



Worship and Spiritual Development Policy

(To be read alongside our school's statement of purpose)

St Christopher's Church of England High School

Compiled by:

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Approved by:

The Governing Body

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on:**

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St Christopher's CE High School Mission Statement

St Christopher's is a Church of England Academy where pupils and staff work together, in the knowledge and love of God. We try to act out our faith in daily life, with Christ as our example.

Within our strong Christian, Anglican context, we seek to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual and physical development of our pupils, growing together as a caring and supportive community whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of their adult lives.

We aim to achieve our mission by providing an environment which

- recognises that each member of the school community is an individual with specific needs and strengths
- fosters mutual respect and concern for others
- values the contribution made by each member of the school community
- encourages and celebrates positive achievement
- actively supports those in need.

Foundation Scripture

“Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
but whose delight is in the law of the LORD,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.”

(Psalm 1:1-3)

This scripture underpins all that we do and everything that we stand for as a school.

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C of E National Vision For Education

In turn, as an Anglican school, we seek to support the national society, the church of England education office, in all that we do. For example, our school improvement plan is influenced by and is complementary to the C of E vision for education, as can be seen from the following three defined areas to our SIP:

1. Knowing what it is to be fully alive.
2. Learning how to live well together.
3. Securing wisdom and understanding.

Worship

We were created to worship God. Collective prayer and worship are an essential and integral feature of our daily activities as a Christian community. They are the means by which we maintain our relationship with God who is the source of our life. It is the way in which we share with each other the faith upon which our school community is built.

Chaplaincy Team 2023/24

Year 7	Fr. David Arnold (C of E Vicar)
Year 8	Rev. Hugh Scriven (C of E Vicar)
Year 9	Rev. Alex Oehring (C of E Vicar)
Year 10	Rev. Toby Webber (C of E Vicar)
Year 11	Rev. Mark Pickett (C of E Vicar)
Sixth Form	Rev. Paul McNally (C of E Vicar)

Chaplain to staff Pastor John Haworth (Elim Pentecostal pastor)

We are truly blessed to have a dedicated ecumenical Chaplaincy team. All are volunteers and have added this work to their Parish/Church work. The spectrum of Churchmanship that these men of God represent is very healthy for our pupils and equips them to make genuinely informed choices about their own expression of Christian worship as they develop into young adults.

Assemblies

Main Assemblies

These contain prayers, Hymns and teaching. They are led by the senior management team, the RE department, the chaplains, and carefully selected and trusted members of the wider chaplaincy team. Pupils participate in these main assemblies once a week.

Year Assemblies

These contain prayers and teaching. Some do include hymns. These are led by the Head of Year. Every Year group has a Year Assembly once a week.

Form Assemblies

When not in main assembly or a year assembly, pupils have a form assembly. All forms have a badged and trained worship coordinator who ensures, under the guidance of the form teacher, that worship takes place. Forms are encouraged to use the Core Virtues to guide them. Sixth Formers are taking part in a trial of some new illuminating pathways Diocesan core RE materials. The school prayer book, issued to all pupils as part of their handbook, alongside a newly developed staff prayer book, provides guidance for form teachers in addition to the above

Prayer

The School Chapel has been recently reordered for our 60th year celebrations, and is always available for prayer. The Chapel is sometimes 'staffed' at lunchtime by one of our chaplaincy team. Pupils and staff are free to take advantage of this facility whenever they wish to. There are always opportunities for pupils and staff to make prayer requests. In addition to our Prayer Board in the Chapel, there is a prayer box in the staffroom.

Prayer Book

Each pupil is issued with a school prayer book. As well as including prayers used in school, there are prayers for pupils to use in private worship. Sixth Formers are issued with their own, specially written prayer book. Staff now have their own separate prayer book too.

Holy Communion

We have a liturgy from the book of common worship that is appropriate to the full breadth of traditions within the Anglican Church. Our selection of the various parts of this Liturgy has been primarily motivated by the need to be user-friendly for our pupils. This can be seen particularly in our form of the Confession.

Form Communions

Once every year each form has a form Communion in the Chapel with their Year Chaplain. Pupils are asked to prepare prayers and choose an appropriate Bible reading. They are encouraged to explain their choice of passage.

Year Communions

Each year group has two year-Communions in the Main Hall. These are led by the relevant Year Chaplain. These mark a combination of key moments in pupils' school lives and key times in the Church's year: Year 7 have a Communion service to mark the beginning of their time at St Christopher's and one at Lent. Year 8 have an Advent and a Pentecost Communion. Year 9 have a Christmas Communion and a Communion to help them as they choose their options. Year 10 begin their GCSEs with a Communion to mark that transition, as well as an Easter Communion. Year 11 have a Communion at pre-public exam time, and their Valedictory Communion at the end of year 11. The Sixth Form have a Communion at the beginning of the academic year, and an Ascension Communion. All Communions are tied to the Church's calendar. Pupils lead the prayers and read the lessons and begin the service with some opening words to set the context of each service. Congregational Hymns are sung, and often the school choir or worship band will contribute to the services.

Provision for Staff

Every new week begins with staff prayers for all in our staff room immediately before briefing starts at 8:35am. These are led by a member of our Chaplaincy team. Staff have their own chaplain in Pastor John Haworth from Oasis church, Accrington, who is proactive in supporting staff needs. We are always looking to support staff needs, for example, by running confirmation courses for staff, or weekly voluntary staff communion services.

Spirituality Week

This takes place during the penultimate week of the summer term and involves all pupils in Years 7-10. As part of that week, Year 10 retain their 'relationships and sex' themed spirituality day, and the rest of the week involves as much high-quality input from external providers such as Scripture Union, Christians in Sport etc. as possible. When not involved with external providers, pupils work in their normal classes, with their subject teachers on curriculum-based tasks supporting the Christian ethos of our school. Year 11 retain their own separate Spirituality Day on a Destiny theme, and based on Jeremiah 29:11 as a Foundation Scripture. The 6th form also have their own separate provision. These days/weeks are key events in the life of our school community, they are contributed to by every curriculum department combined with trusted outside agencies, enjoyed by pupils and staff, and above all, deepen our relationship with God for all concerned.

Staff Communion, Prayers and Special Communion

Each school year begins with a staff Communion service, led by one of our chaplains. Additional form and year Communion are held at the request of staff and pupils for poignant reasons, for example when someone is seriously ill or is leaving, or to commemorate pupils or staff who have died. Each working week begins with voluntary staff prayers at 8:15am in the 6th form chapel, followed by staff briefing at 8:35am, which also begins with prayer, led by a Chaplain, on rotation.

Worship and the Law

Parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from collective acts of worship. However, the core reason why the school was established was for the very purpose of providing Christian teaching and explicitly Christian acts of worship. Given the character of the school, the Governors expect all parents and guardians to respect the Christian ethos of our Church School. The National Society Staff contract specifically states that no member of staff should do anything that can be deemed to work against the Christian ethos of the school. At St Christopher's, we do more than this, however, as we encourage staff's active involvement in the worship, prayer and spiritual development of our pupils.

Spiritual Development

At St Christopher's, we recognise that everything is spiritual. Our worldview is Biblical, and we stand with Jesus, who saw no distinction between the 'spiritual' and the 'secular.' We realise that our 21st Century culture in the UK, influenced as it is by Greek thinking, does make this distinction. Faith is often compartmentalised, and reduced, at best, to a Sunday activity that has no real relevance to the rest of the week.

At St Christopher's, we are building an alternative society, bringing about God's Kingdom on Earth, and we raise the pupils in our care to see this life as an integrated whole. Every breath we breathe is for God's glory, and so is every part of school life – pastoral as much as academic, on the playground as much as in the classroom, as much as in the assembly hall. Spirituality days are good, but they are not an end in themselves. They are a small part of the big picture. They point the way, and act as a springboard into the daily process of spiritual growth, touched by all parts of the life of our school community.

We recognise that our pupils are first and foremost 'spiritual' beings. We teach them that they are human beings, not human doings, but also that they are more spiritual beings, who are having a human experience in this life, than human beings who are capable of having a spiritual experience. We understand that we are a spirit, we have a soul and we are in a body. This understanding permeates all aspects of our school life.

Core Values

Our Core Values of 'Love God' and 'Love one another,' based as they are, on Jesus' Great Commandment, underpin everything at our school. In addition, we now have eight carefully selected Core Virtues:

1. Forgiveness
2. Friendship
3. Hope
4. Justice
5. Love
6. Peace
7. Trust
8. Wisdom

We will work with organisations/individuals who carry the same Spiritual DNA as us. Generally speaking, these will be part of the Established Church (C of E), though we do work with other mainstream denominations who have the best interests of our pupils at heart and who have a clear accountability structure in place. We recognise that there are organisations that from time to time try to gain access to our pupils, who work to their own agenda. It is of paramount importance to our pupils' spiritual health that we protect them from such organisations.



**That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither-
whatever they do prospers.**

Psalm 1:3



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