

Worship Policy

Reviewed by: NM / RAB / JC

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ST HILDA'S
CE HIGH SCHOOL

WISDOM
HOPE
COMMUNITY
DIGNITY
EQUALITY
DIVERSITY

Worship at St Hilda's

Our Faith

In accordance with the Church of England, we believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. St Hilda's worship and curriculum is shaped by our Christian vision and values and encourages the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of our students. As a school community we embrace diversity and respect freedom of religion and belief, enabling all to flourish.

Our Vision

We are the St Hilda's family with Jesus Christ as our Cornerstone. Building on foundations of Wisdom, Hope, Community, Dignity, Equality we nurture and support one another to be our very best. We rejoice in our Diversity and celebrate our many achievements.

Ephesians 2:18-20 says 'God is building a home. He's using us all – irrespective of how we got here – in what he is building. He used the apostles and prophets for the foundations. Now he's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the Cornerstone that holds all the parts together. We see it taking shape day after day – a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home'

Our Values

Our six school values: wisdom, hope, community, dignity, equality and diversity demonstrate our Christian character and school context. They are the standards by which we live out our collective vision and are explored through our cornerstone curriculum and collective worship.

Our Prayer

Written by Grace C in 2017:

Dear Lord

Thank you for our school,

Help us to work as a community.

Treat each other with dignity,

Grow in wisdom as we learn, show equality to all

Encourage us to celebrate our diversity

And give us hope for the future

In Jesus' name

Amen

Defining Worship

Christian worship is honouring God. It means acknowledging that God is holy and above all things: in other words, it is a living and authentic response to the all-loving nature of God as revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ, through the Bible, reason and the traditions of the Holy Communion.

Legal requirements

Collective worship in a Church of England school is the responsibility of the Governors in consultation with the Head teacher:

- It should be carried out in accordance with the school's Christian vision and values
- There must be a collective act of worship for all students each day
- It must reflect the Anglican status of the school
- The act of worship can take place at any time of day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, Houses, forms or key stages.

Right to withdraw – Worship at St Hilda's reflects the metaphor of 'warm fires and open doors'. However, we recognise the right of parents to withdraw from collective worship and under these circumstances parents must consult with the Head.

Our Aims

Worship at St Hilda's is the heart of our Cornerstone Curriculum and is 'invitational, inclusive and inspirational'. We therefore aim to offer worship that is:

- Distinctively Christian and reflective of modern Anglican worship.
- Help pupils to understand the relevance of Jesus and the Bible.
- Inclusive to pupils and staff of all faiths and no faith.
- Meaningful and so enables all pupils to flourish spiritually (e.g. all pupils are given the opportunity to ask questions).
- Consistently invitational.
- Inspirational – e.g. music is used to explore the sacred and engage.
- Always includes the opportunity to reflect and inspires students to be courageous advocates in the world.
- Enable all students to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways.
- Student and staff led – the whole school community are invited to contribute.

Opportunities

Students and staff should have daily opportunities to worship God, develop their spirituality and community spirit. Examples include:

- Daily Wonderwall and Worship (reading, reflection, response and prayer). We use the 'Everyday faith' from the Church of England.
- Weekly Wonderwall tasks including reflection and response to news event.
- God-centred weekly house or form assemblies which also includes music.

- School Eucharist each half term.
- Annual Carol service in Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.
- Year 6 and 7 Eucharist with parents/carers.
- Christian Union, pupil prayer and worship groups (see Chapel timetable).
- Staff prayers.
- Annual pilgrimage from July 2025.
- Cornerstone Week (See Cornerstone Week report 2024).

Leadership

Under the direction of the Head Teacher in consultation with the Worship Committee, worship is organised and co-ordinated by the Deputy Head Teacher, Head of Christian Distinctiveness, School Chaplain and Cornerstone Team. Student leadership is encouraged and nurtured with each form having a Cornerstone Team member. All leaders are given the opportunity to take part in training through the local diocesan team, which contributes to the development of staff expertise and knowledge of collective worship.

Cornerstone Team

Student Cornerstone leaders have a responsibility to set an example to others and lead our school community with a clear understanding of what worship is, why and how we worship God. Many students in school have no other opportunity to experience God in their lives and as such, rely on these young leaders to lead with wisdom and integrity.

Opportunities to lead collective worship are available to all members of the team and include:

- Form worship and for worship representatives
- House assemblies
- Eucharist
- Hospitality for visitors
- Student prayer groups

Spiritual and practical training is offered to all team members during the school year.

Worship Committee

The committee meets at least once a term and will comprise of the following members:

- Headteacher and / or Deputy Headteacher
- Head of Christian Distinctiveness
- School Chaplain
- Diocesan Link Governor
- Head of music

The committee may invite associate staff members or Cornerstone Team members to join meetings where the agenda is relevant.

Our Services

Christian Distinctiveness

Worship at St Hilda's is distinctively Christian and so invitational, inclusive and inspirational. There is a theme for weekly/ daily worship and for our God-centred assemblies, which is based on the Christian calendar and school context. This provides students and staff with the opportunity to explore a variety of Christian topics and themes in detail e.g. characters in the Bible, sayings of Jesus and characters of God.

It is expected that those leading worship of any sort will use their wisdom and discretion to make any reasonable adjustments to suit the needs of participants. Sometimes issues or events arise which may necessitate a change in the weekly theme.

Every effort should be made to create worship opportunities that are accessible, inclusive and suitable for all.

As a Form

Each form will follow a set weekly theme for the week and form tutors should enable students to participate in the collective act of worship that is pre-prepared each morning. This can be found on the Cornerstone Curriculum bulletin. It includes links to the following:

- Daily act of collective worship (Reading, reflection, response, prayer).
- Weekly God-centred assembly (either form or House).
- Weekly Wonderwall task.
- Chapel timetable and other worship notices including Cornerstone Team meeting times.

In addition, each form has a form Wonderwall with a hard copy of the School Prayer and Lord's Prayer. The Wonderwall is a visible focus of worship and form tutors are encouraged to use it as part of the reflection and response element of daily worship. Sometimes observation of form worship by Heads of House, Senior Leaders and the Head of Christian Distinctiveness will take place.

As a House / Form

Assemblies: these take place in forms or Houses once a week according to a calendar which is published at the start of the year by the Head of Christian Distinctiveness. Assemblies are led by Senior Leaders, Heads of House, Student leaders and other members of staff who wish to take a leading role in collective worship. Staff wishing to contribute to these assemblies should contact the Head of Christian Distinctiveness. Assemblies should include the following:

- Music relating to the theme of the assembly
- A reading from the Bible
- A reflection
- A prayer

Christian leaders from our local and wider community are invited to lead worship at St Hilda's. This helps to strengthen connections and enriches our worship experience. New visitors will be brief and 'hosted' by our Deputy Head Pastoral or Head of Christian Distinctiveness. To avoid any misunderstanding, the purpose of collective worship will be explained to new visitors in advance. All visitors must comply with the schools' Anglican foundation.

As a School

We come together as a school community every half term to celebrate Eucharist. Logistically, we can no longer fit in our assembly space as an entire school and so 4 Eucharists are held throughout the designated day every half term. The schedule for our Eucharists is published at the start of the year by our Deputy Head Pastoral, who plans and organises these services in collaboration with the Worship committee, Cornerstone Team and staff who wish to take a leading role.

The order of service follows the Anglican Common Worship which is adapted to suit the needs of our congregation. This order of service for each Eucharist is put together by our Deputy Head pastoral in collaboration with the Worship Committee. The service also includes a sermon / talk which will be delivered by the Chaplain, member of staff, student or visitor.

Music is provided by the Music department and the Head of Music will work closely with the Worship Committee to plan and deliver the service. Song lyrics are checked beforehand to ensure that they are in line with our Christian ethos.

All students and staff are invited to receive Communion or a blessing: this includes those of non-Anglican denominations. Unconfirmed Anglican children may receive Communion if they normally receive Communion in their own church. Anyone may receive a blessing.

Our Family

We endeavour to provide space and opportunities for students of other faiths to participate in their own acts of worship, celebration and observance of their own festivals.

Our Future

Worship at St Hilda's is continuing to flourish. This is due to the collaborative efforts of both students and staff, bringing fresh ideas, utilising, gifting and unleashing creativity to inspire and encourage our ever growing community. Our Head teacher and entire Worship Committee should always be open to new ideas and willing to receive constructive suggestions from staff and students.

The way we are using our space for worship is also evolving and the Chapel is truly the home of the Cornerstone Team, embodying how worship of God includes living out Christian values.