



Eton Wick C of E First School Policy Document

| COLLECTIVE WORSHIP | |
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| Category: Statutory | Approved by Headteacher:  |
| To be reviewed by: Headteacher/RE Leader | <i>Date: September 2023</i> |
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Our ethos as a church of England School is captured in the vision of good seed growing in good soil. We endeavour to provide an environment in which we are all developing, learning and growing. Rooted in that vision, our policies have been developed.

Introduction

Our Vision at Eton Wick was created with a team of staff, children and governors. It encompasses our local community, heritage and current values.

Dating back to the mid-18th century, Eton Wick has been a village for farmers and those who worked the land; the land surrounding the school is still used for both arable farming and grazing cattle. Our school and church were built in the late 19th century; children who attended the school would often be excused from school at harvest time to help bring in the harvest, as reordered on the historical records of the school. The spiritual story which we have chosen to encompass our vision is The Parable of the Sower, which we have taken from the New International Version of the Bible:

We are all growing, developing and learning; achieving success in a caring community.

'A farmer went out to sow his seed.

As he was scattering...seed fell on good soil...'

Taken from St Matthew's Gospel, chapter 13: the Parable of The Sower (NIV)

Collective worship is central to the life of our school², worship offers the pupils and others in our school an opportunity to reflect on values and issues in the context of our Christian vision and ethos. It is an expression of our vision and shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school. We warmly invite all members of our school community to join our worship; our Friday Celebration Assembly is a chance for all visitors, including parents and carers, to be a part of our celebratory worship.

Our daily collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:



- Celebrate: Christian seasons and festivals; school values associated with our vision; Pupils' and adults' achievements
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer;
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship;
- feel safe and affirmed;
- explore their views, whether they have a faith, or not

Worship will reflect aspects of our curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth;
- enable children and adults to consider moral questions in a Christian context;
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy;
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today;
- encourage children and adults to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage;
- reflect the teachings of Jesus and a trinitarian theology.

Space Makers

Space Makers is a toolkit for schools and churches from the Diocese of Oxford which is accessible to pupils of all faiths and worldviews. It is made up of five contemplative practices to help schools embrace some of the ancient wisdom of the Christian tradition and, in doing so, assist children to navigate the world around them and support their mental health

The five practices are:

Stilling – To adopt appropriate posture for becoming aware of surroundings and the self, with breathing techniques

Noticing – To focus on noticing the presence and absence of God and the good in your life.

Dwelling – To take time to dwell with short and inclusive phrases from scripture, children are invited to choose words or phrases which they connect to personally.

Mending – To focus on the central Christian theme of reconciliation in a variety of ways.

Blessing – To focus on human flourishing and growth, using the metaphor of root/shoot/fruit.

The Pattern of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings, in the school hall, in classrooms and in our local church. We follow the seasons of the Church calendar and within these, significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Easter and Pentecost. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance and the Year 4 Leavers' Bible Service also feature in collective worship.

Whenever worship takes place it is planned to promote participants' thinking beyond the time given to worship itself.

Monday: KS1 assembly and KS2 class worship and reflection (Space Makers)

Tuesday: KS2 assembly and KS1 class worship and reflection (Space Makers)

Wednesday: Hymn Practice

Thursday: Visitor assembly, including Open the Book* with local clergy

Friday: Celebration Assembly (parents and visitors are welcome each week).

**Open the book is a bible story led by Reverend La, acted out by adults and children and happens bi-weekly.*



Leading worship

Worship has a variety of leaders from within school and from the local Church Community. Pupils are given opportunities to lead worship throughout the year, for example, our children in Worship Council are learning how to lead various aspects of Space Makers. Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship from time to time and are given guidance from our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

Our acts of worship are carefully planned to ensure a balance between content and experience. Leaders, including the children, plan the content and activities included in worship according to our vision, and what is most appropriate to the season/theme and the needs of the pupils. The themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through the associated values. Throughout their time at our school children will encounter a wide variety of activities such as drama alongside more traditional elements of worship such as prayer and song.

Prayer is a vital part of our worship. It is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to God reflecting the traditions and practices of the Church of England. Pupils who prefer not to pray are encouraged to use these times to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship. Children sometimes plan and say their own prayers, based on the worship which has taken/is taking place.

Our worship is regularly reviewed through discussions with participants, observation and reflection and our evaluations are fed into the planning for future worship.

A legal note

By law, Collective Worship must be provided for every child every day;

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational, inclusive and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship. In the first instance we ask parents who may wish to exercise this right to visit school to speak with the headteacher.

