



## **WORSHIP POLICY**

Latest Review: Nov 2014

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

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

### **RATIONALE**

Withington School is a Church of England, Voluntary Aided School<sup>1</sup> and as such is to provide education according to the principles and practice of the Church of England.

Our aim is: "...to provide a secure, happy, caring, stimulating, Christian environment in which to cater for individual needs and help each child to achieve their personal best in all school activities, and to grow in maturity and confidence as a whole person."

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At Withington, collective worship is provided daily for all pupils, except those withdrawn by parents.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.

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<sup>1</sup> The Diocese of Gloucester Voluntary Aided School (Instrument of Government No. B 160) No. 5 Order 1985. The Trust Deed comprises two conveyances dated 1855. Further land provided by Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1894. Since 1953 School has been in the Trusteeship of Gloucester Diocesan Council (Board) of Education.

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 every day 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**

*Working together, showing God's Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self Control*

- Worship takes place at Withington each morning of the week.
- Both Key Stages worship together. Members of the teaching staff lead the worship.
- 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 a lit candle are usually used to focus attention.
- Opportunities are taken to celebrate special, significant days.
- Children are occasionally encouraged to lead the Worship based on a theme.
- 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 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 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.

## **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.

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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.

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- 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, published by the National Society 2005.

## APPENDIX

### FIXED DATES:

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