



Collective Worship Policy

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Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

This policy is carried out within the context and spirit of the school's Mission Statement; Aiming high, caring for everyone'. It supports and reinforces the aims of Christ Church & St. Peter's C of E Primary School, valuing children equally.

Collective Worship, within a Christian context, plays an important part in the life of our school. It is a time in the school day when the children meet together with members of staff in calm and peaceful atmosphere and where all present are given the opportunity to reflect and participate. It is regarded as 'quality' time and represents something special or separate from ordinary school routines.

"Praise, prayer, silence, a sense of community, common ideal, the power of the spoken word, ritual, and an awareness of important experiences all contribute to worship"

Definitions

School Assembly: is a gathering of the school community; it is often used to celebrate & focus on the life & values of the community itself.

Collective Worship: is a gathering of a 'collection' of people of diverse, religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment.

Rationale – Religious / Educational

Through Collective Worship we:

- Give children the opportunity to learn about praise and prayer;
- Foster a reverential attitude to God;
- Encourage pupils to consider fundamental questions about the purpose of being;
- Address moral issues;
- Give children the opportunity to participate in religious worship;
- Celebrate and learn about values we believe to be important;
- Develop whole school common values and beliefs;
- Develop an awareness of our cultural heritage including the diversity of our multicultural society;
- Promote cultural cohesion;
- Make a contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Aims

"Collective Worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues & to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos & shared values & reinforce positive attitudes". (DfEE 1994).

At Christ Church & St. Peter's Primary School C of E Primary School our Collective Worship should:

- Have a sense of occasion;
- Provide experiences within which pupils' spiritual development may flourish;
- Be a means of expressing the ethos and values of the school;
- Be educational & contribute to the Religious Education of all pupils;
- Provide a varied pattern of worship to broaden pupils' experience of its different forms;

- Recognise that the school includes children from different religious and non-religious backgrounds.

We recognise that during Collective Worship some pupils will be worshipping, some will be experiencing something approaching worship; others will be finding out what it is like to worship by being with those who are.

Objectives

The objectives of Collective Worship are to:

- Affirm the Christian faith and the Christian status of Jesus as Son of God;
- Introduce pupils to the practice of religious worship through music, art, story, poetry, drama, movement and prayer;
- Create a warm, caring and respectful atmosphere in assemblies, conducive to worship; including entering and leaving the hall;
- Encourage, in children, a thoughtful and reflective attitude;
- Help pupils experience a sense of awe, wonder, reverence and inner stillness;
- Enable pupils to use silence for reflection and contemplation;
- Raise pupils' curiosity about the ultimate mysteries of life;
- Enable pupils to learn about & consider in depth Christian teaching, Christian festivals & biblical material;
- Help pupils appreciate that we are 'disciples' of God's world;
- Enable pupils to reflect upon their own beliefs in relation to those of others;
- Enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Guide pupils towards the spiritual & religious options open to them;
- Help children distinguish between right and wrong;
- Affirm pupils' personal worth and responsibility;
- Celebrate individual and collective achievements;
- Develop a sense of community within the school;
- Celebrate religious festivals and special occasions with specified worship.

Content

Planning for Collective Worship is the responsibility of the Coordinators for Collective Worship and the local clergy. The Diocesan themes are used as a basis for termly programme reflecting the Christian calendar alongside SEAL materials. In this way, the school is part the worship across the diocesan schools, developing a sense of the wider Christian community.

They themes may:

- Have a specific religious base such as 'Easter Week';
- Reflect a theme common to all religions such as 'Buildings';
- Be concerned with common values held by religious and non-religious people alike such as 'caring and sharing'.

Links with R.E. and the Curriculum are incorporated wherever possible. The choice of story can link worship with current topic work. Assemblies can be followed up in the classroom by further discussion and emphasis throughout the day.

Elements of Worship

"There are times when worship will be quiet, contemplative and serene and others when laughter, music and dance will be the appropriate form of expression"

Atmosphere is all important in creating the right foundation for Collective Worship. Quiet, orderly behaviour and respectful attitudes on entering, leaving and throughout the assembly are expected. Staff enhance the atmosphere by their presence and participation. A table with a cross and a candle help to set the scene.

Music is played at the beginning and end of the assembly. One piece is selected each week appropriate to the theme. Pupils' attention is drawn to it each day and a simple explanation and/or description may be given.

Stories and talks are carefully chosen to fulfil the objectives of Collective Worship. Stories of a religious or secular nature may be used whilst personal anecdote from pupils, teachers and visitors is effective in expressing that which is important in our own lives. Stories and talks are used to help children to understand themselves better, to develop empathy and to face up to moral issues.

Songs are chosen from a wide variety of traditional and modern hymns, where possible linked to the theme. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thought and feelings that are difficult to put into words. They provide a real source of pleasure.

Prayer and reflection are the most personal part of an act of worship. Participation in prayer can never be imposed but we stress the need for stillness, reflection and respect for others. Silence, read prayers, The Lord's Prayer, children's prayers may be used. A large candle is lit and the children's stained glass window provides the focus for pupils' thoughts. Reflection and thinking time are given some direction by the leader in order to concentrate pupils' response.

Scripture sentences and stories are often quoted from the Bible and, where appropriate, from sacred books and other writings of other world faiths. Longer passages may be used as readings.

Presentation sets the tone within the act of worship. In keeping with the reverent atmosphere, use is also made of visual aids, artefacts, drama and demonstration.

Management of Collective Worship

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Collective Worship Policy is put into practice;
- Engaging an appropriate inspector to carry out the SIAMs Inspection of a church school alongside the OFSTED Inspection;
- Ensure the SIAMs toolkit is up to date.

The Collective Worship Co-ordinator

The co-ordinator for RE and CW work in close co-operation with the Headteacher, who has responsibility for managing the worship on a day to day basis, ensuring that all legal requirements are complied with.

Role of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator & Headteacher

The Collective Worship Co-ordinator & Headteacher:

- Write the school's policy for Collective Worship in consultation with the Foundation Governors;
- Ensure that all staff are aware of and use the policy document;
- Review the policy on a regular basis;
- Plan an overall balanced programme of worship for the year;
- Ensure termly assembly rotas are completed
- Involve colleagues, pupils and visitors in worship.
- Advise on planning, ideas and resources.
- Are responsible for ordering, maintaining and displaying resources.
- Administer the budget for Collective Worship.
- Ensure Collective Worship maintains a high profile in the School Action Plan.
- Monitor & evaluate Worship in all its forms within the school.
- Ensure school promotes religion through the display boards in the hall and in the entrance to the school.
- Arrange appropriate professional development for staff.

- Keep up to date with recent publications, attend Diocesan courses and disseminate information and feedback to staff.
- Liaise with the incumbent, Governing Body and Diocesan Board on matters relating to Collective Worship including church services.
- Liaise with the leaders from the church.
- Report to the Governors.

School Development Plan

The School Development Plan includes future developments for promoting our Christian Ethos including RE, collective worship, themes and resourcing.

Equal Opportunities

All pupils have equal opportunity to take part in Collective Worship and to benefit from the experience. The school prospectus informs parents of their right to withdraw pupils from Collective Worship.

Right of Withdrawal

By law (Education Act 1988), parents/carers may withdraw their children from Collective Worship (CW) if they wish. Parents can request that a pupil be wholly or partly excused from CW and the school must comply. Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal.

Schools are responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by its parents /carers from CW. A pupil may, if the parent/carer requests this, be withdrawn from school premises to receive CW elsewhere, so long as the Local Authority is satisfied that this will not interfere with the child's attendance at school other than at the beginning or end of any school session. [Circular 1/94].

Teachers who do not wish to participate in or conduct CW also have a right of withdrawal.

Any member of staff or a parent who wishes to withdraw their child from the Collective Worship is encouraged to discuss this request with the Headteacher.

Multiculturalism

A variety of multicultural material is available throughout the school, including artefacts. Stories are shared and festivals celebrated in accordance with different faiths. Tolerance and understanding of other religions is encouraged.

Organisation

- Daily assemblies take place in both our school halls.
- Each week the worship follows a planned theme.
- The structure of Collective Worship includes music, a song or hymn of praise, a story or talk and a prayer or quiet reflection.
- In addition, the school worships in Christ Church as well as St. Peter's Church.
- Clergy from Christ Church, other local clergy and members of the local churches lead Worship on Tuesdays.
- Parents, Governors and members of the community are regularly invited to join us for our celebration assemblies on Fridays and Church Services.

Resources

- Assembly books, religious artefacts and pictures etc.
- Candles, cloths representing the Christian Season and Wooden Crosses are used in CW
- A selection of assembly songs and hymn books are available.
- The interactive whiteboards are regularly used for hymns, support stories etc.
- Pre-recorded music via CDs or the desktops are used to accompany singing.

Records and Assessment

- The termly themes provided by the DLAT are used by those leading collective worship. The details; date, leader and content for each act of Collective Worship are emailed to all parties, added to the school diary and saved to the server.

Assessment of Collective Worship is carried out jointly by the co-ordinator for collective worship and a nominated foundation governor through discussion with children. Discussions with staff are done in an informal manner through discussion or in staff meeting time.

Special Assemblies and Visitors

Special assemblies are held for Harvest, Christmas, Easter and End of the School Year Leavers' Service. Parents are encouraged to attend Celebration Assemblies and the Leavers' Service. Occasionally visitors and outside speakers will lead the assemblies.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

A nominated Foundation Governor and the collective worship coordinator are responsible for the monitoring and evaluating Worship. They report back to the head teacher and ensure that any action points are included in the School Development Plan.

This policy was agreed by Staff & Governors and will be reviewed as part of our Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Cycle.