

**The Bishops’
Church of England and Roman Catholic
Primary School
Worship Policy**



Our Mission Statement:

Live fully,

Laugh often,

Learn deeply,

Love as God loves you

And Let your light shine!

Our Core Belief about Worship

Worship is an expression of our relationship with God and with each other. It provides an opportunity for rejoicing and celebrating the joys and successes of life within our School community as well as reflecting on life's sorrows. The Collective Worship can be a focal point for the community to share the beliefs and values it considers most important.

Acts of Worship

At The Bishops' School, our Acts of Worship are Christian in character, according to the Trust Deed. Worship is regarded as a collective act or opportunity to think about and relate to God, and to consider and reflect on how belief and faith in God may affect our lives. Our times of worship incorporate prayer and singing, and where possible, responses from the children are expected. There is an opportunity to incorporate multi-faith and multicultural awareness into chosen themes, reflecting the rich diversity of nationality and culture represented in our school community.

Our aim at The Bishops' School is that our Acts of Worship should always be appropriate to the age, aptitude and background of the children, and that they should challenge and enrich the children's experience, taking them on their journey through life with a stronger Christian foundation. We conduct our assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We aim to provide

time for the children to be still and reflect calmly on their experiences and explore their feelings and thoughts in a prayerful atmosphere. We regard it as a truly special time and expect the children to behave in an appropriate manner. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully when appropriate; there are also times for the children to be actively involved in the worship (and excited).

Singing and music form a very important part of our worship and membership of choirs to support worship is encouraged. Regularly children share their music and participate in worship activities away from school, e.g. carol singing, a cathedral concert, Barnados concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

Through collective worship we aim to:

- Contribute to the personal development of the individual;
- Enhance pupils' spiritual and moral development;
- Encourage our pupils to explore and question their own beliefs and to
- Consider the beliefs and feelings of others;
- Build a community identity through which individuals feel valued;
- Offer the opportunity for celebration and reflection;
- Offer an opportunity for children to be involved in planning and taking part in worship;
- Offer consideration of issues which are important to the ethos of the school and the wider community

Tuesday Services

Our Assemblies are held daily within school with the exception of Tuesdays. Tuesday worship takes the form of a service which takes place in St. Augustine's Church. These church services are led by local clergy together with children from a particular class or year group on a rota basis. We have a 2 week rotation for these Church-based services which means that the school is vertically split into two enabling FS to Year 6 to regularly worship together. When 'Group 1' is worshipping in church, 'Group 2' is worshipping as classes, which gives the opportunity for more informal and class-linked worship.

Through our weekly collective worship services, the children are introduced to elements of Church liturgy, including formal prayers and responses, and the use of signs and symbols. They begin to understand some of the elements of liturgy - greetings, silence, prayer, praise, community- which prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

The children become familiar with the seasons of the Church year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost - by preparing for and participating in Special Church Services. We also hold two outdoor services on the school playground, one to celebrate and recognise the life of St Augustine with a Eucharist (as near to May 27th as possible) and a second one to commemorate Remembrance Day, incorporating the Act of Silence (as near to November 11th as possible). The local community, as well as our wider school community, are involved in all of these Special Services which are presided over by the local Clergy.

Worship Assemblies

Within the life of our school, there will inevitably be times when we need, for example, to give out notices, reports of sporting activities, review and reminders of school rules, or celebrate achievements in class. There is a significant separation between this ‘school-based’ activity and that of Collective Worship when we are offering praise and thanksgiving to God.

Visiting speakers are often welcomed to the school to talk to the children about different topics, especially with regard to charitable giving or other faiths. When this happens, the children are still given an opportunity to consider and reflect on how belief and faith in God may affect our lives.

Withdrawal

There is a hope that, as the parents are made aware of the Christian ethos of the Bishops’ before their children enter the school, such requests will not be made. However if such a case should arise, requests should be made to the Headteacher.

Our Weekly Pattern for Worship

Our school has established a pattern of worship which forms the core of what we do. However there is an element of flexibility within that pattern to reflect the style, content or purpose of the gathering together of the children. All members of staff are given the opportunity to lead school Acts of Worship.

The current pattern of Collective Worship is as follows:

Monday	Whole School assembly, usually led by the Headteacher or a senior member of staff.
Tuesday	Church service at St Augustine’s led by a member of the clergy or classroom- based services. Parents are invited to the Church service.
Wednesday	Key Stage Assemblies led by members of staff or visitors. Also isingpop assemblies may be used.

Thursday	Singing Assemblies – Key stage 1 and Foundation Stage children in the courtyard, led by KS1 leader; Key Stage 2 children in the Hall, led by the Headteacher or Deputy Head.
Friday	<p>Class Assemblies or Key Stage Celebration Assemblies:</p> <p>Each class gets 2 opportunities each school year to plan and lead an Assembly which they perform to the rest of their Key Stage classes. The parents of the participating class are invited to attend this Assembly.</p> <p>The other Key Stage holds a Celebration Assembly in the courtyard where all the teachers share with the children and staff some of the great learning which has been going on that week.</p> <p>Each of these types of Assemblies also includes time to reflect and consider the role of faith and belief, and would typically include prayers and Christian songs.</p>

Prayer and Silence

Many of our worship assemblies offer times for quiet reflection, and children are encouraged to offer their own extempore prayers, especially in Class Worship times on Tuesdays and during the Thursday Singing Worship Assemblies. Children also learn the formal prayers of St. Richard and The Lord's Prayer, which is sung each week, and a 'sorry' prayer.

Prayers of thankfulness (Grace) and trust (end of day prayer) are said in every class each day, and there is a special KS1 prayer 'Father I place into your hands' which the children learn.

This policy was written and agreed by Governors in 2010, updated in 2014, has been updated with minor alterations in January 2016 and April 2021.