



Community time Policy

May 2025

Community times

Vision

Our vision is Micah 6 v 8: 'Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.' This is explained in our community time liturgy and to our parents as 'Be fair, be kind, listen to God and other people.' The vision and Bible verse inform our work throughout the school, in terms of curriculum, ethos, staffing decisions and behavioral approach.

Easton CE Primary School is part of Lighthouse Schools Partnership, whose vision is 'Flourishing Together in Partnership' and who works closely with the Diocese of Bristol to promote the vision and values of the school.

Definition of Community time

Community time is a time when the whole school or groups within the school meet in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Legal framework

There must be a daily act of community time in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at anytime in the school day and in any groupings. Community time in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England.

The Community time Policy at Easton CE Primary School pays due regard to statutory requirements. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act and the 1996 education Act, which states that community time should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', and in recognition of the fact that the majority of our pupils are practising members of other faiths, we base our community times on those aspects of Christian teaching that are shared with other faiths. Community times are conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from community time and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

It is recognised that at Easton CE Primary there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious worldview. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As community time occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within community time. However, as outlined above, the nature of the community time will be to include children of all faiths.

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Community time. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the Head Teacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from community time and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the Governors and Head Teacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the Parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

(This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily community time.)

Aims For the School

Community times contribute significantly to the ethos of Easton CE Primary School and it is our aim that we:

- Share common aims and values
- Celebrate achievement and special times
- Explore together the world in which we live
- Develop a community spirit

Aims For the Pupils

We also intend that Community times contribute to the development of the pupil as a 'whole' person by providing opportunities to:

- Worship God
- Reflect on that which is considered worthy
- Consider spiritual and moral issues
- Explore their own beliefs
- Develop their own spirituality
- Reflect on the direction of their lives
- Reinforce positive attitudes
- Participate and respond & reflect on what it means to be human
- Consider the wonders and worries of the world

The Local Governing Board have the responsibility to ensure that community times are taking place and are of good quality. If the school is a Church of England school, it must meet the criteria detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the Head Teacher.

Organisation

Community times are organised as follows:

- Monday - Whole School– Led by SLT to introduce theme of the week linked to value of the term
- Tuesday- Whole school singing assembly
- Wednesday - KS1 PSHE assembly, KS2 Class assembly with time to reflect on the theme in Monday's assembly
- Thursday – KS2 PSHE assembly, KS1 Class assembly with time to reflect on the theme in Monday's assembly
- Friday – Whole School – Celebration assembly led by Year 6 and SLT

We have a special table with a cloth and candle that are used for community times, and our school liturgy welcomes, introduces and finishes the community time.

Music is played as children walk in and out of community time. A range of classical music is used and a record of this is kept.

Children leading community time take part in writing the liturgy.

Each of these community times take place for 15 minutes.

Planning basis

The school vision is Micah 6 v 8 'What does the Lord require of you? Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.' This is displayed in the hall and forms an integral part of our community times each year. It is explained as 'Be fair, be kind, listen to God and other people.' The pattern of worship is based on the values in 'Roots and Fruits' and follows a two year pattern. Each value is linked back to the Bible verse. The termly plans are made by the Head Teacher and shared with the school community. These are then adapted and fulfilled by those planning individual community times. There are 12 values which are covered over a 2 year cycle. To ensure that the vision is evenly covered each year, we adapted the order of coverage to the below:

Act Justly = Be Fair and links to the values of – service, justice, perseverance and truthfulness

Love mercy = Be kind- links to the values of compassion, friendship, generosity and forgiveness.

Walk humbly = Listen to your God and others= Respect, Trust, Courage and Truthfulness

Term	Year 1	Year 2
1	Thankfulness	Generosity
2	Trust	Compassion
3	Forgiveness	Courage
4	Justice	Truthfulness
5	Friendship	Service
6	Perseverance	Respect

The Community times are also linked to British Values: Tolerance, Rule of Law, Democracy, Liberty and Respect. They are also linked to the Protective characteristics in the law: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The cycle of the Church year is marked through community times, RWV lessons and special events (Festival of light celebrations, nativity plays etc)

Response

All members of the school community take part in community times. There is an expectation for active engagement and space is always made for discussion.

Teachers keep 'I wonder' books (EYFS and KS1) and digital 'I wonder' books (KS2). These enable recording of the discussions and thoughts generated in the community times and allow for children to reflect on their thoughts.

Class community time discussions are linked to the value of the term or to school council. They are a chance for children to discuss issues that are important to them and the community and to reflect on the value of the term.

How support and guidance is given to visitors leading worship or interacting with children in RWV lessons or visits. An information leaflet for visitors is produced by the Diocese (Appendix 1)

Monitoring and evaluation

Each term's community times are monitored at the end of term by the Head Teacher and assistant head.

The RWV team and the Children's Community time Team are also involved in monitoring, as are Academy Council members.

Appendix 1 - Guidance for Visitors

A CODE OF CONDUCT FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS

Representatives of religious communities can make a vital contribution to learning when visiting schools or acting as guides to their place of worship or community activity.

Like other organisations that work with children, churches, other places of worship and faith-based organisations need to have appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

In particular, these arrangements should include:

- procedures for staff and others to report concerns that they may have about the children they meet that are in line with "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused". (Visitors will need to be referred to the School's safeguarding policy).
- appropriate codes of practice for staff, particularly those working directly with children, such as those issued by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)
- recruitment procedures in accordance with safer recruitment guidance and NSSCB procedures, alongside training and supervision of staff (paid or voluntary).

(Working Together, 2010)

Spiritual and moral development and religious learning can be stimulated through encounters between people of faith and school pupils of all ages.⁵

AWARENESS

When working with school pupils, representatives of religious communities should be aware that:

- schools are *diverse* communities: they usually include members of different faith groups, children from secular families and (within Christianity or other faiths) different denominational allegiances, and that it is important to show sensitivity to this plurality. Each child's beliefs and experiences must be respected.

PREPARATION

In order to make their presentations to school pupils effective, representatives of religious communities should:

- comply with the "Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People" ethos of the school;

- be familiar with the school's aims, ethos and policies, and plan their involvement in the light of the aims and curriculum of the school;
- plan their presentation carefully. Religious visitors to schools need to be in good communication with the link person in the school. They should be aware of the Value or the theme for the term, clear about the purpose of the visit and how the visitors' contribution links to the overall purpose for Community time;

Visitors should :

1. discuss their input with teachers in advance, and be open to teachers' suggestions;
2. take account of the differing abilities of the pupils;
3. where appropriate, use a variety of teaching methods and styles, including those which elicit a response from all the pupils;
4. select the content of their presentation carefully, avoiding the temptation to try and get the whole of their faith across (for example, teaching six year olds all there is to know about Jesus in a 20 minute session!).

TALKING WITH PUPILS

When talking with pupils, representatives of religious communities should:

- make clear to pupils who they are, who they represent, and what they are offering to the pupils;
- be willing to have an openness and humility to learn from pupils' and staff' insights.
- be willing to share their own experiences, beliefs and insights, but avoid criticising the experiences and insights of others
- seek to use engaging teaching and learning methods which involve the pupils actively, and to communicate at appropriate levels for the age group(s) concerned;
- develop ways of speaking to pupils which communicate an open approach, avoiding any hidden agenda to convert them.

This question will help representatives of religious communities to reflect on their approach: *If a member of another religion visited my child's school and contributed in the same way that I have done, would I, as a parent, be happy with the education given?*

Communications between children and adults, by whatever method must take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web cams and blogs. The School's Social Media Policy which specifies acceptable and permissible modes of communication must be adhered to and "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People" adopted.

It should be noted, therefore, that these professional boundaries extend beyond a visitor's contact with pupils within the school premises and include any further contact that may be made with pupils in the wider community.

Easton CE Primary School

Guidelines for those leading Community time

We are delighted that you will be visiting our school to lead or take part in our Community time or take part in a lesson or visit

At Easton CE Primary School we value our daily acts of community time extremely highly. Through it we identify, affirm and celebrate those ideals and values that we hold to be of central importance to us as a community.

It is important, for visitors to be aware that children in our school come from a range of faith backgrounds, and none; we therefore ask that those who lead Community time take account of this in the preparation and delivery of their material.

At Easton CE Primary School we prioritise the safeguarding of our pupils and to that end would like you to have enhanced DBS clearance. If you already have DBS clearance, please bring your certificate with you so that the details can be recorded on our school system. If you do not have DBS clearance, please let us know so we can support your visit appropriately.

Each child at Easton CE Primary School is involved in an act of worship every day. These take place in a variety of different groupings:

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There is a community time plan for each term.

History of most recent policy changes and review period

Date	Page	Change(s) made	Origin of Change (e.g. TU request, change in legislation)
May 2025	all	update	SM

Policy Owner	Education Directorate
Date Adopted	November
Latest Review Date	2022
Next Review Date	2025
Level	Level 2
DBAT Policy levels:	
LEVEL 1	DBAT policy for adoption (no changes can be made by the Academy Council; the Academy Council must adopt the policy)
LEVEL 2	DBAT policy for adoption and local approval, with areas for the Academy to update regarding local practice (the main body of the policy cannot be changed)
LEVEL 3	DBAT model policy that the Academy can adopt if it wishes
LEVEL 4	Local policy to be approved by the Academy Council