

RIPLEY ST THOMAS

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY



Collective Worship Policy

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Believe.....

Collective Worship Policy

As a Church of England Academy, worship is at the heart of the daily life of Ripley St. Thomas. Worship is a collective time of prayer and reflection. It may be as simple as reading a prayer or reflection during tutorial. It may involve leading a year group or a House during morning assembly or even the whole school at the end of term. At particular times of the year, worship takes place outside the school in a number of local churches.

We are privileged to have a beautiful chapel. This space creates a quiet place within the school for pupils and staff. It is used every day for collective worship for different year groups and is available before and after school and during lunch-time for private reflection. It is also available during lesson times and tutorials for the use of classes for worship. Communion services for staff are held once a month. We also have a small outdoor chapel by the canal to enhance our experience of worship and provides an alternative space for reflection.

We very much encourage and support pupils in becoming involved in and leading worship, acknowledging the importance for pupils of seeing their peers actively participating in the spiritual dimension of our school.

The School Chaplain, Sam Cheesman, is responsible for overseeing worship at Ripley.

At Ripley we seek to develop the same love, respect, tolerance and care of each individual as exemplified by Jesus Himself. Our daily acts of worship make a significant contribution to achieving this purpose.

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from worship. However, in view of the religious foundation of the school, the Governors would be extremely concerned if any parent expressed this wish.

All form tutors are expected to begin each day with an act of worship, opening each day with a prayer and once a week, a more substantial form worship. A number of staff also volunteer to lead a collective act of worship for the year group or the house.

The Senior Leadership Team and Progress Leaders take an active role in collective worship, both leading and facilitating worship spaces within the school. This reflects the importance placed on involvement in worship throughout the collegiate.

Statement of Aims

Worship is mainly, though not exclusively, Anglican in character. It will aim to develop pupils spiritually, so that they:

- learn and develop the ability to pray
- learn to be still and reflective
- increase our collective and personal knowledge of God
- understand what worship is and what people do when they worship
- develop a sense of awe and wonder at creation
- explore the mystery and the important questions about life and creation, including suffering, loss, death, evil, etc.
- explore that which is of value in life – truth, love, goodness, beauty etc.

help pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith, so that they:

- learn about the place and significance of the Bible, Church life and Christian practice
- experience different forms of worship
- celebrate the festivals and Saints days of the church year
- begin to understand the nature of God as revealed in Jesus and the significance of Jesus in their lives
- understand that God is concerned with all areas of life

contribute to the general development of pupils by:

- providing them with the opportunities for Christian leadership and developing performance skills
- exploring moral issues and concerns and the process of decision making with regard to morality
- helping pupils to reflect on their own values, commitments and beliefs
- helping pupils to reflect on the news and current affairs
- helping pupils to be aware of the needs of others

appreciate and celebrate and take note of the life of the school by:

- celebrating work undertaken by pupils in all areas of the curriculum
- building up the sense of community of the school
- developing and reflecting on the values of the school
- sharing the achievements, joys and difficulties of all members of the school community.

Content of the Acts of Worship

In general, worship will include one or more of the following: a hymn, prayer, Bible reading, homily, music, drama, dance, each of these may be related to one or more of the following:

- **Elements of faith:** understanding the Bible, Old Testament Stories, stories about the teaching of Jesus, Church history, Church seasons, festivals and beliefs
- **Prayer and God:** exploring ideas about God and prayer
- **Variety in Prayer:** adoration, confession, thanksgiving and personal supplication and intercession for others; meditation and reflection
- **Topical events:** crises and continuing issues, such as Third World needs, wealth and poverty
- **Stories** which illustrate faith themes, e.g. awe and wonder, love, compassion, myths and legends, literature and children's literature, stories which explore metaphor, truth bearing stories
- **Sharing and taking note of experiences of others,** and expressing concern for others, both in school and in the news
- **Encouraging the Ministry of Giving:** support for a variety of charities, especially those with a Christian foundation; community gifts to the elderly and nearby local and national charities.

- **Exploring common values, standards and rules:** how to treat others, self-discipline, good and evil, understand that Christian values are perfectly embodied in the person of Christ
- **Sharing common experiences:** loss, anger, thankfulness, sorrow, joy, fear, jealousy, beauty
- **Music:** hymns and songs from the Christian tradition, Taize chants for meditative worship etc. to reflect the variety of music used to enhance the worship of God.
- **Sharing communion.**

It is important to differentiate between worship and assembly. Our acts of worship should stand alone and not be diluted by notices.

Structures and Support

Collective worship is held in both the chapel and the hall for each year group from Monday to Friday. Worship is held for each house once every half term.

Worship is led by a variety of people; the chaplain produces a rota staffed by the Chaplain, the SLT, student bodies within the school and a number of volunteers. Outside speakers are often invited to lead worship.

Form tutors are expected to manage one act of corporate worship per week in form time. Resources are provided for all tutors by the Chaplain however many form tutors develop their own worship programmes and some facilitate the young people to lead the class themselves. This is supported and resourced by the Chaplain and Progress leaders.

Every day prayer is provided on the daily bulletin. All pupils end the day with the Grace.

It is recognised that to be effective the acts of collective worship require a comfortable and stimulating environment conducive, for example, to quiet reflection and contemplative activities. The material, ideas, etc. need to be relevant to the world of young people, appropriate to their level of understanding, their degree of faith and to their experiences.

It is also recognised that staff and pupils who lead the acts of worship require support, including induction for new staff, in-service training for all staff and resources that are meaningful, varied and readily available.

The following support is available:

- Musical support from the Music Department who are happy to advise and contribute.
- Presentational advice from Mrs Plowright, Head of Creative Arts.
- ICT support from our technician team.
- Resources for staff, including a Bible for all form tutors, readily available prayers, a staff library resourced with assembly books, sketches, themes and ideas. The school has recently purchased and compiled additional resources.
- Visible symbols in keeping with our status as a Church School. For example, the 'Mission Statement' and artefacts that can serve as a focus for worship are visible in classrooms and about the school. Crosses have now been placed in each classroom.
- A daily prayer is published on the pink bulletin.
- Resources for weekly form worship are provided for all tutors by the chaplain.

The School Chaplain is always able to support staff in delivering both year/house and form worship.