



Worship Policy

Latest Review:

October 2017

Agreed by Governors:.....Chair of Governors

Agreed by Head teacher:.....Head teacher

Withington School is a Church of England, Voluntary Aided School¹ and as such is to provide education according to the principles and practice of the Church of England.

Our vision is: "to empower us all to try our best to achieve our full potential in a safe, happy and vibrant school with a strong Christian ethos at the heart of our village community." This is underpinned by the words in John 10:10 "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full".

At Withington, Christian worship is regarded as special. It is an opportunity to experience something of the work and life of Jesus.

Collective Worship time in school is distinct from other classroom activities, and retains a sense of occasion and togetherness.

We recognise the span of ages, the different aptitudes and family backgrounds of our children in attempting to promote spiritual development, but believe worship and its links with the curriculum are important to the whole life of the School. We have connections with St Michael and the Angels Church, Withington, enjoying support and encouragement from our clergy and the church.

Legal Position

We have 7 Foundation Governors appointed to oversee the Christian ethos of the School. The Bishop's Visitor is currently Mrs Melanie Pitts. The 1998 Education Act States Worship must take place daily. At Withington, collective worship is provided daily for all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents. It may take place at any time of the day.

It is a gathering for all pupils though there may be separate assemblies for smaller groups. New parents are notified of their right to withdraw their child from Collective worship via the School Prospectus. Parents who wish to do this are asked to discuss the matter with the Head Teacher. Parents withdrawing their child from Worship may be asked to supervise the child during Worship time.

Aims for worship

We aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values

More particular aims include:

- To help children develop an awareness of the presence of God in everyday life.
- To develop an appreciation of the special relationship between God and His people, expressed in the life of Jesus.
- To help children develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them.
- To offer our children a spiritual dimension to their lives and personal relationships.
- To provide opportunities for thought so that children can reflect on the lasting concerns of life.
- To provide opportunities to say 'thank you'.
- To provide opportunities to share love, joy, hope, friendship, fear and forgiveness.
- To foster a secure, kind and loving environment in which everyone is special.
- To develop standards, attitudes and values which are fundamental to the Christian faith.
- To help children value each other and in doing so, develop a concern for the needs of others.
- To have a clear set of beliefs and values, known by all.
- To strengthen family and community aspects of the School.

Through worship, children will be able to:

- Celebrate in songs, hymns, readings and other ways.
- Make responses collectively and individually through prayer, silence and reflection.

Worship structure

- Worship takes place at Withington each morning of the week.
- Both Key Stages worship together (pre-school join Worship on Mondays and Thursdays). Members of the teaching staff lead the worship. The Clergy run 'Open the Book' Worship on Mondays in the local parish church.
- The clergy or members of the Church visit regularly.
- Duration of Worship is approximately 10-15 minutes.
- Worship takes place a classroom or in the Church.
- Children often listen to music prior to Worship taking place.
- A table with a cross (or picture of a cross) and 3 lit candles are usually used to focus attention.
- Opportunities are taken to celebrate special, significant days.
- Children are encouraged to lead the Worship based on a theme, with each class running at least one worship each half term.
- Once a week we hold the act of worship in the Parish church.
- Once a term a longer church service is held to which parents, governors and friends are particularly welcome, i.e. at Christmas, at Easter, and a "Leavers'/Graduation Assembly" in the summer.
- Once a term the children and parents are encouraged to attend the parish church on a Sunday, e.g. Harvest, Mothering Sunday, Christingle and Pentecost.
- A Holy Communion service is held once a term (3 times a year) to which members of the parish are invited.
- Equal opportunity is considered essential regardless of sex, colour, disability, age and ability.
- We have a 'Worship Group' of elected children who organise, evaluate and discuss Worship in our school with the Head teacher.

Worship content

- Weekly, bi-weekly or half termly broad themes which relate both to the Christian year and to core subjects of Christian teaching, are used to explore spiritual, moral and cultural issues.
- There is flexibility for particular festivals, and particular events in the life of the community or news events in the world.
- The program and fixed dates are set out in the Appendix part a.
- Children will be given the opportunity to consider familiar ideas and explore new ones. They will experience a diversity of worship practice that encourages a variety of responses.
- Children are invited to reflect upon and respond to the subject matter.
- It is important that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background.

Elements of worship

In our children's act of Worship at Withington, we use different spaces depending on the material and upon the media that best presents the theme. presentations include:

- Spoken word (stories, reading, poetry, interviews/discussions)
- Visual aid (display, ' values' display board, posters, pictures, children's art and craft, objects relevant to the theme, films and slides).
- Art and Creative arts (drama, music, mime,).
- Individual or group activity
- Procession, ritual action
- Food and drink
- Reflection.
- T.V. /Radio broadcasts (live or taped).
- Hymns or songs and music

Achieving spiritual development

We achieve Spiritual and Moral Development by encouraging the following senses and feelings to be experienced:

- Sense of beauty, wonder, awe, mystery
- Feeling of pride
- Sense of pity
- Sense of thankfulness or peace
- Sense of shared loss or sadness
- Senses of smallness in the face of the greatness of things
- Sense of grandness in the face of the smallest of things
- Sense of stillness in the midst of a busy experience
- Sense of silence
- Celebrating success.
- Celebrating all that is good and wonderful.
- Providing opportunities to share experiences, both good and bad.
- Using a variety of media to communicate these senses.

Prayer

- All children learn the Lord's Prayer (traditional and contemporary versions) and are given help to understand it.
- Prayers are used from a collection of written prayers.
- Children's own Prayers are used.
- Impromptu prayers are said by children and staff.
- Children are given quiet times to think and address their thoughts to God.
- A 'prayer tree' may be used.

Evaluation and monitoring

- Collective Worship is evaluated by clergy and the Head Teacher at the end of each unit, to inform future planning.
- Worship is co-ordinated by the Head Teacher.
- Our Worship Policy will be reviewed every 2 years.
- Worship is monitored by the Head Teacher, to ensure a varied balance, and evaluation is reported as part of the Head Teacher's Termly Report to the Governors.

Worship and inspection

Collective Worship is part of the OFSTED Inspection at Withington. Denomination Inspection takes place to make a judgement about the quality of Worship. Details of the criteria for inspection of Collective worship are outlined in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican Schools Document.

Appendix

FIXED DATES:

October 4 th	Feast of St. Francis
31 st	All Hallows or Hallowe'en
November 1 st	All Saints Day
2 nd	All Souls Day
5 th	Guy Fawkes (Bonfire) Night
30 th	St. Andrews day
Remembrance Sunday (second Sunday in Nov.)	
December 6 th	Feast of St Nicholas
24 th	Christmas Eve
25 th	Christmas Day
31 st	New Year's Eve
January 1 st	New Year's Day
5 th /6 th	Twelfth Night
6 th	Epiphany (Feast of the Magi)
25 th	Conversion of St. Paul
February 2 nd	Candlemas Day
14 th	St Valentine's Day
Feb/March	Shrove Tuesday
	Ash Wednesday
March 1 st	St. David's Day
17 th	St. Patrick's Day
25 th	Mothering Sunday
	Annunciation of Our Lord to the Blessed Virgin Mary
March/April	Easter
April 21 st	Queen Elizabeth 2 nd Birthday
23 rd	St. George's Day
May	Ascension Day
	Pentecost (Whit Sunday)
	Trinity Sunday
	Visit of the Virgin Mary to Elizabeth
June	Father's Day
24 th	Birth of John the Baptist