

*'Live Fully, Laugh Often, Learn Deeply,  
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## **WORSHIP POLICY**

### **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 at The Bishops' is the focal point for our school 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 all present are encouraged and 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, encouraging them especially on their spiritual 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 community 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 everyone to behave in a respectful manner. We model quietness and thoughtfulness and the ability to listen carefully, expecting the pupils to follow this example.

Singing and music form a very important part of our worship and membership of choirs and instrumental groups is encouraged. Where appropriate, groups of musicians from within the school take part in Collective Worship, adding another dimension to our times together. On other occasions, groups of children are invited to 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 our worship we all (pupils, staff and visitors) aim to:

- Contribute to the personal development of the individual
- Enhance our community's spiritual and moral development
- Encourage everyone to explore and reflect on their own beliefs
- Consider the beliefs and feelings of others

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- Build a community identity through which individuals feel valued
- Offer the opportunity for celebration and reflection
- 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 3 week rotation for these Church-based services which means that the whole school attends services one week, the next week it is the turn of the Key Stage 2 children and the third week KS1 and Foundation Stage children hold a service together. When the children are not in the Church for a service, they hold classroom services which are also attended by either Father Nick or Rev Jane. There is a link between the 'Come and See' scheme of work and the theme of the worship.

Through our weekly 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 and special times of the Church year – Harvest, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost- by preparing for and participating in Special Church Services. We also hold 2 outdoor services on the school playground, one to celebrate and recognise the life of St Augustine with a Eucharist (as near to May 27<sup>th</sup> as possible) and a second one to commemorate Remembrance Day, incorporating the Act of Silence (as near to November 11<sup>th</sup> 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.

### **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.

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### **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 are 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 attended by Father Nick or Rev Jane (rota). Parents are invited to the Church service.
Wednesday	Key Stage Celebration Assemblies led by members of staff or visitors.
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 other musical staff.
Friday	Class Assembly led by each class on rota. The parents of the participating class are invited to this, along with the Key stage of the class and the other key stage siblings. The PTA offer welcome refreshments for these parents; The other Key Stage holds a Celebration Assembly in the courtyard.