



Mindfulness, prayer and learning



Parent Workshop



Welcome

We want to welcome you to our **mindfulness, prayer and learning** workshop and we want to begin by saying a massive thank you to all the parents for your support, participation and feedback. This is really appreciated.

We want to inform/remind you that our provision as well as the values and guidance that we offer, is taken from the **Church of England** guidance. The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement is centred around **John 10:10**, which states that **Church schools should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness**. We are proud to support this ethos and at our school, we love, embrace and accept the diversity of our school community. We celebrate the fact that our school community is made up of people from a multitude of religions, cultures and backgrounds. As part of our provision, this parent workshop aims to inform you on the topic of mindfulness and prayer and how this impacts the learning at our school.

At the heart of everything we do is love.

As communities of Christians we are held together in the love of God. Our many differences are gifts that can build us up in trust and mutual affection... or they can mar the image of Christ that we are called to reflect through our life together. At the heart of our ethos is a spirit of **love** and we approach this topic with this value:

Listen attentively and openly

Open your heart and mind without judgmentalism

Value everyone's choices, vulnerability and perspective

Express love, respect, acceptance, concern and empathy.

Mindfulness

mindful
healthy mind, healthy life

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

While mindfulness is something we all naturally possess, it's more readily available to us when we practice on a daily basis. Whenever you bring awareness to what you're directly experiencing via your senses, or to your state of mind via your thoughts and emotions, you're being mindful. And there's growing research showing that when you train your brain to be mindful, you're actually remodeling the physical structure of your brain.

The goal of mindfulness is to wake up to the inner workings of our mental, emotional, and physical processes.

Mindfulness in our school

Children today can be faced with an unprecedented amount of anxiety, especially with regards to the challenges we have been facing in recent times. The Schools that make up the Genesis Education Trust are doing everything in our power to combat this, by using mindfulness strategies.



- When pupils enter our school, each class plays calming music and there are some simple morning work tasks, which help pupils to relax and begin the day in a positive state.
- The atmosphere around our schools is setup so that each child can flourish, by feeling confident and calm when traversing through the school day.
- During collective worship, there is always a time of silence and a time of reflection.
- Lessons, across all subjects allow for times of partner talk, quiet thought, critical thinking and discussion, which help pupils to air their thoughts, emotions and opinions.
- Worship councils and the Leading lights work collaboratively with adults to develop mindfulness across the school.
- We have specific mindfulness lessons as part of our PSHE curriculum.
- All adults receive training on how to help children to process their thoughts and emotions and we have learning mentors, who offer specific support for whoever may need it.

Prayer

Bible verse: Philippians 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The Bible instructs us to pray about the things in our lives that we may be anxious about. When religious people pray, they feel that God helps them to experience peace. Prayer goes hand in hand with mindfulness and although it is an integral part of our day, we are respectful of the background, diversity and beliefs of all our pupils, those with faith and those who have no faith.



Prayer in our school

Prayer is giving our attention to God or a higher power. From a Church of England perspective, our belief is that God is always alongside us and ready to listen. Anyone can pray, at any time and in any place. Prayer brings us in touch with God and others. As we pray, we offer every situation to God, and God uses our prayers to bring love and justice into the world. Prayer is a part of every day at the schools that make up the Genesis Education Trust:

- Each morning we have Collective worship, which has opportunities for group prayer, as well as individual prayer.
- Each class takes part in a lunchtime prayer and a hometime prayer.
- Each school also has a special 'School prayer' which has been created through the inspiration of the uniqueness of the school.
- There are also other ways that pupils can pray, when current issues arise in the world and at our wonderful prayer/reflection areas/stations around the school. These offer a variety of ways to pray, such as: mirrors enabling children to look inward. World maps, giving pupils opportunities to pray for their worldwide family. Stations that allow pupils to lay down their burdens, asking God for help in their situation.

Learning

At the Genesis Education Trust, we believe that our incorporation of mindfulness strategies and prayer has a positive impact on the learning that our pupils experience. Having a calm, positive atmosphere, spaces to breathe, reflect and be mindful create a positive approach to learning, as pupils are able to start their day and each lesson in a confident and peaceful state. Incorporating mindfulness into education has been linked to improving academic and social and emotional learning. Research shows that mindfulness skills improve memory, organizational skills, reading and math scores, all while giving kids the tools they need to handle challenging situations and anxiety.



Thank you for joining us!

We are proud of our incorporation of mindfulness and prayer and hope that you understand the reasons behind it and the benefits it brings. Please do let us know if you have any queries surrounding these topics, as well as any suggestions for other ways we can incorporate mindfulness and prayer into school life.

Thank you for joining us for this workshop.