

Horton St. Michael's CE First School

Collective Worship Policy

To be reviewed – annually

Policy Statement

At Horton St Michael's, 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, Hope, Creativity and Curiosity.

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. As a school, we have chosen to use the Windows, Mirrors, Doors concept as a common reflective structure. We have developed the model to ensure it is accessible for all of our students from EYFS to Year 4.

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:

Monday	Whole school worship led by Mr Wolvers – Focus - Windows
Tuesday	Whole school worship led by Mr Wolvers – Focus - Mirrors
Wednesday	Classroom worship – Focus Mirrors and Doors activity
Thursday	Whole school worship led by Mrs Poyntz - Roberts.
Friday	Celebration Worship led by Miss Royall

The worship team lead worship at least once a term.
In addition to this, visiting groups and individuals are welcomed into the school to lead worship.

At regular intervals, 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.

Planning, Content and Detail

The themes for our collective worship are taken from the Church calendar, the Bible, 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. Typical content is then:

1. The candles on the altar table are lit and the worship begins.
2. The children and adults in the room then share the peace.
3. Light the candles
4. Worship theme / story including reflection time
5. Song / hymn
6. Opportunity for prayer – Lord's prayer and prayer linked to theme.
7. Final blessing

Whole school prayer:

Oh lord,
Bless our school,
So that working together and playing together,
We may learn to serve you.
Amen

How the children are involved with worship varies from day to day. Sometimes different groups of children lead the worship; we also welcome visitors from church and our local community to lead worship. Sometimes worship is held outside. This has a different feel from worship in the school building. It isn't just 'normal worship' happening outside, instead it attempts to engage the pupils in a creative and reflective manner. The nature of the worship can make everyone feel more readily included. Outdoors is also the perfect setting to look at some of life's big issues that impact both our local communities and also the wider world.

Celebration worship on Friday celebrates the children's achievements both in and outside school. Teachers choose one or two members of their class to receive a special mention and certificate. Our certificates are linked to our core values.

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.

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.

By the worship table in the hall there is a reflective display. This is used widely throughout the year. Children have used it to thank God, to ask for support, to think about those who have lost their lives and to explore advent.

Other Faiths

At Horton St Michael'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.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, we ensure 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. When it fits with their learning we also take the children to the Islamic Mosque in Stoke.

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 Worship 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 and Anna Bennett
Executive Headteacher and Deputy Executive Headteacher
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