

**Belmont Church of England Voluntary
Controlled Primary School**

Policy on Collective Worship

Belmont Church of England (Cont.) Primary School

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Foundation of the School

Belmont CE (Cont.) Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School. The school was established in January 2015 following the extending of the age range of Belmont CE (Cont.) Junior School to pupils aged from 4 years to 11 years, thereby incorporating the merger with Belmont Infant School. Our school provides education within the framework of the 'principles and practices of the Established Church.'

Collective worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. All members of the school come together to participate in collective worship.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base our worship on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

While most acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions that are represented in the school and the wider community. Our policy on Collective Worship is in line with the Diocesan policy of Collective Worship in Voluntary Controlled schools.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship.

Expectations of Pupils

We conduct Collective Worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that Collective Worship 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 prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, and sometimes candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children. In order to fulfil our aims, we provide children with a range of opportunities during Collective Worship. These include opportunities for:

- individual response and reflection
- listening and thinking about the World, themselves and others
- introducing pupils to the use of symbolism and religious language to express feelings and beliefs;
- sharing in experiences of e.g. sadness, excitement, joy, thankfulness, togetherness and challenge;
- silence, stillness, meditation, contemplation and prayer;
- celebration of the shared values in the school community.

Organisation and Delivery of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship. This forms part of each morning assembly, which can be either a whole-school assembly or a class assembly. Collective Worship usually takes place in the infant and junior halls but may also take place in the classrooms or at St Mary Magdalene Church on special occasions.

The acts of Collective Worship are normally conducted by the headteacher or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups.

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 acts of Collective Worship are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our acts of Collective Worship well in advance of the day they take place and Collective Worship is evaluated regularly by those leading it and taking part in it. Records of Collective Worship are maintained.

Our acts of Collective Worship reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the Collective Worship by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Collective Worship provides an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised. We shall celebrate the successes of all our children during our weekly Celebration Assemblies.

Parents are invited to class assemblies and we encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements.

Governors' attendance at our assemblies or Collective Acts of Worship is always welcome.

Right of withdrawal

Although we expect all children to attend Collective Worship, it is the right of every parent to withdraw their child from acts of Collective Worship. However worship is central to the life of our school and there is no guarantee that pupils can be withdrawn from the Christian ethos of the school. Any parent can request that their child is withdrawn from acts of Collective Worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that time. Parents and carers do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from Collective Worship.

Monitoring and review

The school has a named member of staff who is the Collective Worship co-ordinator. This is the Head Teacher.

Monitoring the policy and practice of Collective Worship is the role of a named school governor, who is also responsible for religious education. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher before reporting to the governors.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

January 2015