

## RE and Collective Worship during Lockdown and beyond – Governors' Report

As in all areas of school life and indeed life in almost every aspect, the lockdown due to Coronavirus has presented specific challenges for RE and Collective Worship. Barford St Peter's School has always regarded the spiritual development and welfare of pupils to be of paramount importance, and accordingly put appropriate measures into place to ensure that Collective Worship could still take place, along with weekly RE lessons for all pupils.

RE was incorporated into home learning via Padlet, which was used very successfully by the school to make learning accessible and engaging to all pupils via links, images, videos and document files. Among the topics covered were creation, world faiths, Christian values, holy books and humanism. As part of their RE work during the Spring term, the children produced some moving and thoughtful prayers for Captain Sir Tom Moore. During Lent, the school launched a 'Lend a Hand for Lent' initiative via Twitter, the highlight of which was creating a beautiful heart of painted stones which could be enjoyed by the whole village community outside the village hall.



In addition, throughout Lent, pupils and their families were issued with a weekly challenge to do something positive for others, such as making a donation to charity, doing a litter pick, or having a Zoom tea party with a lonely relative or friend.

During full lockdown, all pupils were invited to access a daily act of worship via Zoom. Children of key workers and vulnerable children attending school were able to participate in their bubbles, while the remainder of children accessed the services at home. Led by the Head Teacher, the acts of worship reflected the strong Christian ethos of the school, with emphasis on prayer and Christian values. Songs and other interactive elements contributed to the creation of a lively atmosphere, leading to a high level of uptake and engagement.

There were a number of special acts of worship and key assemblies during lockdown, including Harvest, Remembrance Day, and a farewell assembly for Mrs Delaney, the former School Head, at the end of the autumn term. A highlight of the school's Collective Worship at Christmas was full school participation in the online Christingle service provided by the Diocese. Reverend Andy Larkin, our Priest-in-Charge, prepared a bi-weekly video for collective worship, in addition to producing special videos with our Reader Ann Fawcett for the school Christmas and Easter services. The Easter services were a real cause for celebration, as for the first time for many months the children were able to be together in their bubbles in the school hall. Parents and governors were invited to watch on Zoom, and it was wonderful to see the children singing and praying together, enjoying the video clip provided by Reverend Andy and Ann, and watching their Head Teacher play the role of detective to find out all about Easter! The governors invited children to make Easter crosses in a media of their choice, which were then displayed at the Easter services in school and in the church.



To mark the anniversary of the beginning of lockdown restrictions, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, the children spent time reflecting and held a minute's silence during their Collective Worship time.

The Christian ethos of the school is very much in evidence in the weekly school newsletters which are emailed to all parents, carers and governors. Each week features a Bible reading and a related prayer, and during the Spring term parents, children, staff and governors were invited to vote for a new school vision. The aim was to choose a vision which would be memorable to the whole school community and which encapsulated the school values, which are based on 1 Peter 4:8-10:

*'Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.'*

The vision chosen from a selection of four was 'Together we love; together we learn', and children have spent a lot of time exploring this phrase since its adoption.

As a response to God's call for His people to be stewards of the Earth, an Environment Week has been planned to take place during the Summer Term. The theme of the week is 'Our World, Our Future', and each class will have their own drama workshop to investigate the challenges faced by our environment as they examine climate change through a multitude of perspectives and settings. It is planned that the children will work collaboratively with each other and their community to make a positive change, and to explore how they can make a difference.

With the easing of lockdown restrictions, it is hoped that there will be more opportunities for whole-school collective worship to take place. Worship through song has resumed in the hall for year groups, and it is hoped that all the children will be able to be together again in the school hall for collective worship after 21<sup>st</sup> June. The annual Leavers' Service is planned to take place in Church at the end of the summer term.