

Blackshaw Moor Church of England First School

Worship Policy 2019

Policy statement

At Blackshaw Moor Church of England First School we value the whole child. We aim to offer our children a creative, enriching and fulfilling learning journey enabling all to flourish. We aim to develop strong links with our local community whilst preparing our children to be good global citizens. Our school values and Christian distinctiveness underpins all that we are and do.

Our school Bible verse is "Your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children. Isaiah 53:13

At Blackshaw Moor First School, the daily act of 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 school aim:

Working together in God's Love for the benefit of all.

It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values, vision and ethos of the school and we reflect upon their contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As such, the contribution of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly. Worship allows those present to experience and participate in living expressions of Christian worship that are inclusive, educational, God centred, affirm Christian beliefs and yet remain inclusive and educational.

Christian Values

The acts of worship embed the core Christian values to develop the wisdom and understanding of the Christian faith and particularly in gospel values founded in the reality of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It is the Christian tradition that gives our values content and the story of Jesus that gives our values moral substance. These values are embodied in the New Commandment that Jesus gave us:

John 13:34-35

"...love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples".

We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection.

Values Education

We blend Christian teaching and values education in order to create opportunities that enhance the spiritual development and response of the school community that are grounded in distinctively Christian teaching whilst seeking to make a difference to the lives of all members of the school community by engaging, challenging, encouraging and inspiring in a relevant way. Children will learn about and reflect upon Christian teaching, biblical material and Christian

festivals, in a way that relates to the pupils' experience and to living together in community. We explore and develop an understanding of the Trinitarian nature of Christianity, providing a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We aim to create an atmosphere in which faith in God is recognised and respected and enable learners to develop an understanding of the person of Jesus Christ and the central position He occupies in the Christian faith. We allow learners to explore and enjoy reflection, praise, prayer and the rituals of Christianity. We also provide opportunities to understand and celebrate the seasons of the Church year and Christian festivals including local celebrations. We ensure that worship is appropriate to the age of pupils and enable pupils to develop as independent worshippers.

Collective worship is distinctively Christian but we recognise the importance of assembly time which allows the school community to recognise and celebrate the beliefs and cultures of other and to celebrate achievements of members of the school that are held to be of worth.

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 to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Head teacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship. The Head teacher and worship co-ordinator are aware of the requirements of the section 48 (statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) inspections with regard to worship, and will ensure that the school is striving to ensure that worship at the school develops and aspires to best practice as articulated in inspection criteria.

Organisation, planning, content and detail

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and reflection. Our current schedule is as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday.

Whole school worship led by a member of staff. The theme for each period reflects our Values focus interspersed with festivals and Saint Days as they fall during the year. The worship begins with the children entering the hall accompanied by a piece of music for the week. The altar table has already been set up by children. The service begins with the prayer of preparation written in the planning to collect the children together and the candle will be lit ready for the worship. A child will tell the school about a thought for the day and a prayer will be said followed by an introduction to the story theme, a bible story or other appropriate story is read and the meaning discussed. Where applicable, a prayer is read linked to the theme followed by the Lord's Prayer. Children then sing a hymn. Worship is closed with the leader saying the dismissal outlined in the planning. The candle is blown out before any messages are given to allow for us to make a clear distinction between worship and assembly. The children then lead out as the music is played.

Friday

Whole school worship led by a member of staff and the worship council. This assembly is a celebration of success when children are praised for any awards they have received, their progress up the reading tree, the winning house team for the week and certificates are given for children who have achieved one of the school values through the week and children chosen for Golden Table. A prayer is said thanking God for the support given to achieve and the hymn 'One more step along the road I go' is sung.

Wednesday

This worship is led by the Vicar or a member of the local Christian community and will be linked in with the church calendar. The format is similar to other days.

In the EYFS class a prayer of thanks for food at snack time and an end of day prayer asking for the children to be kept safe at night.

At the end of every half term, a celebration assembly is held when parents are invited to attend and children talk about their successes out of school as well as successes in school of a non-academic nature such as the politest child or most helpful etc.

At the beginning of lunch time, grace is said by a child from the lunchtime prayer book that contains prayers written by the children and teachers make an individual decision about whether to say a prayer with their class at the end of the school day.

The Eucharist is celebrated by all children with parents and governors invited both in church and at school.

Other Faiths

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs.

Record keeping, evaluation and monitoring

A file is kept, recording details of each act of worship with records of plans and content being kept centrally in the hall. It is the responsibility of the worship co-ordinator to ensure these are kept updated. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of Collective Worship is an on-going process that involves input from staff. The worship co-ordinator also has the responsibility for auditing and keeping records of resources and ensuring they are accessible to pupils and staff as appropriate. A negotiated budget ensures that the worship programme can be carried out effectively. Training is encouraged and available for those who wish to lead acts of worship.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, Blackshaw Moor CofE First School ensures 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. St Matthew's church is our most valuable and frequently used resource with the whole school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter and leavers' services. Mothering Sunday and Christingle take part within school.

School development plan for collective worship

There is a clear link between the school development plan and collective worship to ensure it is inclusive, invitational and inspiring.

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.