

ST LAWRENCE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, LECHLADE

Worship Policy

'Start Children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it'. Proverbs 22: 6

i. Introduction & Rationale

The Trust Deed and school ethos statement informs the policy and practice of collective worship in St. Lawrence CE primary School, which is a VA (Voluntary Aided) school with the majority of governors being foundation governors. School worship is an affirmation and celebration of the Christian foundation values and ethos of the school and provides a space and a place for telling the story of Jesus. In our school, we seek to provide a community that will actively sustain and guide pupils. School worship provides an opportunity for the mutual giving and receiving of worth within a zone of freedom where individuals can make informed choices.

Worship is central to the life and purposes of our school and will reflect the Christian understanding of God as Trinity- Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 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.

Prayer and time to reflect are part of each school day and pupils are encouraged to pray in a variety of creative and stimulating ways.

ii. Aims

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, allowing the expression of an encounter with God in both verbal and non-verbal ways
- provide creative opportunities for reflection, participation and enjoyment where children can be actively involved, take part in special time that encourages calm, stillness and peace
- introduce children to explicitly Christian language and imagery and the cycle of the Church Year so that children are offered a pattern of meanings and a symbolic framework, which begins to integrate and explain personal experiences
- explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers and introduce children to well-known prayers e.g. the Lord's Prayer
- explore the variety and depth of God's written Word in the Bible, as a foundation of Christian worship
- strengthen and support the school community, giving expression to and reaffirming the core Christian values agreed by all stakeholders in the school. Worship will provide a shared experience, which is educational in nature, a time when individuals can inwardly

reflect and when the school community together can explore ways of living which reflect the shared values and vision of the school

- develop a sense of self-worth and 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, especially in the context of the global Church and the Anglican Communion
- foster an appreciation of and awareness of our responsibility for the created world
- encourage respect of others' religious beliefs and practices, whilst maintaining our Christian distinctiveness
- foster a sense of beauty, awe and wonder and feelings of pride, pity, compassion etc. through exploring the spirituality of life and experience
- to offer worship opportunities within the local church community

iii. Legal Framework

In accordance with National Society guidelines there must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils, which takes account of their age and aptitude (Education Act 1944, Education Reform Act 1988). Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

However, in our church school, Christian worship has a central place and is regarded as a vital part of pupils' education. There is an expectation that parents would meet with the headteacher to explore their reasons for requesting withdrawal. The governors have the responsibility for worship in a church school in consultation with the headteacher. There is an expectation and requirement that staff will be fully involved in worship in this school

iv. Organisation

- 6 core Christian values have been identified by the school through consultation with staff, pupils, parents and governors. These are:

Truthfulness; Forgiveness; Trust; Respect; Responsibility; Friendship

The values are taught in worship times and through cross curricular themes. School policies should reflect these values at all times.

- Pupils are supported in making links between Bible stories and the Christian values of the school.
- Worship is planned in long, medium and short term by the worship coordinator (HT) and all other staff members. A Worship Planner is maintained and developed by the senior staff team and shared with all other staff and worship leaders.
- Worship takes account of the Church Year, the Bible as an authoritative source of inspiration and learning, and the Church of England's commitment to ecumenism and dialogue with other faiths.

- Worship is planned into each school week as follows:

	Time and type of worship	Led by:
Monday	9:10 Whole school	Head Teacher / Vicar
Tuesday	10:10 Open The Book / whole school alternate weeks	OTB team / M Crampton
Wednesday	9:10 Worship through singing	A Massey / C Howard
Thursday	Staff / pupil led worship	Teacher rota
Friday	2:45pm Celebration worship	Deputy / Head Teacher

- The worship space is made special, we ensure the atmosphere for worship is created by using:
 - the liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church year, Christian signs and symbols, candles, music, a focal point, ritual and liturgical responses, how the children are seated, an outdoor area, the local church
- Children contribute to worship: through planning and participation in a meaningful and thoughtful way, being encouraged to ask and answer questions, acting a story, miming to a story, reading, using pupils' artwork, using poems or prayers written by the pupils, allowing children to present and lead worship.
- Worship is evaluated and monitored by the worship coordinator and by pupils in school. Evaluation sheets are available for children to complete and reflect on their experiences. Foundation governors monitor and record the impact of worship through observation and participation in sessions and pupil conferencing.

Possible lines of question - how did the worship time give- a sense of special time and place, opportunity to focus on matters of worth to individuals, the school community or the wider world, a sense of occasion that allowed for an encounter with God, how particular acts of worship have made an impact on school life and practice?

v. Reviewing Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Christian Ethos Committee and the full governing body.

vi. Church School Distinctiveness

St Lawrence is a Church of England School proud of its strong distinctive Christian tradition. Therefore we endeavour to embed the Christian distinctiveness and biblical teachings into our policies, day to day values and everyday practice.

***I am important to God and so are you.
Be kind to each other in all that we do.
When someone is talking, listen to them.
Remember good manners again and again.
Respect your own and others' things.
Behave kindly for the goodness it brings.
Let the teacher teach and the children learn.
With God's help, let's take care of our school every term***

Approved by the governing body on 12 Oct 2022

Review date: Oct 2024