



THE ABBEY CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Together we learn, we care, we achieve –
for ourselves, for each other, and for the community in which we live.

Collective Worship Policy

Date policy last reviewed: May 2018
Most recent revision: January 2021
Date policy next reviewed: January 2024

Introduction

Many families send their children to the Abbey School because they value a church school education. We have many children from practising Christian families, as well as children from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds.

As a church school, to ensure that an open and inclusive Christian Faith underpins the experiences of the children in our care. The different faith backgrounds of both children and staff are respected and embraced at all times.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from acts of Collective Worship if they wish. Teachers may also withdraw from Collective Worship.

This document should be read alongside the Policy for Religious Education, as the two are interwoven.

Aims

As a Church of England school, our aim is to nurture the children in the Christian faith, providing them with opportunities for reflection and prayer in a caring atmosphere guided by the life and teaching of Jesus.

At the same time, we are conscious that we live in a multi-cultural society and we seek to encourage and develop a mature awareness of other traditions and beliefs.

Objectives

- To show interest in and a concern for all members of the school, developing the feeling of belonging to our community.
- To celebrate special occasions together.
- To show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and the wider world.
- To explore and reflect upon the variety of values and attitudes in society at large.

- To reflect upon the dimensions of human life – the beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, solemn and wonderful.
- To consider the deeper questions of human existence and how they affect us.
- To provide an opportunity for prayer and reflection.
- To provide an opportunity for the recognition and affirmation of the values which we hold.

Organisation

An act of collective worship takes place each day:

Monday 10am: Key Stage singing assemblies led by music teacher

Tuesday 1.10pm: Whole school led by head of Key Stage 2- Christian or multicultural focus

Wednesday 1.10pm: Whole school led by Headteacher - Christian focus

Thursday 9.15am: Whole school service in Cathedral led by the Sub Dean or Youth chaplain– Christian focus

Friday 1.10pm: Whole school Star of the Week celebration assembly with celebration of sharing work led by Deputy Headteacher

Monday: Key Stage specific singing assemblies which focus on teaching Christian songs in preparation for Services/Liturgical events but may include other music too.

Tuesday: This assembly is led by the Head of Key Stage 2 and may have a Christian or multi-cultural focus. In addition, this assembly focuses on the sharing and celebration of excellent work and achievements. Potential issues of concern such as world events, illness at home, bereavement etc may also be discussed.

Wednesday: Whole school worship led by the Headteacher. A theme which can be developed over a week or several weeks is selected from the Diocese collective worship document based on the liturgical calendar. A focal point such as our trinity candles on our special altar cloth or our mosaic depicting the journey to the cathedral is used.

The participation of the children may include setting up the arrangements and the music for entering and leaving, lighting the candles, discussion of the theme, reading and writing prayers for the worship and the singing of the hymn. Sometimes the response is stillness or silence for short periods.

Music, organised into half-termly themes, for the beginning and end of assemblies is planned by the music teacher, and saved power point presentations on the network.

The words and music for hymns and songs used in assemblies are also stored on the network and accessed through the hall laptop.

Thursday: 9.15am: The children from Reception upwards attend a service in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral which is coordinated by the Sub Dean and Youth Chaplain. The assemblies are planned to reflect the stages of the church year, or may follow half-termly themes with a Christian focus. Parents are invited to join this service.

Friday: 1.10 pm: A whole school assembly, led by the Deputy Headteacher. The Star of the Week badge is awarded to one child in every class for perseverance in short term goals or modelling of Christian Values or Golden Rules. Key Stage 2 House Points are celebrated and sporting news is shared.

The assembly also includes a hymn, a time for reflection and prayer.

- A school Eucharist takes place at the end of each term either in the crossing of the Cathedral or in school. Pupils are encouraged to play active parts in this service through leading the prayers, readings, serving and bringing up the offertory.
- The Faith Council is involved in planning and evaluating Collective Worship with the head teacher and sub dean and Foundation Governor.
- A programme of listening music for the beginning and ending of assemblies is prepared by the music teacher, taking different themes e.g. concertos, different composers. A power point presentation gives information to the children as they listen to the music.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from both Religious Education and Collective Worship. If they wish to exercise this right, they should notify the Headteacher in writing.

Additional Services:

Parents are very welcome to join our Cathedral collective worship on Thursdays mornings at 9.15am in the Lady Chapel.

A school Eucharist takes place at the end of each term for Lent, Harvest, Advent and in the Summer term in the Abbey Crossing. We also have other special services and celebrations through the year such as the annual Carol Service in the Naïve and the Year 6 Leavers Service in the School. Parents are warmly welcomed to attend all our services.

During the year, each Year group leads an assembly for their parents. The theme is selected from an aspect or aspects of their classwork, so that parents can see what the children have achieved. The children select the hymn and write the prayers for these services.

Key Stage 1 children enjoy performing in a Nativity each Christmas and all Key Stage 2 children perform in a summer production each year.

A special Welcome Assembly is held near the beginning of the Autumn to welcome new children and their families to the school. The Year 6 'special friends' bring the new children to the front of the hall in turn to be introduced to the school.

- A Leavers' assembly is held at the end of the Summer Term for Year 6 and their parents. Cups and shields are awarded for special achievement at the school, and each child is presented with a prayer book from the governing body and an autograph book from the Friends Association.
- In October, the whole school is involved in a Harvest Thanksgiving in the Cathedral. Families are invited to attend as there is space available for everyone. The theme is determined in advance and usually involves offerings of produce and money for the Bishop's Appeal and food contributions for St Albans Food Bank. As the Bishop's Appeal often supports work in other parts of the world, this lends itself to some interesting themes, e.g. the Caribbean, India, coffee farmers etc.
- A Carol Service takes place in the Cathedral at Christmas. The Christmas story is told through carols, songs, readings and a Nativity procession. Families are invited to attend.
- Members of the school also participate in the Christingle Service in the Cathedral, arranged by the Childrens' Society, as well as other community services during the year.
- The school also takes part in the St Albans Primary Schools carol service and other diocesan services as they occur.

Resources:

- Visiting speakers may include members of the Cathedral clergy, members of the local community, The Salvation Army, Acting Up and representatives of charities.
- A wide range of assembly resource books are available, including the Twelve Baskets series of books which follow the termly SEAL themes.
- Website resources, e.g. www.assemblies.org.uk; <http://www.natsoc.org.uk>
- A range of CDs with music suitable for the beginnings and endings of assemblies, reflections and accompaniments for hymns.
- Artefacts are used as appropriate.

Recording:

A record of collective worship is kept by the headteacher.

Evaluation and Review

The assembly programme is evaluated in staff meetings and in the School Council, Faith Council and through informal discussions with colleagues and pupils at least once a year.

Surveys on RE, Collective Worship and the school's distinctive Christian character are regularly carried out by the governors and fed into school development.