

St Andrew's C E Primary School



Worship Policy

Reviewed: Summer 2023
Next Review Date: Summer 2024

St Andrew's CE Primary School Mission Statement

We aim to:

show concern and care, through a strong sense of Christian values, for all members of the School Community;

establish a centre of excellence in which all individuals are enabled to experience success at varying levels and so are encouraged to develop to their maximum potential;

ensure support and communication channels are clear and links between home and school are positive and genuine;

be a school in which a sense of belonging, involvement and real partnership is felt by all.



St Andrew's CE Primary School
Every Child A Champion in Their Own Right. Matthew 5.16 - "Let Your Light Shine."

Worship Policy

Contents

Philosophy	4
Variety in Worship	6
Staff involvement with Assembly/Worship	8
School Worship - General	9
Assemblies/Acts of Worship	10
Governor involvement in Worship	10



Philosophy

The ethos of the school has a profound effect on the children and colours each aspect of the educational process. The Assembly and Collective Worship have a crucial role in establishing the ethos of the school community. This will be so whether the gathering is of the whole school, or part of it.

Our aim is to present learning, knowledge and experience in the light of the Christian Gospel, with the whole staff, school community, Parish and wider community contributing to the development of skills and knowledge, as well as the nature of concepts and attitudes within a caring environment.

Church Schools are the spiritual, physical and mental guardians of individuals and communities, emphasising growth into truth, of which love, tolerance and forgiveness are a profound and inextricable part. We aim to be a loving, forgiving community and although the reality is sometimes different from the ideal, this ought to concern all who have responsibility within a Church School.

We will continue to develop new modes of education and new relationships within the community, being open to change and having a vision of the future and the future of our children which is filled with hope based on trust in God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

Worship is a different activity from that of Religious Education, although it does have an educational element. It is perceived and understood in many ways - often described as having an outward aspect of physical, spiritual and verbal activity which can take a variety of forms, but it also has a further aspect of inner intention. Worship is a human response to an experience of the Divine. It is not enough, therefore, that a school engages in only the outward activity. There must be an inner experience which relates to the outward activity.

Our school worship is of a collective nature - a gathering together - a time for expressing the values of the school - an offering of that which has worth in the life of the school.

It is also of an inspirational nature - pupils can increase their understanding and appreciation of what others have found inspiring.

Worship is to do with worth and worthiness. It is recognition, affirmation and celebration of certain realities and values held to be of central importance to the community which worships. The act of worship reviews the meaning of these realities and values for the community, helping each of its members to grasp them personally

Pupils' responses of what they experience and hear in worship will vary from age to age, ability and experience. It is appropriate to provide opportunities for pupils to respond in prayer and praise.

Careful thought needs to be given as to how the occasion of the school assembly can be used as an opportunity for collective worship - this may be the only place where children have this kind of experience. Worship will occur when there is a sense of the divine presence. The place is not as important as the bearing and activities of the participants.

Collective Worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum. It will be given a special place in the school day. It will be distinctive and identifiable as such if it is to meet the legal requirements.

The 1988 Education Act allows Aided schools 'on special occasions'

to hold their daily act of worship elsewhere than in school, e.g. in church.

The school community is a collection of people from different backgrounds and if school worship is to be meaningful, it must be sensitive to this. Whilst the Christian context will be explicit in our collective worship, the overall pattern will be **collective** rather than **corporate**, as *shared* beliefs and values cannot be *assumed*. The use of the term **collective** is important in that it recognises that pupils and staff will subscribe to a range of beliefs, and that there is a need to provide opportunities for all to share in worship in a way which make sense to them and is appropriate to their stage of development.

A sense of awe and reverence can be evoked in many ways, and those responsible for the school worship should plan that however brief the occasion a response in the form of worship can emerge within those participating.

Variety in worship

The structure of our worship should be varied and will include the following:

- Formal/informal ... it will sometimes be appropriate to have formal services, with a set form devised by the school, e.g. Christmas services with printed sheets. On other occasions informality and spontaneity will be best, e.g. sharing experiences, or informal prayers.
- Reflective/expressive ... there will be occasions which call for quiet, thought provoking worship and still others which call for loud singing, dance etc. However, all collective worship will include a time of reflection.
- Proclamation/teaching ... this may be through visiting speakers, staff, a group, audio visual presentation etc..
- Liturgical language - there will be occasions when it will be appropriate to use liturgical language for greeting or dismissal.
- Celebration ... where we offer those things which we feel to be important and of value. This can include established rituals (e.g. birthdays), or carefully planned festivals. It can also be spontaneous.
- Leadership ... will usually be staff, or groups of children overseen by staff, but there will also be occasions when we have individuals or groups from outside the school to lead/inspire worship. In this respect we would stress the importance of developing and maintaining good relationships with parents, governors and the local community.

In particular the role of the Church is vital here, as we endeavour to encourage good practice and Christian awareness in the children.

- There are a number of occasions when we specifically invite Governors to attend or participate. These include Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day, St Andrew's Day, Carol Concerts, and Easter Services.
- We should strive towards all members of the school being aware of their interdependence, not only at times when the whole school is assembled together, but at all times.
- The timing and place of assemblies will be adaptable, according to needs and the occasion. The present plan of Acts of worship/Assemblies can be found later in this document.
- Whilst many of our times of worship will be occasions when the whole school meets together in the Hall, in order to enable children of all ages and abilities to be able to take part at appropriate levels there will also be class, phase and year group assemblies, as well as House Meeting assemblies and services in St Andrew's Church.
- Useful guidance can be found in *Worship Works in Church Schools* - produced by the Diocesan Department of Education (2004).

Staff involvement with Assembly/Worship

At some point all staff will become involved in producing an assembly, either as a leader or a class assembly. There are certain pitfalls to be avoided. The same standards apply here that would apply to any classroom work and the children should be helped to produce the best they can manage.

It must be remembered that these occasions are times of worship and not entertainment.

Assemblies follow the guidelines as set out in this Policy, the School Worship Plan and will reflect the Anglican Calendar.

Class Assemblies:

- Plan well in advance.
- Most assemblies should last 12 to 15 minutes.
- Have a clear idea of what you want to do, and share this with your class.
- Try not to be too ambitious.
- Include a Bible reference in your Assembly, and record this on the Worship Plan in the Staffroom.
- Once you have started to practice try to avoid making too many changes to the script or the action - this may confuse the children.
- Make sure the children have clear, simple instructions.
- Choose readers carefully - you will need readers who can read with confidence and whose voice have sufficient volume.
- Allocate the workload evenly over a number of children - involve each child in some way.
- make an early start on collecting props and costumes.
- Have a full 'dress rehearsal' to give the children a chance to get used to the props/costumes.
- Remember that some children feel extreme stress at such times.
- There is a standard invitation to parents, which should be sent out during the week before the assembly - see the SAO about this.
- Remember to use the experience and expertise of other members of staff everyone is willing to help in sharing ideas on hymns to be sung, organisation and content. The Head is more than willing to offer advice.

School Worship - General

- Our themes for Worship will take due consideration of the calendar of the Anglican year and a record will be kept of stories/themes covered.
- Adequate time will be allowed for staff discussion and consultation about our programme for school worship and to this end a Worship Committee will meet regularly, to pool ideas, reflect upon and evaluate our worship.
- We believe that involvement with the local Church is a two way process between the Church and the School and we will take every opportunity we can to build up a good relationship with our local Church Community.
- Our worship should relate to the day to day life of pupils, both in and out of school and it should enrich the experiences of the pupils.
- Multi-cultural and equal opportunities issues will be addressed, to enhance the children's awareness and sensitivity in these areas.
- Some occasions of school worship will be major productions, involving large numbers of pupils, and rehearsals. Others will be much more informal, led by a small number or a single person.
- Parents are always welcome to share our worship, especially our Class Assemblies, Sharing Assemblies and other special occasions.
- The right to withdraw pupils is available to all parents. Care will be taken that any children whose parents take this option will not be made to feel isolated or 'different', and they will be adequately supervised and have something purposeful to do.
- When appropriate members of the clergy will be invited to offer advice, practical support or to take part in our worship.
- Our Altar Table in the Large Hall will reflect the Anglican seasons in the colour of the cloth used.
- Whenever appropriate, artefacts connected with the Anglican Church will be included in our worship.

Times of Worship / Assemblies

As a Church School, it is our policy for all staff to be fully involved in Worship/Assemblies and Worship.

Below is a typical week's worship plan - a detailed termly rota is on display in the staff room.

Monday

Classroom or Year Group worship. One Year Group to have worship time in St Andrew's Church - led by Year Group Staff; One Year Group to have worship led by member of Sutton & Wawne Ministry team (rota)

Tuesday	Whole School Assembly - Head/SLT/Governors/Visitors
Wednesday	Whole School Assembly - often led by classes - all staff/classes on rota over the year
Thursday	A shorter time of reflection in classes/year groups
Friday	Whole School - sharing good work Occasionally House Assemblies/acts of worship led by House Staff NB - Dates of special services can be found in the School's 5 Year plan / Worship Rota

Worship

Governor involvement with

Worship Working Party:

- Mr G Huckstep (Head)
- Revd C van Straaten (Vicar)
- Miss Lisa Russell (Chair of Governors)
- Mr D Catherall (Foundation Governor)

Worship Working Party Meetings are usually monthly, convened by the Head Teacher and attended by a member of the RE team and members of the POP Group (as Associate Governors).

Foundation Governors:

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Mrs H Baggely | Mr D Catherall | Mrs J Hamer |
| Revd C van Straaten | Mrs H Robinson | Mrs L Russell |
| Mrs E Burton | Mrs J Storr | Mrs R Colton |

NB Foundation Governors are invited to participate in, or lead, collective worship.