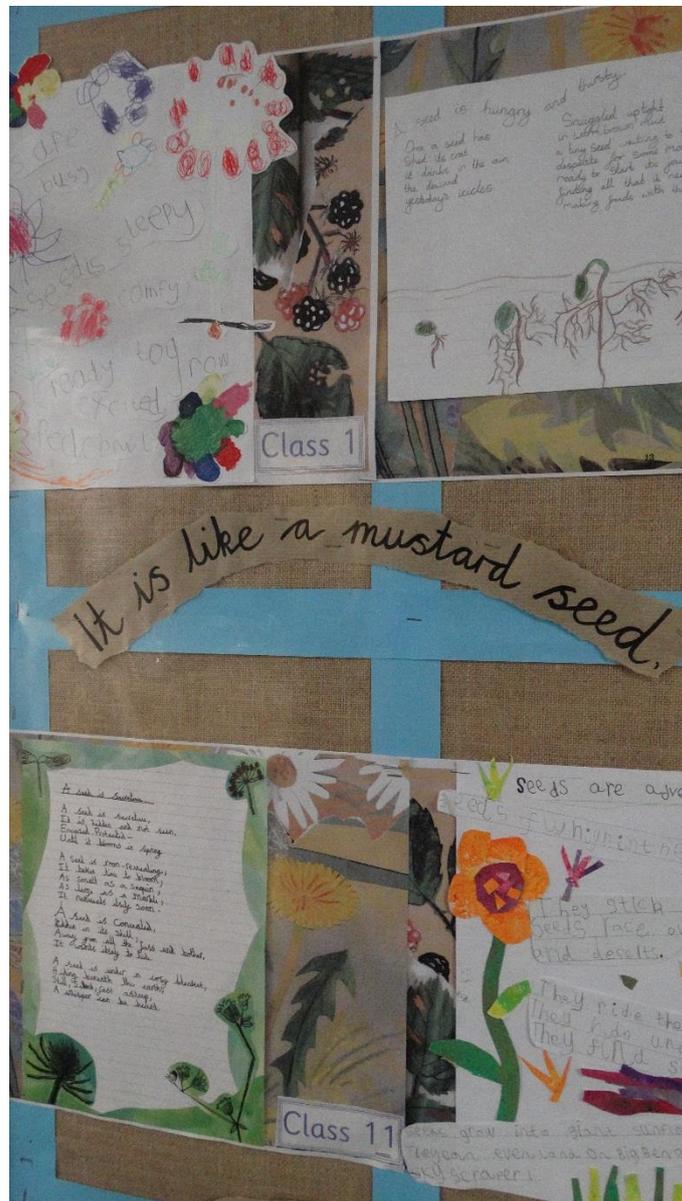


'Planting Seeds of Hope'

What makes Horfield a distinctive Church school for your child?



A guide for families

Horfield CEVC Primary School Vision

“Everyone here has an active and valued part to play in creating a caring and stimulating school where each of us has pride in our achievements.”



This school is a Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary school. One of the aims of the school is:

- To develop an appreciation of Christian beliefs, practices and values. To respect and be sensitive to other people's beliefs, faiths and cultures.

In this guide we will explain how the school aspires to be a 'distinctive' Church of England school, and how it permeates through our worship, teaching and all we do.

What do we mean by 'distinctively Christian'?

At Horfield we want children to grow into resilient, curious, successful people who develop academically, personally and spiritually. The heart of our 'distinctiveness' is to provide opportunities for children to experience the mystery and wonder of our world, and to share how the Christian faith has enriched our world through text, music and art, and through values such as forgiveness, reconciliation, peace and hope.

Through our extremely close links with our Parish church, Holy Trinity Horfield, we enable children to experience the depth and mystery of Christian faith, whilst also recognising the many faiths and none that are represented amongst parents and children at the school.

Fundamental to our idea of distinctiveness is living as a community. This means many things, from children 'singing for the brain' with older people at a local residential home, to school productions where all can take part, to growing plants at our Green club, and to raising money for charities. We seek to involve all children in playing their part as a school and world community.



This display put together by children and staff shows how our Christian Values link with the British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect.

Music at Horfield



Music is one of our great strengths. We know that music allows children to express and connect with a world beyond themselves. We have a large and highly talented choir, which regularly performs at venues such as Colston Hall. On Tuesdays we have a 'singing assembly' where children learn a variety of songs, from traditional Christian hymns to Taize chants and modern songs. Music adds a depth and splendour to our worship at school.

Our Church – School links

We are fortunate to have exceptionally strong links with our Parish Church, Holy Trinity Horfield. Our local Priest, Father John, is greatly respected by the children, and either he or one of the team come in weekly to lead reflective and thoughtful assemblies. For important festivals we come together with the Church to celebrate.

Harvest – we reflect particularly on the Christian ideas of 'stewardship'; caring for the world around us, especially those in need, whether in our own country or abroad. Children collect food and gifts for the local food bank and other charities.

Christmas – we celebrate with a beautiful, candlelit service at the Church. Children perform readings, drama and music to bring the Christmas story to life. In addition, the Reception Nativity allows our youngest children to re-tell this wonderful story to the school and parents.

Church-School service – in May we celebrate our links with a service at the Church, bringing together parents, children and other members of the Parish.



Our 'Prayer Space'



We believe that growing as a spiritual being means having time to contemplate and reflect. It is important for children to find moments to be still and calm, whether they choose to use this time for prayer, or simply to think back on a busy day. Our prayer space is a room, designed by members of our 'Collective Worship Council' to provide a space for this. We are exceptionally fortunate to have a parent who leads a weekly session based on our themes, and allowing children to use craft, song and prayer to think about the questions of the week.

Lent Trail

"I learnt that life is precious, and you should make the most of every second". Taya, age 11



Lent is an important time in the Christian faith; a time of preparation and reflection before Easter. At Horfield we have developed a 'trail' to allow children to immerse themselves in these ideas in a playful and interactive way. All children, from Year 2 upwards, have a chance to spend time sowing seeds, writing prayers for the world or just sitting still. We are lucky to have strong support from our Parish Church, Ebenezer church and many parents to take part and lead activities. Children of all faiths and none are welcomed and love the special time they have.

Collective Worship council

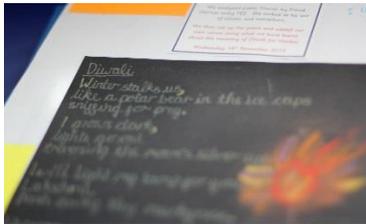
Developing children into questioning and spiritual people is what our collective worship is all about. It is really important to us that children have an opportunity to shape and lead our worship. The Collective Worship Council helps us do this. Over the last year they came up with ideas to redesign our prayer space, led whole school assemblies, and begun to put together a School Prayer Book. Children across the school lead remarkably mature and powerful assemblies that they have created.

Religious Education at Horfield

It's essential to do RE because you can learn about what people believe. It is important to treat all religions with respect. I enjoyed making a shrine showing what was precious to me.' **Abel, age 10**

We believe that religion plays a dynamic and important role in the lives of millions of people across the world, and so it is important that children understand why people choose to follow a religion. Furthermore, we want our children to consider important questions, so they can make up their own minds about what they believe.

We teach RE throughout the school, following our locally agreed syllabus. As a Church school, children are taught key Christian ideas every year. We will be teaching the new 'Understanding Christianity' programme, created by the Church of England which enables children to learn about the 'big story' of Christianity and ideas such as incarnation and salvation. We also learn about the other major religions of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism, as well as non-religious worldviews such as Humanism.



We teach RE very creatively through art, drama, poetry and music. In addition, we also ask important philosophical questions and examine religion through the teaching of English, History and other subjects. Our 'Imagination Station' approach where children engage with text and art together can be a powerful way of thinking about religion.

Faith and Action

"Faith isn't just about what people believe at Horfield. It's about the impact of what they do. Children see how faith leads to action." **Parent**



It is really important to us that being a church school is about making a difference in the world. We want our children to grow up to be responsible and caring citizens, regardless of whether they have a faith or not. We provide opportunities for children to show how they can make a difference. For example, we have a longstanding link with a school for deaf and blind children in Uganda. Children have given gifts of glasses and toothbrushes, and money to fund a bike workshop. Our choir sing to older people at St Monica's every year. Year 5 children raise money to buy an acre of rainforest to protect it. Our active Green club grows vegetables used by our kitchen staff. In addition children often come forward with their own ideas; such as supporting as parent on a bike ride for charity, or raising money for Syrian refugees.