



Kington St Michael CE School

Collective Worship and Spirituality Policy

Rationale

Kington St Michael School is a Voluntary controlled, Church of England, non-selective primary school. As such, we are subject to the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988 and the Education Act 1993, as outlined in Circular 1/94 "Religious Education and Collective Worship".

Collective worship is central to the life of the school and is held for everyone in the school community. The Diocesan guidelines for collective worship are followed and worship is in accordance with the teachings of the Church of England.

We seek to lead people to the threshold of worship by providing a setting where they may worship God if they so wish.

Aims

- To offer opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- To provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God
- To consider spiritual and moral issues
- Encourage participation and response
- To develop a community spirit
- To share with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith, at an appropriate level and thereby give them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework.
- To help children discover their place in the world
- To promote a common ethos and shared values
- To establish, explore, and reinforce the common Christian values of the school community such as love, peace, kindness, compassion
- To learn to develop an interest in, and have the ability to, reflect upon the world around them, including respect for individual and cultural differences and a personal appreciation of beauty and pleasure
- To enable children to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to the community, and to respect the integrity of all individuals as a child of God
- To help children to explore and share beliefs
- To consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence
- To provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery
- To encourage a sense of awe and wonder
- To express inner thoughts and feelings through art, story and music
- To foster respect for others and an appreciation of the importance of religious beliefs for many people
- To affirm school values and foster a sense of fellowship by bringing pupils together as a community
- To encourage pupils to actively reflect on their own experiences and the experiences of others
- To provide opportunities for celebration
- To share emotions such as love, hope, friendship, acceptance, fear, reverence, forgiveness, and trust.
- Nurture and encourage respect and care for God's created world
- Provide opportunities for spiritual, social and moral development
- To reinforce positive attitudes

The Character of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at Kington St Michael CE School is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character", as stated in the Education Reform Act 1988s 7(1) and Education Act 1993s 138(2).

However, we include in our acts of worship the traditions of other religions or elements drawn from a number of faiths.

Pupils who do not come from Christian families should be able to join in the daily act of collective worship even though this would, in the main, reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief (Education Reform Act 1988s.6(1)).

Collective Worship at our school is related to the day to day life, the aspirations and concerns of our pupils and the school and seeks to preserve the integrity of all of our members. We come together to affirm and celebrate experiences of work to us all. Our collective worship is something special and separate from ordinary school activities and may be directly or indirectly concerned with reverence given to God.

In order to create a good learning environment we aim to:

- Link the gospel of Christ with the daily life of the school
- Create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance and respect
- Develop a sensitivity to individual needs where children's confidence and self-esteem grow and where they feel able to make mistakes without fear of criticism

Organisation and Content

- An act of collective worship happens daily, either in the school hall, classroom or church
- Collective worship is usually conducted as a whole school but is as a key stage or class once each week and with parents when in church
- We try, as a school, to create a worshipful atmosphere, by encouraging the children to be quiet and reflective before, during, and after Collective Worship
- We practice some Anglican traditions (eg. Lord's Prayer, candle lighting, etc.)
- We celebrate the Church's year and use the Church's colours in displays in recognition of the seasonal and cyclical nature of Anglican observance
- This involves the use of props to focus attention (e.g. altar table, cloth and candle)
- Introductory music is played to create a worshipful atmosphere
- The singing of hymns or appropriate songs
- We include time for "reflective thought" as well as prayer during Collective Worship
- Collective Worship is generally led by one or more members of staff. Each week we welcome a visiting speaker in Collective Worship and these include Ministers and lay preachers
- Collective worship is based on the Values for Life Scheme
- We record assemblies which have been undertaken and these records are kept by the Collective Worship co-ordinator
- Collective Worship takes place every day in school
- A leaflet is provided to all visiting members of clergy which describes the practices we expect to follow during collective worship
- Collective worship is planned and monitored
- Planning follows a rolling programme, taking account of religious festivals, events and celebrations (local, national and topical) and the life and needs of the school community, linked to the Value for Life document
- Planning ensures that specific traditions and festivals are studied and links made to bible stories and values
- Themes and values are shared with visiting leaders of collective worship well in advance
- A range of strategies are used in collective worship so as to involve pupils, such as drama, puppets and IT
- Monitoring takes place throughout the year by visiting members of the clergy, a foundation governor, the subject leader and pupils
- Pupil voice is very important to us in delivering effective collective worship
- Our Collective Worship Council meets each term and also leads an act of collective worship (minutes are available on our school website)
- The traditional Lord's Prayer is said in some Collective Worship, as well as our school prayer
- Class prayers, written by the children and the lunchtime prayer are said daily

Monday: Whole school Collective Worship

Tuesday: Class Collective act of worship (written and led by pupils)

Wednesday: Whole school Collective Worship with visiting church representative

Thursday: Music Assembly – hymns and songs are learned and practiced

Friday: Celebration Assembly - children's achievements are celebrated and reflected upon.

The link governor and subject leader with responsibility for Collective Worship will monitor and evaluate Collective Worship throughout the year.

We aim to offer the pupils the opportunity to:

- Recognise the place a Christian faith has in the lives of people
- Develop a sense of wonder, awe, curiosity and mystery
- Understand the difference between right and wrong and the consequences of their actions for themselves and for others
- Be creative, questioning and imaginative within a broad Christian framework that recognises the importance of experience, personal values and respect for the beliefs of others
- Recognise, respect and celebrate cultural diversity
- The older children are able to discover the value of meditation and silence, through meditation sessions run each month

Resources

- A variety of Teachers' Assembly Books (stored in the Hall)
- A variety of books giving examples of prayers and reflective thoughts
- A range of versions of the Bible
- Values for Life Scheme
- School documents
- School planning document to link Values and Bible stories
- Evaluation forms
- Collective Worship observation forms

Right of Withdrawal

The Education Reform Act 1988 and the Education Act 1993 reaffirms parents' rights established in the 1944 Education Act to withdraw their children from collective worship if they wish. The act of collective worship in a LA maintained, voluntary controlled or grant-maintained school cannot be a condition of school attendance. If a parent wishes their child to be excused wholly or partly from an act of worship then the school must comply. Parents do not have to state their reasons. The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parent from collective worship. Further guidance is given in Circular 1/94 paragraph 85/87.

All teachers also have the right not to participate in Collective Worship.

At Kington St Michael CE School, we ask for written notice of the parents' desire to withdraw their child from Collective Worship, addressed to the Headteacher. Children will be provided with supervision, but will not be given extra work to complete, in addition to what they have already been set by their class teacher.

Spirituality

The school aims to support each individual and encourage them to flourish. Pupils are encouraged to explore and develop their own values and beliefs (which may or may not be Christian), and to appreciate the richness and diversity of the world. This is coupled with the promotion (and modelling) of high standards of personal behaviour and positive, caring, attitudes - all based on a firm bedrock of Christian values.

The "building blocks" of Spiritual Development have been defined by the National Society and OFSTED under several headings:

Self Awareness or Self Knowledge

All humans need to be aware of, and acknowledge, their own inner life of thoughts, feelings and emotions. What does it mean to be human? This is an important part of developing self-respect, a sense of identity and self worth. In turn, this enables us to value and respect others. Pupils should be given a range of opportunities to reflect upon and discuss their beliefs, feelings and responses to personal experiences.

Forming Relationships

An important part of personal growth is being able to develop relationships with others, recognising them as people of worth and value. This includes developing a sense of community and building social relationships. Pupils should be given the opportunity to develop an understanding of both their individual and group identity and to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships.

Asking Ultimate Questions

This is the search for meaning and purpose in life. It involves asking questions such as “Why me?” in times of suffering, or “What happens when you die?” The youngest children often ask the most profound questions of this type, and deserve to be taken seriously when they do so. It is important that this area of reflection and challenge is encouraged, not stifled. Ultimate questions are not limited only to RE and collective worship, but can arise at any time.

Uncertainty, Awe and Wonder

In historical and spatial terms each individual is insignificant. An awareness of one’s place in the world enables a person to live with natural doubt and uncertainty and encourages the search for meaning in life. When faced with eternity and infinity, or the wonders of the natural world and human achievements, feelings of awe and wonder are also a natural response. For some this may include experiencing feelings of transcendence which give rise to belief in the existence of God. It may also encourage a belief in ideals and possibilities of rising above one’s present experience of the world (e.g. by adopting and supporting specific causes or issues). Pupils should be given opportunities to reflect on, consider and celebrate the wonders and mysteries of life and to experience moments of stillness and reflection.

Beliefs and Values

This is the search for, and development of, personal beliefs and values which may or may not be shared with other members of the community. This naturally may include the development of religious beliefs, and it is an important role of any church school to be a supportive environment in which people can explore and clarify their own beliefs.

Creativity

This is the exercising of the imagination or intuition and insight so as to express one’s innermost thoughts and feelings, especially through the creative arts. Creative work can be an important vehicle for exploring some of the other areas of spiritual development.

Feelings and Emotions

The sense of being moved by kindness or beauty, or being hurt by hatred and injustice. This should bring a growing awareness of when it is important to control feelings and emotions. Pupils should be able to foster their emotional life and express their feelings in the community of the church school, knowing themselves to be accepted and loved as unique individuals.

Spiritual development cannot always be structured and opportunities may arise spontaneously out of the school day. A range of experiences and curriculum areas provide opportunities for spiritual development (eg. Circle Time, Philosophy for Children, drama, PSHCE, science, humanities, PE, music, RE and our Citizenship Award programme).

Our spiritual development links closely with our Collective Worship and both support and complement each other. However, spiritual development permeates all of the work of the school.

Aims of spiritual development at our school include:

- To develop the ability to use all one’s senses
- To promote an awareness and enjoyment in using one’s imaginative potential
- To develop individual self-confidence in expressing inner thought in a variety of ways
- To appreciate the role of stillness and silence in different faith traditions
- To recognise the value of relationships and each person as a person of worth
- To sustain the self-esteem of pupils in their learning experiences
- To develop an acknowledgement and awareness of the principles and values by which we live
- To provide opportunities for the expression of imagination, insight, empathy and understanding throughout the curriculum

- To promote opportunities for stillness, silence and reflection
- To foster the emotional life of the pupil, particularly with regard to the experience of feelings
- To encourage the search for meaning, the quest for learning, and the joy of learning.
- To encourage the development of a set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour
- To foster a respect for themselves and for others
- To foster a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion
- To develop an increasing ability to reflect and learn from this reflection
- To encourage an ability to show courage and persistence in defence of their aims, values, principles and beliefs
- To develop a readiness to challenge all that would constrain the human spirit: for example, poverty of aspiration, lack of self-confidence and belief, moral neutrality or indifference, force, fanaticism, aggression, greed, injustice, narrowness of vision, self-interest, sexism, racism and other forms of discrimination
- To foster an appreciation of the intangible – for example, beauty, truth, love, goodness, order – as well as for mystery, paradox and ambiguity
- To develop an understanding of feelings and emotions, and their likely impact, and an ability to talk about feelings
- Provide pupils with the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives
- Provide a supportive environment in which each and every individual feels themselves to be an important part of the school
- Accommodate and celebrate difference, and respect the integrity of individuals
- Open up pupils to the possibility of working for a greater cause - peace, justice, a care for the earth
- Encourage the use of imagination, creativity and reflection in learning

Policy Approved by: _____S+C Committee_____

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