



Collective Worship Policy

Author: HCC Model Policy

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Introduction

In accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act all children will be involved in a daily act of Collective Worship.

Collective worship required in the school shall be mainly of a broadly Christian character. Therefore the majority (i.e. greater than 50%) of Collective Worship will be based on Christian themes and Collective Worship will not be denominational.

Collective worship is an integral part of the broad and balanced curriculum to which all our children are entitled.

We interpret "Worship" as:

Worship is a universal human activity which can be expressed as a growing ability to celebrate and reflect on things held to be of worth. For many people, worship involves commitment to a belief in God. However, it can have a much broader and inclusive meaning. It can be a "form of human activity, when we purposely put ourselves in the position of paying particular attention to those things in life which have the greatest meaning for us".

and "the words used and activities observed in worship recognise the existence of a deity" (Ofsted)

Collective worship in our school is open to all the staff (teaching and non-teaching) and pupils. No assumption should be made about their personal commitment. Staff are permitted to exercise the conscience clause of withdrawal.

Parents must inform the school in writing if they wish their child to be exempt from all or parts of the collective worship.

Aims

- Knowledge of Christian values, beliefs, celebrations and patterns of worship
- To encourage a sense of participation where children, teachers and parents can gather together to set the tone for the whole school as a caring community.
- To encourage pupils' social development by providing regular opportunities to gather together, learning how to be part of large and small gatherings, as well as offering opportunities to perform and respond to a presentation of readings, music, dance drama or prayer.
- To celebrate achievement and special occasions for the individual or the school.
- To encourage pupils' spiritual development by celebrating and reflecting on things held to be of worth and providing a time for children to question their thoughts, values and emotions.
- To encourage pupils' moral development by exploring notions of right and wrong.
- To encourage pupils' spiritual development by allowing time to appreciate the beauty in the world and develop a sense of wonder and discovery, thus providing a special time with a distinctly spiritual atmosphere.

- To encourage pupils' cultural development by promoting an awareness of other beliefs, traditions, cultures and patterns of worship.
- To raise awareness of the basic needs of mankind and some of the problems which the world faces.
- To give opportunities for reflection and silence in the midst of the pressure of the school day.

Promoting British Values

- Promoting respect and tolerance for other faiths
- Developing an understanding of individual liberty through learning of inspirational people and those who fought for the rights of others
- Exploring the rule of law in relation to pupils' own lives within and outside of school
- Fostering democracy by involving pupils in planning and delivering collective worship on a regular basis

Practice and Procedures

The majority of acts of collective worship will be based on the broad principles and values of Christianity. The majority of themes explored will be appropriate to pupils whatever their background or personal beliefs, whether Christian or otherwise.

A collective act of worship should provide opportunities for:

- **REFLECTION** - To focus on a particular issue by providing a stimulus. e.g. a picture, music, artefact, candle, poem, a word
- **RESPONSE** - To respond in a variety of ways, such as prayers, singing, movement, experiencing stillness / thinking time. N.B. Prayers. Children should be invited to join in, if they wish.
- **REVERENCE** - We aim to achieve this over a period of time through the recognition, affirmation and celebration of the worthiness of those values held to be of central importance to our community.

We aim to create an atmosphere of calmness prior to the start of Collective Worship therefore the children will be expected to be silent from the time they leave their classrooms. Music may be played for entering and leaving the hall.

Example Weekly Outline

Day	Type	Taken By	Venue
Monday	KS1 – Hymn practice	Class teachers	Main hall
	KS2 – KS assembly	Class teachers/ visitors	Main hall
Tuesday	Key stages	Deputy Head teacher/ Headteacher	Main hall
Wednesday	KS1 – KS assembly	Class teachers	Main hall
	KS2 – Hymn practice	Class teachers	Main hall
Thursday	Class/Year assembly	Class teachers	Classrooms
Friday	Whole School	Headteacher	Main hall

Time allocation:- 5 to 20 minutes

Visitors to the school may lead acts of Collective Worship e.g. Ministers, Governors and other members of our local community. Such visitors should be personally known or met beforehand and should be well briefed on the school's requirements. We will encourage friends, parents and governors to share with us in our Collective Worship.

The headteacher should discuss the matter sensitively with any parent who wishes to exercise their right to withdraw their child. Children who are withdrawn from Collective Worship at their parents' request will be supervised by a teacher, teaching assistant or the office staff. Parents may prefer to lead their own act of Collective Worship at this time, in which case a member of staff will not be present. Children may be taken off of the school site for this act of Collective Worship but must be returned at the end of the allotted time.

Administrative and Disciplinary matters will, as far as possible, be separated from the act of Collective Worship.

A variety of methods of presentation will be used to help stimulate and maintain the children's interest in Collective Worship e.g.

- radio broadcasts
- stories
- poems
- artefacts
- movement / practical activity
- pictures
- videos / slides
- discussion
- remembering
- music

We recognise that the four-year-olds will need a gradual introduction to whole school and key stage acts of Collective Worship. Year R will begin with teacher led Collective Worship in their classrooms and this will lead to full participation with the entire school.

The RE co-ordinator will devise a programme of themes for each term using the religious calendar, significant events and from ideas presented in "Living Difference (revised)". The member of staff leading the Collective Worship will draw from the programme of themes.

Each term, acts of Collective Worship centred on "one off" issues will also take place, e.g. road safety, stranger danger, school and national events, etc. These will be planned into the long term programme for Collective Worship as far as possible. There is, however, a need for flexibility in order to respond to the unexpected where appropriate.

The RE co-ordinator will ensure resources are maintained.

Resources - various books in resources area, school library and class libraries.
Music available in main hall.

The delivery of classroom / year group collective worship

(Adapted from an article in RE News No 12)

The following are important considerations when planning Classroom / Year Group Collective Worship.

Consider:

- How the classroom will be arranged to mark the “special” nature of the occasion e.g. circle of chairs, the carpet area, time of day.
- How the “special” time will be marked e.g. lighting, music, placing an appropriate object as a focus (flowers, artefact, picture, slide) ringing a bell, lighting a candle.
- How to create a quiet introduction.
- How to create an opportunity for reflection and response e.g. closed eyes passing round the object, song, dance, playing a piece of music, reading a poem or prayer, artwork.

Key principles of Classroom / Year Group Collective Worship

Start with the child’s experience of home and the local environment and reflect on it.

Explore the continuing experience of school – how it affects us (our emotions, feelings, intellect, spiritual sensitivities).

Explore with increasing empathy, acquire new knowledge about oneself by raising awareness of one’s inner self.

Learn and practice new skills such as stilling, reflection in order to concentrate and be silent.

Value silence and inner peace.

Make religious connections between our own spiritual experience and that of others (starting with those we know, our friends, our teacher, other staff in the school and visitors to the school who lead worship – then those we find out about in the community, in our land, world-wide, throughout history).

Being still and connection with prayer and communicating with God.

Reflect on worship artefacts, their symbolism and meaning for those who regard them as holy.

Allow for openness so that doubts and fears can be expressed in a supportive atmosphere.

Value imaginative thinking and feeling as a way of knowing about life – give time for this.