

Collective Worship Policy



Ashton Church of England Primary School recognises that Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life in allowing children and staff time to reflect, drawing on those opportunities as described by the DfE (circular 1/94); worship God, consider spiritual and moral issues, explore their own beliefs, encourage participation and response, promote community/shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

The law requires that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”. In inviting the school community to worship, we have to be mindful of the varied backgrounds that the school community come from and it is therefore never the practice of our school to preach to or seek to convert. The faith background of all is to be respected at all times.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children however as our main purpose in Collective Worship is for it to be meaningful and relevant for all our pupils, it is hoped that few parents will find the need for withdrawal. At present there are no parents who exercise this right. If in future children were withdrawn, adequate supervision arrangements will be put in place. Teachers and support staff also have the right to withdraw from Collective Acts of Worship.

Collective worship is **not** the same as an assembly, though can take place in the same gathering. A school may hold any number of assemblies each week, but **must** have a daily act of collective worship.

Our School Vision

“Each valued, Each Talented, Each Unique. Valuing all God’s Children”

is at the heart of everything we do. It underpins the curriculum, informs school development and sets the ethos of our school. Collective Worship reinforces and develops our vision.

School Values

Our values contribute to both the vision and ethos of our school. Whilst these values are Christian in their origin, they are values that those of any faith or no faith can ascribe to. These values flow through all aspects of our school life, they help inform decisions and policies, shape our curriculum and equip our learners with values for life.

Our values are:

- Peace
- Thankfulness
- Reverence
- Humility
- Wisdom
- Friendship
- Perseverance
- Trust
- Forgiveness
- Honesty

- Hope
- Compassion

Aims

We aim for Collective Worship to be creative and meaningful inspirational and varied

Through our Acts of Collective Worship we aim to: -

- give opportunities to reflect on the Christian Faith including the teachings of Jesus and the trinitarian nature of God
- consider the importance and variety of prayer, reflection, including silence
- develop a respect for each other's beliefs and opinions
- encourage a sense of unity and personal identity
- build a concept of individual self-worth and 'special-ness'
- realise our commitment to each other, staff and pupils alike
- encourage Christian personal, social and moral values
- think about the needs of others
- provide a richness and variety of experiences
- including occasional reference to other major faiths
- allow individuals to reflect on their own behaviour, values and attitudes

Our Practice and Purpose

Collective worship in our school will offer opportunities for the whole school community to:

- celebrate together and share common values
- develop a reflective approach to living and thinking deeply
- foster a corporate identity and build community
- affirm the individual and the community
- deepen every individual's capacity for emotional responses
- awaken empathetic responses
- look beyond the material and the physical
- challenge and question their own thinking and the views of others

It may include:

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/reflection/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Film/video
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

Prayer

Where prayer is used it is important to ensure that:

- There should be no expectation that children will pray.
- Words introducing any prayer-like activity are given as an invitation rather than an instruction.
- Any invitation to pray is made for the benefit of those pupils for whom it is appropriate.
- The use of silence gives space for prayer or reflection or both.

- The words need to be owned by the speaker and/or grounded in a religious tradition
- Everyone can be included in a personal reflection on the theme or story or words of a prayer.
- There is an expectation that everyone will be still and listen to the words a prayer, without expectation of participation

Planning and organisation

When planning our collective worship we try to ensure that there is;

- thorough planning to meet the needs of the school, its learners and community
- educational use of religious and other material, ensuring variety in its form and presentation
- an open approach that gives pupils opportunities to respond without compromising them in any way
- every opportunity to interest and inspire pupils
- encouragement for all members of the school community to share in the planning and leading of collective worship
- an appropriate structure to indicate the beginning and end of collective worship
- Opportunity for all teachers and pupils take an active role in leading worship
- A plan for the Collective worship themes in a yearly cycle and every half-term
- A value introduced each half-term so that that value can be fully explored
- Planning is collected in the file in the hall

Responsibilities

Foundation Governors – Governors monitor the quality of collective worship

Head Teacher (CW & RE lead) – has the delegated responsibility for day to day acts of collective worship. As well as identifying and recording themes and resources; providing support for colleagues on delivery of collective worship; identify training needs; monitoring acts of worship and evaluating impact; ensuring all staff recognise the need to develop themes and content beyond collective worship.

Leaders of collective worship – planning and delivery of acts of worship

Equal Opportunities

Special arrangements are made for children with special educational needs which may include for these alternative seating or support

Visitors

We encourage guest providers throughout the year. Some of these maybe related to a specific project e.g. NSPCC, speakers from other faiths, Barnados etc.

Monitoring

This is done through recording planning and discussing with children, as well as questionnaires that are more formal.

Conclusion

Collective Worship unites the whole school and develops a sense of community. It is a time to celebrate the worth and value of every single person in the school community.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Ethics and Ethos Committee.

