflection on their own or others' experiences or on the theme of the worship (sometimes still and quiet)
- opportunities to learn more about the world in which they live
- prayer
- singing a song of praise
- when possible, children being involved in the worship
- children should have a time of reflection in the classroom after worship

Planning Worship

The Headteacher, Deputy Head teacher and RE Leader share responsibility for the planning, implementation and monitoring of Collective Worship. The RE Leader is responsible for the dissemination of information; 'in-house discussion' and attending relevant training courses.

All collective worship is planned on a termly basis and related, where possible, to notable dates in the calendar, and the LDBS Worship Calendar. They are interwoven with religious topics and Christian values such as forgiveness, patience, charity and justice. Each worship is planned by the person leading to ensure a variety of delivery and teaching styles.

On occasion the worship programme may be changed to reflect and respond to current affairs. Every effort is made to ensure worship is enjoyable and fun for all and actively involves the children where appropriate.

Leading Worship

Daily Worship is led by the Senior Leadership Team and by class teachers on a rotational basis.

All class teachers are expected to attend Church services, class worship and daily worships when led by the Vicar. The Vicar, Christian leaders and local Christian groups lead some acts of daily worship. Worship is valued in school and adults are encouraged to support and join worship where appropriate to reinforce the Christian ethos of the school.

Our St Matthew's Parish Vicar, our St Hilda's Parish Vicar and the children's worker from St Saviour's have a programme of fortnightly visits into school to lead worship. This ensures the children attend Collective Worship once a week taken by a church leader. Other Christian leaders such as the local, and very active branch of the Salvation Army and FACT (Faith Awareness in Children Trust) come into school every six weeks to lead acts of worship.

Visits from leaders of other faiths are welcomed.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Worship

The Senior Leadership Team, RE Leader and selected governors monitor Collective Worship to ensure that those who regularly lead it are observed once a year.

Evaluation is in the form of conversations with staff and pupils as well as observation and feedback from parents and other leaders of worship. This is to ensure we continuously strive to develop and improve on planning and delivery to ensure the children have a deeper understanding of Christian values and faith. The governors are given feedback on the effectiveness of Collective Worship in school on an annual basis.

Special Events

The school celebrates many important events in the Christian calendar. Each year the school celebrates Harvest, Christmas and Easter as well as many topical events. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to join these occasions.

Key Stage 1 and EYFS perform a Nativity and Key Stage 2 lead a Carol Service annually. Year group visits to either parish church are part of the RE scheme and visits to other places of worship are encouraged.

Right of Withdrawal

Ashford Church of England School is committed to valuing diversity and to equality of opportunity. We aim to create and promote an environment in which pupils, parents and staff are treated fairly and with respect, and feel able to contribute to the best of their abilities.

The Governing Body recognises that it is unlawful to take into account anyone's gender, marital status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, religious beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Full consideration has been given to this during the formulation of this policy as it is the governors' aim that no-one at Ashford Church of England School should suffer discrimination, either directly or indirectly, or harassment on any of these grounds.

Our Christian ethos pervades all areas of school life but we welcome those from all faiths to become part of our community. At the beginning of a person's relationship with the school, for example on a tour of the school for a new child or at an interview for a new member of staff, it is explained that by becoming part of a faith community, there is an agreement to embrace and accept our ethos by taking part in RE lessons and acts of worship. Of course, we accept that in some cases, parents may wish to exercise their statutory right, under section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, to withdraw their children from this, and that parents are not obliged to give a reason for requesting withdrawal. Teachers may wish to do the same with regard to the teaching of RE. Such requests should be made to the headteacher in writing. We trust, however, that through open communication at the outset and a clear message about the vision and values of the school, such situations will be rare.

Safety

All activities in Collective Worship are carried out with due consideration for the children's safety at all times.

First agreed by Governing Body: March 2014