

St Bede C of E Primary Academy



Worship Policy

St. Bede C of E Primary Academy lies in the Parish of St. Bede's Church to the south of Bolton.

Rationale

At St. Bede, while respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all children, parents and staff, we take the teachings and examples of our Lord Jesus as the foundation of our educational life and spiritual values. We believe that these values encourage the children to develop self-esteem and respect for others and to show compassion, understanding, forgiveness and friendship. This, in turn, equips the children for life in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith community.

This Worship policy builds upon the core values and ethos within our mission statement, in promoting good relationships and harmony.

Aims

- To create an ethos where everyone is valued;
- to give children opportunities to praise God;
- to provide a daily act of worship;
- to celebrate and respect all faiths;
- to show faith in practice by incorporating a clear Christian framework in the daily collective act of worship;
- to encourage all pupils to make a personal contribution to the quality of worship in the school;
- to enhance links with St. Bede Church.

Approaches to uphold these aims

The Trust members of the school constitute representatives from the Diocesan Board of Education, the Parish Church Council and the Archdeaconry as corporate bodies, and the majority of the Governing Body are appointed by these bodies. This ensures that the Christian faith is upheld.

Multicultural aspects are integrated into assemblies by theme. We endeavour to celebrate cultures and religions at appropriate times and include all children at these times. Where appropriate, visitors may be invited, or visits arranged, to practically demonstrate aspects of faith and culture.

Each class will provide a prayer corner or area which can be used as a quiet place for thought and reflection. Children will be encouraged to respond to a question of the week.

The close proximity between Church and school offers a real symbol of spiritual links. School services, involvement with the Church on a regular basis, weekly worship led by a minister,

attendance by the clergy and Governors in school all help to enhance these links with the Church and Parish.

All classes lead a whole school assembly at least once a year, and parents and friends are invited to support their children by attending. All assemblies are recorded in a worship file which is stored in the hall, and parents are invited to comment on and sign a visitors' book after class assemblies.

All assemblies should provide an environment in which children feel confident to explore and develop their own beliefs and spirituality. This should be through:

- Singing hymns of praise;
- coming together each day to celebrate life;
- fostering a sense of the importance of, and the spiritual aspect of, worship and reflection as a celebration of the values of life;
- gaining knowledge of the Christian faith based upon the significance of the Bible, the Holy Trinity and celebrated through the festivals and Saints' days of the Church's year;
- celebrating festivals and beliefs from other faiths, especially those practised by children at St. Bede;
- an awareness of the needs of others based upon an appreciation of the values and beliefs developed from reflection on moral and social issues;
- an opportunity for the children to develop their leadership and performance skills by participating in an act of collective worship;
- an understanding of the school and its place in the wider world, by expressing sorrow and joy at local and world events and to recognise God's role in these;
- providing a moral framework to underpin and guide children's actions.

The school recognises the rights of parents to withdraw children from the act of worship, whilst clearly stating that it is not possible for pupils to escape the Christian ethos of the school. However, all parents have expressed a preference that their child attends St. Bede and are aware of its religious character. If children are withdrawn from worship, supervision arrangements would result and would be difficult to organise and also parents would be denying a school place to a child who may fully participate in all aspects of school life. This should be indicated to parents.

Teachers' rights of conscience are also safeguarded and the rights of teachers to decline to lead worship is acknowledged.