



The St Marylebone Church of England School

64 Marylebone High Street
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WORSHIP POLICY

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1. Statement of belief

1.1 We believe that the whole curriculum should promote the spiritual and moral development of all pupils, although it is in school worship that the opportunity will be given for the spiritual dimension of school life to find its major expression.

1.2 As a Church of England Academy with a multi-faith and ecumenical intake, we believe that our worship, whilst in the main reflecting our Anglican tradition, should also mark the major faith festivals of other traditions and celebrate the spiritual and cultural diversity of our staff and pupils.

1.3 The ethos behind worship and its wider implications is based upon Colossians 3.12-17: *“As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

2. Aims

2.1 In our worship we aim to:

- show reverence for God
- express and give direction to our experiences of awe, thankfulness, humility, dedication, hope and responsibility
- live out the values of respect, admiration, devotion and gratitude
- give expression to our common values and purposes
- affirm the worth of every individual within the School community and in the wider community as children of God
- provide experiences which strengthen attitudes and disposition so that those with a religious commitment may worship more adequately and those as yet uncommitted may develop a capacity to approach the threshold of worship
- provide occasions when those who have a degree of commitment can express it, while those whose commitment is less can learn what an act of worship can mean to those who take an active part
- provide an educational experience for all pupils
- avoid exclusivity or proselytisation

3. Implementation

3.1 The Worship Programme:

- The responsibility for school worship lies with the Governors and Headteacher. The day-to day responsibility for worship arrangements lies with the School Chaplain
- Whole school assembly takes place every Monday in the Parish Church
- Assemblies are based upon the Theme of the Week, chosen by the School Chaplain and Headteacher, as stated in the Academia for the year
- During Tutor Time, Years and Houses have assemblies in the Parish Church, theatre or sports hall
- Eucharists are celebrated to mark major events in the Christian calendar. There will be at least one Eucharist per term. A Eucharist planning meeting is held prior to each Eucharist. This is attended by the Headteacher, School Chaplain, Director of Chapel Choir, Head of Performing Arts, and the Organ Scholar
- There are special services at the end of each term, for example the Festival of Lessons and Carols and Year 11 Record of Achievement assembly; as well as to mark festivals and seasons, such as Founder's Day and Ash Wednesday
- On other days the school day starts with 'Thought for the Day', also based upon the Theme of the Week. This is taken by Senior Staff and pupils. Once a week the Duty Form writes and reads the 'Thought for the Day'
- Student voice regarding worship is enlisted through the Student Worship Team which is part of the wider School Council

3.2 The Delivery of Worship:

The School Chaplain is responsible for the successful delivery of whole-school worship. As part of that responsibility s/he will:

- set the themes for the week after discussion with the Head Teacher and Senior Staff - offer support, advice and resources for teachers taking assemblies

- take part in the 'Thought for the Day' rotas
- attend planning meetings for the Eucharists
- prepare the readers and Chapel Team for Eucharists and major services
- prepare any other pupils involved
- select and train the Chapel Team
- set up the Parish Church for weekly services
- arrange the Teaching Eucharist, and schedule Eucharists and other services throughout the year
- make every effort to liaise with the Head of RS, so that through RS lessons it is ensured that pupils are aware of the significance of the acts of whole school worship
- keep the staff informed of any changes to the pattern of assemblies and services.

3.3 The Director of Chapel Choir (or Director of Music, depending on allocation of responsibilities within the Music Department for particular services) is responsible for the musical content of the church services which includes the hymns. As part of that responsibility s/he will:

- call and chair meetings with the School Chaplain to arrange the hymns for the coming year suitable for the themes
- arrange for a member of the Music Department to provide the singing practice prior to the service
- encourage and facilitate the inclusion of different types of music in the services to add variety and to include pupils in the service
- work with the School Chaplain to provide suitable music for the end of term services - allocate the responsibility for Thought for the Day music to a member of the department (oversee the selection to ensure the suitability of the music for the themes)
- develop the provision of music for whole school worship
- audition, select and train the Chapel Choir
- direct the Chapel Choir in the weekly services
- with other members of the team select the hymns for all the services, ensure that the Chapel Choir knows the hymns and can give a lead to the singing especially when a new hymn is introduced
- liaise with the school receptionist on the provision of choir robes and arrange for them to be cleaned at the end of each year
- attend the Eucharist planning meetings
- oversee the work of the Organ Scholar for the Monday services, Eucharists and Chapel Choir practices, and ensure he/she has regular contact/supervision with the Music Department, and all available resources, such as the Academia
- prepare the Chapel Choir to sing the music for the themed Eucharists

4. The role of the School Chaplain in worship and the wider life of the School

4.1 The School Chaplain will, by God's grace, and with the support of the Rector of St Marylebone:

- work to ensure that the Anglican character of the School is deepened and enhanced
- ensure that, whilst being faithful to and confident in the School's Anglican foundation, the Chaplain's contribution is as broad and as generous as possible, ever sensitive to the School's global character and outlook
- work to make school worship a powerful, engaging, involving, inspiring, joyful, challenging and mysterious part of the experience of each and every member of the school family
- seek to connect the ethical concerns of the Christian faith wherever possible with the specific interests and projects of the School, and communicate a vision of the Christian faith that is deeply rooted in charity, compassion and service

4.2 To meet these aims, the School Chaplain will:

- prepare and read a prayer to begin assembly every Monday morning based on the theme of the week. The School Chaplain contributes to the drawing up of the themes for the week with the Headteacher.
- lead one assembly each year
- attend the Eucharist Planning Group, which meets regularly to discuss the theme of forthcoming School Eucharists and any other special services
- take the lead on how the theme of the week/the theme of the ecclesiastical season/recent events in school or news/the ethos of the School can be expressed and explored creatively within the given framework of the Eucharist
- prepare candidates for Baptism and Confirmation and provide follow up support for the recently Baptised/Confirmed
- be available to staff and students for pastoral support
- contribute enriching and relevant resources in school life, for example, 'Saint of the Moment' in public spaces, 'Variations on a Theme' in the weekly Bulletin, Seasonal email art and faith reflections.
- contribute to Religious Studies teaching at the discretion of the Head of RS
- contribute resources and assist in the planning and delivery of assemblies, where appropriate
- help develop opportunities for students to engage in community activities and projects linked to the life of the Chapel

4.3 As an Affiliated School of the Woodard Corporation:

- a Provost is assigned to the School, to provide pastoral support and supervision for the School Chaplain, to preside at the Confirmation Eucharist, and attend services and events throughout the year as appropriate
- a mentor is provided for the School Chaplain from another Woodard School
- training is provided for the School Chaplain through the Woodard Corporation, along with pastoral support, throughout the year
- the School participates in and contributes to Woodard-related opportunities for staff and students to develop spiritually, academically and to promote the value of Christian distinctiveness in education

5. The role of assembly leaders

5.1 In the Academia, there is an Assembly Rota which corresponds to each Theme of the Week, where department leaders, house leaders and senior leaders are all allocated one assembly per year.

5.2 Assemblies should primarily provide an occasion for worship, showing reverence for God and giving direction for our experiences of thankfulness, awe, hope, sorrow and responsibility. They should reflect the fact that we are a Church of England School, whilst acknowledging the presence of people from other faith communities. They should be educational and bring pupils to the threshold of worship.

5.3 The assembly should start by introducing the week's theme, and go on to explore that theme. Many of the themes are based around Christian values (see www.christianvalues4schools.co.uk), as well as events, celebrations and commemorations throughout the year.

5.4 Students should be involved in the planning and presentation of the assembly.

- 5.5 At least one other member of staff should be involved in the presentation of the assembly.
- 5.6 Students should be well rehearsed.
- 5.7 A range of methods of presentation are encouraged, e.g. drama, poetry, music, PowerPoint, a contribution from the Performing or Visual Arts, etc.
- 5.8 The presentation should end with a prayer. At the end of the prayer, the hymn should be introduced.
- 5.9 If the projector and a laptop are required this should be booked through the School Chaplain, at least one week prior to the assembly.
- 5.10 Two scripture readings / pieces of writing from a prominent religious figure are required (at least one from Christianity and one from another faith).
- 5.11 If further support is required resources can be found in the Worship Folder on Google Drive, or through direct consultation with the School Chaplain.

6. The role of staff

- 6.1 All St Marylebone staff are expected to uphold and promote as appropriate the Christian values and ethos of the school. This is made clear in staff interviews, induction and training.
- 6.2 Form tutors and teachers should reinforce the Christian ethos of the School and should place high priority on acts of collective worship: this includes insisting on silence for Thought for the Day and attendance at all Monday assemblies and services.
- 6.3 The Duty Form is responsible for Thought for the Day on the Friday of the Duty Week, which should include a story or commentary, religious teaching and a prayer. Students should have rehearsed in advance. It is the role of the form tutor to ensure that this is prepared in advance.
- 6.4 All teachers and form tutors are expected to attend assemblies and services.

7. The role of students

- 7.1 Students should attend all acts of collective worship for which they are in school.
- 7.2 Where PSHE is taught during assembly only one year group should be absent at a time.
- 7.3 All students should have an opportunity to contribute to and be involved in acts of collective worship.
- 7.4 Students should plan and organise thought for the day with their form for their duty week.
- 7.5 Student applicants to the School (year 7, year 12, and in-year admissions) are reminded of the Christian ethos of the School when they apply.

8. Worship at Blandford

8.1 Collective worship at Blandford should begin with a short talk/thought for the day from a senior member of staff and a prayer.

8.2 There will be a performance from either music or drama to begin the act of worship linking to the theme of the week.

8.3 Contributions from the performing arts will be coordinated by the Performing Arts Scholars/Head of Performing Arts.

8.4 All exams (excluding national exams) should be scheduled around the time for worship.

8.5 Each time a 6th Form group misses a School Eucharist they will have their own relevant and engaging Eucharist in Blandford Hall in the previous/next week.

8.6 The Chaplain will maintain resources for prayer, meditation and worship in the Contemplation Room.

9. Recruitment of staff

9.1 The Application Form for new staff ensures applicants understand the Christian ethos of the School and the expectations arising from this.

9.2 At interviews for new staff, candidates are always reminded of, and asked to uphold the Christian ethos of the School, which is expected of all staff.

10. COVID-19 Appendix

10.1 As of September 2020 limitations have been placed upon large gatherings and singing etc in worship. The school remains committed to the spirit and substance of our Anglican identity and all that flows from that in living out faith and the worshipping life of our community.

10.2 Despite our continued commitment, the nature of the current situation has resulted in some temporary practical changes. These include the institution of a weekly Eucharist on Monday mornings for the school, 2 forms at a time on a rolling rota. The rest of the schools remains in form groups to watch a pre-recorded assembly (with the same varied, high quality and faith-ful content, themes, department/HoY/SLT leadership). Confirmation classes, Bright Lights Film Club, Chapel Team and other activities happen only with year group bubbles and in small numbers with appropriate hygiene precautions.