

St Augustine's CE Academy



Collective Worship Policy

Agreed - September 24
To be reviewed - September 25

Policy Statement

At St. Augustine's CE Academy, the daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life.

Through this and in the general ethos of the school we seek to promote our academies motto:

'Learning together as disciples of Jesus'

It is a time where we come together to share a love of God and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly.

Christian Values

We identify the values of Love, Friendship and Hope. These values are embodied in the New Commandment that Jesus gave us:

John 13:34-35

"...love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples".

We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection.

We blend Christian teaching and Values Education in order to create opportunities for children to develop physically, emotionally, personally, socially, mentally and intelligently so that their self-esteem and well-being is sound and supported by ever growing emotional intelligence; leading to an understanding of their rights and responsibilities as young citizens. The systematic introduction of a common values vocabulary allows children to access moral and ethical thought.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group. Parents have the legal right, following discussion with the head teacher, to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Organisation

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. Our current schedule is as follows:

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| Monday | Whole school worship led by class teacher. |
| Tuesday | Whole school worship led by a member of the clergy from the local Anglican church, Methodist church or lay preacher. |
| Wednesday | Whole school worship led by Senior Teacher. |
| Thursday | Pupil led worship to the whole school. |
| Friday | Celebration Worship - this is sometimes led by the Executive Headteacher. |

Once every half term, a group of children meet with a member of the governing body to discuss worship, in particular, the impact of collective worship on the children. In addition to this, visiting groups and individuals are welcomed into the school to lead worship.

Planning, Content and Detail

The themes for our collective worship are taken from the Church calendar, the Fundamental British Values, SMSC topics and rituals and festivals. The worship begins with the children entering the hall accompanied by a piece of music for the week. The title of this piece of music is shared with the children and could come from a variety of cultures. The music is chosen by a different member of staff each week. The candle on the altar table is lit and the worship begins with the adult selecting a pupil to be the worship leader and they then begin the worship by asking the children to put their

hands together and close their eyes and say our opening prayer.

Dear Father God, we have come to our worship today to spend time thinking about you. You know all about us, you know what we are doing, saying and thinking. Nothing is hidden from you. We want to be able to worship you, to thank you and to bring to you anything that is on our mind. Help us by the power of your Holy Spirit, to love you and to be happy to call ourselves followers of Christ. Amen.

The worship then proceeds, which includes a song or hymn and a reflection time is given towards the end. The worship leader chooses a prayer or may select a few prayers from the boxes in each classroom or the one on the worship table. The candles are then blown out and the children say 'we are the light of the world'. We then share the Grace with one another and the worship leader offers the Peace to everyone. The children then lead out as the music is played.

How the children are involved with worship varies from day to day. Sometimes the children sit in a circle and sometimes in mixed groups where they have something to discuss. Children can quickly organise themselves into groups from across the whole age range of the school. This facilitates discussion in groups. In a circle parts of the 'acting out' takes part in the middle. It also shows how we are all equal. Sometimes worship is arranged for children to explore the ideas of mirrors, windows and doors where they can reflect on varied subjects and their own spirituality.

The Celebration Worship on Friday celebrates the children's achievements both in and outside school. Normally, teachers choose two members of their class to receive a special mention and certificate. Values certificates are also awarded to someone who has shown one or more of the core values that week. This person can be nominated by staff and pupils.

At Harvest, Mother's Day, Easter and Christmas we hold special services at the local Anglican Church and each year we organise an Open Door day at St Werburgh's in Hanbury. We regularly visit the church when covering certain topics in RE lessons and also for holding some daily acts of worship.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and reflection. A range of prayers are used including the Lord's Prayer, the school prayer, prayers written

by the children and others. They are introduced by the worship leader who asks the children to prepare themselves for prayer. The school is actively developing the children's confidence in reciting simple liturgy. A cross is displayed above the worship table and on the table there are wooden praying hands and two further crosses. Children are also invited to lead a prayer linked to the themes they have been exploring.

As the children are lining up for lunch a prayer of thanks is said by the class. Prayers are also said at the end of the school day. These prayers have been written by the children. Every classroom has a Reflective Area, where there is a prayer box and children can use these spaces if they need a moment to reflect during the school day or to write a prayer.

The school has a Prayer Tree next to the worship table. This is used widely throughout the year. It has been used to remember those lost in wars, to celebrate the advent of Jesus and to explore liturgy with particular reference to words about love in the Bible. It has also been used as a place to put photographs of those who have achieved our 'you are officially amazing' certificates.

Other Faiths

At St Augustine's our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values and we are also committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs. Some acts of worship may portray other cultures and beliefs as they reflect the RE studied as part of the curriculum requirements.

Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring

A worship book is kept, recording details of each act of worship. Evaluations will also be recorded here. This book is looked at by the children and governors when they meet each half term.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, St Augustine's ensures that appropriate visits are

made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge - their role is to educate, not to evangelise. St Augustine's Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the whole school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Mother's Day services. We also take the children on the Faith Trail every other year. This gives them opportunity to visit a Hindu Temple, Sikh Gurdwara and an Islamic Mosque.

Parents/Governors/Diocesan Liaison and Local Community Issues

- Children may be withdrawn from R.E. lessons at the wish of their parents. This should only be done in consultation with the Head teacher. The Head teacher will ensure that suitable provision is made for such pupils.
- We are very fortunate at St Augustine's in that our Foundation Governor volunteers at our school each day and therefore has a great insight into the daily acts of worship, the RE curriculum being taught and the impact of worship on the pupils. He also contributes to the RE teaching alongside the teaching staff.

Equal Opportunities and special needs issues

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, age, gender and ethnic origin will have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of R.E. At each Key Stage, the teacher will draw from other religions as appropriate to acknowledge and celebrate the religious beliefs of the children within the class.

Rebecca Walker

Executive Headteacher

September 2024