

St Anne's CE (Aided) Primary School



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN A CHURCH SCHOOL

Collective worship is a requirement in school, and it is the responsibility of the Governing Body in consultation with the Head Teacher.

Its value is affirmed in a church school through commitment to the whole school's daily experience.

It is for all registered pupils (of statutory school age), and must be held on school premises at any convenient or appropriate time and may be organised in groups, as school requires.

However, pupils can be withdrawn by parents for collective worship, or, if both the school and parents agree, the pupil could be allowed to remain physically present during the collective worship but not take part in it. Although parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal, it would be helpful for the Head Teacher to establish the elements of worship in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part. Where parents have withdrawn their child from collective worship, they may provide for worship to take place according to their particular faith or denomination as long as:-

- No extra cost is incurred to school
- The effect is not that denominational worship replaces statutory non-denominational collective worship
- Alternative provision is consistent with the overall purposes of school curriculum in the 1988 Education Act

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document states that all teachers attend school assemblies - this duty is subject to teacher's freedom not to attend Collective Worship.

Collective worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' and reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief'.

School worship is collective rather than corporate, in that not all participants will be united in membership of any faith community.

As a Church School we have a right, in keeping with the schools' Trust Deed, to keep our collective acts of worship wholly within the boundaries of Christian character and belief in line with the principles and practices of the Church of England; but we would wish to consider the aptitudes, interests and backgrounds of pupils in our school, in the way we present acts of collective worship, so that the integrity of individuals is maintained.

THE AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN OUR SCHOOL

Collective Worship should affirm Christian beliefs

- in God the Father, Jesus Christ His only Son and the Holy Spirit, affirming the Christian response and values in an open atmosphere
- by honouring the Church Foundation of the school, reflecting the principles and practices of the Church of England
- by enabling pupils to make links with the worshipping community of the local church

Collective Worship should be as inclusive as possible

- relevant to pupils' ages and aptitudes
- acknowledge diversity and encourage mutual respect

Collective Worship should be appropriate to an educational setting by:-

- complementing work done in other subjects, especially Religious Education
- heightening pupils awareness of the mysteries of life, beliefs held and commitments made in response to questions
- heightening aesthetic awareness and enable pupils to appreciate the use of symbolism, particularly in Christianity

Collective Worship should nourish the spiritual dimension of the individual. It should:-

- be a time of peace, tranquillity and refreshment
- be challenging and enjoyable
- be a special time with a distinctive spiritual atmosphere
- encourage reflection and individual response
- give opportunities for pupils to participate in many ways
- foster a sense of community, separate from other school activities

Worship can foster a sense of 'otherness' to life. In order to support this we need to:-

- provide good experiences for Collective Worship
- encourage relaxation and stilling, to develop the pupil's awareness of creating quiet and space for and within themselves to achieve a sense of transcendence, spirituality and reflection
- encourage meditation using natural materials, artefacts and works of art to foster a sense of awe and wonder, beauty and goodness
- express concern for others to achieve a sense of empathy, responsibility and community
- give participants an opportunity to think about God and explore religious ideas about God
- give experience of prayer and a variety of prayer techniques and forms
- allow for community praise and singing, acknowledging response to God through different kinds of music

Collective Worship should be relevant and meaningful for the age aptitude and family backgrounds of the pupils. It is a spiritual activity and needs to focus the pupils attention by the creation of mood or atmosphere, which can be achieved by various means.

ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Collective Worship is a daily event. Different groupings and venues are used in order to encourage participation appropriate to the age and aptitude of the pupils and to make worship a time of challenge and enrichment.

This daily event plays a significant role in school life and requires particular planning and preparation in order to allow the different groupings and venues to enhance the worship.

The Head Teacher and members of staff are responsible for leading Worship but visiting speakers, from a variety of sources including members of our Church Worship Team, usually serve to extend worship in different settings and to strengthen links between school and the St Anne's church.

This organisation may be reviewed whenever it is deemed necessary in order to maintain the dynamic quality of our worship. Suggestions can be brought to staff meetings and discussed there.

As with all learning, pupils will often want to make their own personal contribution or respond in a variety of ways, sometimes prompted by a direct request from staff leading worship. Pupils are encouraged in this and their responses valued.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayers and hymns.

CONTENT

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.

At any time the planned focus could be waived in favour of a focus based on an unusual national, local or personal event. Spontaneity gives an extra dimension to worship and breathes life into ritual.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. This is not restricted simply to academic learning. It is a time to reflect upon the quality of individual learning and the breadth of growth as a whole person. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by showing their work to the other children. We reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. We also promote the ethos of our school with a celebration of good citizenship. Parents are invited to these assemblies.

Each week we also hold a class assembly where children share and celebrate their learning with the whole school. Parents are invited to these class assemblies to share in this.

Governors' attendance at our assemblies is always welcome.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementations and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.