

WORSHIP

Name of Governor: Carley Franke

Date of visit

Class name / year group: whole school

No of children

Subject and purpose of visit overview of collective worship

Linked to School Improvement Plan Priority

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Details of discussion

Collective worship is participated in by the whole school and begins each and every morning of the school day. Every worship starts with a prayer and the lighting of a candle, and ends with the prayer: "I send you out into the world as messengers of peace and love".

Each week the worships will follow a theme - or core value - set by Miss Stapleforth, and each day worship will take a slightly different form whilst exploring those themes.

In general the week progresses as follows:

Monday - In church. Miss Lyons introduces the children to the core value that week, talks about mindfulness and expectations looking forward.

Tuesday - In church, either Rev Nicky will talk about a reading from the Bible, or Open the Book (see below).

Wednesday - In school, House Worship (see below).

Thursday - In school, singing worship in the Key Stages (see below).

Friday - In church. Either there will be a class worship (see below), celebration worship (see below) or Miss Lyons will read a bible story, with discussion points and a prayer - all of which will relate to the core value/theme.

Open the Book: A group of local adult volunteers act out a story from the New Testament with a slight twist. For example the story of the lame man made to walk by Jesus is told from the point of view of a little girl who cannot understand why making a hole in the roof (to allow the man to be lowered down to Jesus) could be a good thing - surely making holes in things is bad?!! The children seemed entranced by this re enactment and story-made-real, and it opened up lots of discussion points for the children to explore. Some of the children from Yr6 took part as the crowd, which made it feel even more interactive and immediate for the children watching.

House Worship: Children get together in houses, and read bible stories relating to the week's theme. This week the theme was 'the many faces of love'. The bible quote 'love thy neighbour as thyself' was given to the children to explore and discuss, and in particular the necessary interaction between the two. Each house has a big house book into which things can be added and into this book a picture of a flower was stuck, on each petal written a description of self - love, decided on by the children. The opportunity to mix across age groups is one enjoyed greatly by the children, with older children teaming up with younger children to support them. The younger children get to know their house representatives and can learn from listening to the older children discussing on more sophisticated themes.

Singing worship can be a time to rehearse songs before a big feast day i.e. Easter. However the children also enjoy just singing the songs and hymns, and have ones that they particularly look forward to singing, i.e. one child I spoke to loves 'If I were a butterfly' and regrets not having sung it for some weeks!

Class Worship: Each term each class presents a class worship to the rest of the school, and as well as being about a Core Value, these can be specific to an event in the Christian Calendar, or outside of it for example, Pride Month and Black History Month, (both of which are celebrated every year). Sometimes it will be related directly to the experience of a child within the school, as for example in the case of one child who has juvenile arthritis. In this instance the child approached Mrs Stapleforth - a practice greatly encouraged at the school of 'courageous advocacy'. Another instance of child-lead worship was the Christmas Boxes appeal. There will also be a British Value Worship once every half term and Remembrance Day Worship takes place every year. Parents are invited to come along to the Class Worships in which their child or children are taking part.

Celebration worship: Children are nominated by their teachers for the Headteacher Certificate to recognise academic progress, and all children will receive at least one of these over the course of the year. Ethos Certificates are nominated by class peers and not teachers: once every half term the children are asked to put two names on a piece of paper of a classmate they think have been particularly deserving of one (i.e. helpful, selfless etc). These are presented at Celebration worship (along with any certificates children have earned outside of school) and parents are invited to come along too.

A deep understanding of the stories in the Bible are built on year on year. In the half term leading up to Christmas, the children explore the story of Christmas (including the events that took place before) in depth. For example Rev Nicky organises the 'posada' where small versions of the Nativity characters move around the village, and new ways of telling the story are found, for example last year the story of the Three Trees was told at the Christmas Service (the manger, a boat and the cross). Similarly other bible stories such as the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep, and Noah's Ark, so that the children leave the school knowing these stories very thoroughly.

Observations on behaviour

The children are obviously used to walking to church and filing in quietly and then sitting patiently on the floor for the duration of worship, and are well behaved as they do so. They all seem to know the songs and sing them with varying degrees of gusto! The children who are presenting to the rest of the school seem happy to do so and those spectating watch and listen respectfully, with only occasional encouragement from teachers on the sidelines to the younger children. During Celebration worship the children have to go up to the front to collect their certificates and do so with confidence, and the rest of the school show their support in clapping and otherwise remaining quiet and attentive.

During the House worship the children are supportive of one another - especially the older towards to the younger.

Links to SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development)

The children are being taught to think about the range of life experience through the lens of the Christian ethos. Many secular festivals are celebrated as well as Christian ones, giving the children an integrated framework of values which is primarily Christian and British, without excluding other cultures and belief systems.

The children are leaving the school knowing, in depth, key teachings from the bible. The Core values (re-emphasised for example in the Ethos Certificates) give the children a moral sense of what is good and bad, how to take responsibility for one's actions, how to be kind to one another and to oneself and how to be a positive force in the world and a good example to others. The worships continually emphasise and strengthen the community of the school, whether it be that of the school houses, the whole school, the school and church and the school and wider community of parents and village.

Areas highlighted by staff or following discussions with staff:

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Governor signature
Staff signature