

**SINGLETON C.E. PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

**POLICY FOR  
COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

Reviewed: Summer 2017

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction and Legal Background
2. School Commitment to Worship
3. Setting the Scene
4. The Anglican Tradition
5. The Bible in School Worship
6. The Eucharist in Singleton CEP School
7. Prayers
8. Hymns and Music
9. Dance and Drama
10. Planning for School Worship
11. Worship Themes
12. Resources
13. Review
14. Rights Respecting School & links to Christian Values

### INTRODUCTION AND LEGAL BACKGROUND

It is a legal requirement that all registered pupils attending maintained schools should take part in daily collective worship, although parents have a right to ask that a pupil should be wholly, or partly, excused from attending religious worship at school.

As a voluntary school we have foundation governors who are appointed 'for the purpose of securing as far as is practicable ... that the school is conducted in accordance with the provisions of any trust deed relating' to the school.

## **WHEN AND WHERE WORSHIP TAKES PLACE**

The 1998 Education Act allows schools, on special occasions, to hold their daily act of worship elsewhere than in school. The act of worship need not take place with the whole school together, but may take place in class groups or other grouping of pupils. We aim to vary our acts of worship by holding class assemblies and by encouraging the older pupils to plan and lead acts of worship.

The whole school takes part in collective worship every day, usually in the school hall. The Headteacher, class teachers and the Rector lead the school in collective worship each day, according to a rota.

The local Church is used as the venue for the celebration of major Christian festivals. Parents are invited to join us in celebrating specific acts of worship during the school year, i.e. Harvest, Easter and Christmas. Year 6 pupils also attend the Diocesan Leavers Service at Chichester Cathedral during their final term at Singleton.

## **THE PARENTS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHILDREN FROM WORSHIP**

Singleton is a Church of England School. The pupils, in the main, come from a practising or non-practising Christian background and the school has strong links with the Church, but children of any religious belief are welcomed and integrated into all aspects of the school. Any request to withdraw a child from attending collective worship, as is the parents' right, will be discussed with the Headteacher.

## **SCHOOL COMMITMENT TO WORSHIP**

We aim to:

- introduce children to Christian worship and practice and promote their involvement
- provide opportunities for spiritual development
- provide an atmosphere of trust and free response from all
- celebrate and developing the school's values and ethos
- enable adults and children to worship together

**Five main principles** can be seen at the heart of the school worship:

1. Worship should aim to be spiritual and educational: *good worship develops children's ideas about God.*
2. Worship should aim to be stimulating and reflective: *good worship increases children's awareness of God through varied experiences.*
3. Worship should aim to be inclusive: *good worship engages everyone present in his/her own way.*
4. Worship should aim to be central in school life: *good worship gathers together and offers to God, the ethos, life and work of the school.*
5. Worship should aim to be linked to pupil learning: *good worship shows appropriate links with the curriculum, RE policy and class work.*

## **SETTING THE SCENE**

**CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE FOR SCHOOL WORSHIP** is very important and this will aim:

- be welcoming
- be peaceful and calm
- be vibrant and alive
- enable all to express and share thoughts and feelings - if they so choose;
- allow for a secure and comfortable knowledge that each person will be valued and respected.

The atmosphere for collective worship has its roots in the school's ethos.

**THE PRESENCE OF ADULTS** participating with children in worship gives a positive message and underlines its importance in the life of the school. This enables teachers who are present to ensure the content is sensitively followed up.

**THE SPACE FOR WORSHIP** gives clear messages about the special nature of the occasion. A focal point - a cross, a bowl of flowers, a candle or other artefact can be used. We have an assembly board and a cross in the hall. We also use a candle which is lit to show the presence of God.

**STILLNESS AND QUIET** are important parts of worship, and children are expected to enter quietly while music is playing. The children need to develop an understanding that this time together is complementary to the activities of the classroom, and to appreciate the reflective nature of the worship. A period of silence during worship enables those present to make their own conversation with God.

**WORSHIP AND ASSEMBLY HAVE** different purposes and are distinct from one another.

**Spirituality is further supported by designated areas in each classroom. Where focal points include pictures, candles and a Bible.**

### **THE ANGLICAN TRADITION & CHRISTIAN VALUES**

The following areas are explored in worship during the child's time at school:

- using the Bible as a source of inspiration and learning;
- reflecting on Christian symbols and their use in worship;
- observing the cycle of the Church's year and the holy days;
- using the parish church and its priest as resources;
- making a collection of prayers and hymns, thus creating a framework for worship in school;
- providing opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence within worship;
- recognising our strong commitment to ecumenism (e.g. inviting members of other Christian denominations to lead worship);
- welcoming all pupils of whatever faith and celebrating shared values and beliefs.

### **THE EUCHARIST AT SINGLETON C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The majority of our pupils, families and staff do not attend Church regularly.

Bearing this in mind and the very young age range of our pupils, we have agreed, as a staff, that it is inappropriate to include celebrations of The Eucharist in our **whole school** worship.

However, exploration of the important elements within The Eucharist is included in RE lessons for KS2 pupils.

## PRAYERS

How we encourage children to explore the experience of prayer is of vital importance as we can influence their perception of faith well into their adult life. It is hoped that through prayer children will develop a sense of trust and recognition that Christians put their lives, and those for whom they intercede, in the hands of God.

**Prayer is a natural part of school life and contributes to the whole Community. Children are helped to develop an understanding of prayer and by recognising that different people pray in different ways.**

**Prayer is not confined to the acts of worship:-**

Grace is said every lunchtime and also prayers are said at the end of every school day. Each class has a collection of prayers which includes prayers composed by the children themselves.

Prayer can often be simple expressions of petition and thanks; it should also include such elements as repentance and the simple sharing of interests and enjoyment. Children can be encouraged to look beyond the recitation of familiar prayers by the use of different methods of prayer:

Prayer and silence; prayer of listening; prayer alone and the use of a time of quiet;

Postures for prayer - hands together or on laps.

**There are artefacts in and around the school that act as aids to reflection.**

During whole school and small groups worship, the lighting of a candle or the provision of another focal point often enhances prayer and reflection.

There is also an outside area that is being developed as a prayer space.

## SET PRAYERS

During their time in school, children become familiar with a number of the great prayers and appropriate local prayers, such as **the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester**. The traditional format of **the Lord's Prayer** is used. We also have a School Prayer which is usually used to begin whole school worship.

## HYMNS AND MUSIC

Music is an important part of the school worship time and can help to create an atmosphere that will lead children to a deeper sense of worship.

The music provided encompasses many forms: listening, performing, singing.

This aspect of worship is planned to complement and contribute appropriately to the cycle of themes.

Various areas are considered when selecting the hymns or songs:

- singing during worship allows children to become involved rather than passive observers of the worship;
- the repertoire of hymns/songs is carefully considered to include a variety from all traditions of Christian worship;
- the music is selected to match the age range of the children;
- special consideration is given to the use of choruses or hymns with refrains for Key Stage 1/Reception children and other non-readers;
- regular practice and learning of hymns/songs is built into the school timetable in order to prepare for quality worship;
- an understanding and enjoyment of the music adds to the success of the worship.

A regularly updated list of known hymns is kept to aid the planning process and the copyright arrangements observed.

**Hymn practice** on its own does not constitute a daily act of worship but time put aside to include a reading, reflection or a prayer to complement the hymns being practised makes this acceptable as fulfilling the daily obligation.

Key Stage 2 pupils have a regular hymn practice, and the whole school practice hymns when needed for special services or events.

Music to be listened to is carefully considered to include a variety from all traditions and to enhance the atmosphere of the worship.

We aim to:-

- build up a repertoire and lists of suitable music;
- use both recorded and live music;
- use visiting musicians to add to the variety of musical expressions and enliven worship;
- use pupils to play entrance and exit music as well as to accompany the singing of hymns.

## DRAMA

Drama can provide a rich and meaningful dimension to worship. It is often used to retell and interpret passages from the Bible and other stories, but it can also be a very powerful way to convey feelings, attitudes, information and symbols and to further deepen understanding of the life of Christ.

The children involved have an opportunity to express their feelings in a creative and imaginative way. This experience deepens and develops their spiritual understanding. It allows pupils to investigate and reflect upon their own beliefs and values.

For those children watching it provides a focus and inclusive feel to the worship which can develop insight, empathy, inspiration and a search for meaning. Drama provides active learning situations for all present, and allows each one to be totally engaged, both in mind and emotion. The preparation will vary from a spontaneous short practice with a group of children to the more rehearsed worship. The following are considered when drama is used in worship:

- guard that the drama is clearly part of the worship and does not become a 'performance' or 'play';
- ensure that the drama is possible and suitable for the place of worship;
- make sure the words and actions are clear and visible so that those watching are able to follow the message.

Children who take part in the drama should feel a sense of well being and happy to be involved. Teachers should prevent any child feeling threatened or having a loss of self-confidence while taking part in the worship.

Good drama will stimulate the children and they may well need time to talk about the experience afterwards. Teachers may need to follow up worship times with classroom discussion.



At Singleton School, drama is used on special occasions such as Harvest Festival, Mothering Sunday, etc.

### **PLANNING FOR SCHOOL WORSHIP**

The Headteacher undertakes planning for school worship with the help of the Rector and in liaison with other schools in the parishes of the valley. Themes for worship may include specific events (eg. The Church Year, National events) or the exploration of particular Christian values.

Plans include:-

- the programme of worship themes which ensures a balanced and informed approach
- the special occasions or services the school wishes to mark
- the use of the Church Calendar
- the leadership of the worship times
- the venues and booking arrangements for special services

Included in these plans will be:-

- the possible hymns and other specific music ideas to allow for the planning of the necessary practices
- visitors to be invited to take part in school worship
- the involvement of children in the various acts of worship

### **MONITORING**

The monitoring of the planning and provision of worship should be done on a regular basis. The foundation governors have a vital part to play in this area, both as a support and as a visitor sharing in school worship.

The following are areas for monitoring:

- the planning file

- the themes
- the balance of leaders of worship
- the encouragement children are given to worship
- the centrality of worship and how it encompasses other areas of school life
- the community involvement
- the music and hymns used
- the finances available to develop the worship
- the resources

The Christian distinctiveness of the school will be inspected by an accredited Section 48 inspector as part of the SIAMS inspection schedule. This will further assist the school in monitoring.

## **RESOURCES**

Resources of suitable materials can be found in the staff room and R.E. topic boxes to assist with preparation of collective worship.

## **REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed according to the timescales of policy reviews in the School Improvement Plan.

## **RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS & LINKS TO CHRISTIAN VALUES**

Collective Worship promotes the following articles from the UN Convention on the Rights of Children:

Article 14 - Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Article 30 - Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

The following table shows how our School Charter link with Christian values and the articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children.

ARTICLES FROM UNCRC	SCHOOL CHARTER	CHRISTIAN VALUES
ARTICLE 1 ARTICLE 2	Drawing on our Christian ethos and our belief in the rights of all children our school family have agreed that:	
ARTICLE 14 ARTICLE 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a Church school we worship God and respect those who wish to worship another.</li> </ul>	RESPECT REVERENCE
ARTICLE 15 ARTICLE 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We feel safe and secure because we respect each other, treat each other fairly, care about each other, are kind to each other and we respect the adults who look after us.</li> </ul>	FRIENDSHIP COMPASSION SERVICE
ARTICLE 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are listened to as we listen to others.</li> </ul>	FRIENDSHIP RESPECT HUMILITY
ARTICLE 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We want to try our best with the talents we have.</li> </ul>	CREATION WISDOM PERSEVERANCE COURAGE
ARTICLE 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We play and share.</li> </ul>	FRIENDSHIP
ARTICLE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are all equal and yet treated as individuals.</li> </ul>	JUSTICE