



Finedon Mulso Church of England Junior School and Finedon Infant School.



Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out how the school will meet its legal obligation to provide a daily act of collective worship which must be "of a broadly Christian Character" for the majority of the time, in line with the 1988 Education Reform Act. They must also be "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils".

Definitions

'Worship of a broadly Christian character'

The majority of acts of worship must be of a "broadly Christian character", and those that are must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being denominational. Paragraphs 60-63 of the DFE Circular 1/94 asks schools to define this as according a special status to Jesus Christ.

If we are to be inclusive in our worship in this school, taking the family backgrounds of the children into consideration, then, when according a special status to Jesus Christ, all pupils, whatever their beliefs, need to be respected. It is therefore appropriate in this school to tell stories of the life of Jesus, but inappropriate for all children to be required to address Him in prayer.

Many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all the faiths. It is important to concentrate on these as well as those specific to Christianity.

'Collective Worship'

The aim of collective worship is to develop pupils socially, morally, spiritually and culturally. The 1994 legal framework documentation regarding collective worship still stands. Added to this is the recent requirement to promote British values as part of SMSC (Ofsted, September 2014, DfE, November 2014).

This may include learning about interesting cultural traditions and their meaning, listening to stories with a moral message and reflecting on themes such as strength, courage or loyalty. Collective worship should draw pupils' attention to the values the school wishes to develop both as a body and in each individual. Collective worship is about the growth of the person, their character and social outlook, whatever their academic aptitudes.

Collective worship is a term which is used only in education. Churches and religions usually think of their worship as being corporate. Assumptions cannot be made about shared beliefs within a school community. Collective worship must take account of the varied backgrounds of the pupils (and staff) as well as of their ages and aptitudes.

It is the task of collective worship to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised but in which everyone finds something positive for themselves. In collective

worship, children and adults will be responding to the worship in different ways and at different levels. Some will be passive observers, learning about worship but not participating in it; some will be "at the threshold", interested in the process and participating in it but not full believers; for others the act of collective worship may be a time of real worship of God.

VALUES AND AIMS

We believe that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner. In particular school worship here develops the feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

Through our collective worship, we seek to:

- provide an opportunity to worship God through enjoyable and memorable experiences
- establish, explore and reinforce the common Christian values of the school community
- create a sense of belonging to the school community
- enable all children to appreciate their value and worth to God and the community
- enable the school to make effective use of silence through opportunities for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer, thereby encouraging those present to engage with the spiritual dimension of worship
- foster an atmosphere of integrity toward all individuals as children of God
- celebrate all children's gifts, talents and achievements
- foster feelings of awe, wonder, joy, mystery, trust and love
- develop personal relationships and encourage social development through providing an opportunity to empathise with the needs of others
- consider spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues
- explore children's own beliefs through the development of an enquiring and reflective attitude
- share some of the central teachings of the Christian faith
- share important times of the Church including Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity Sunday
- encourage respect and care for God's creation through the development of a positive attitude to local and global environmental issues
- foster sensitivity to other religions, their beliefs, values, cultures and traditions and as appropriate use these to enrich or deepen Christian faith
- provide opportunities for children to meet members of the local, and wider, community
- provide opportunities to bring personal needs and those of others before God in prayer

Organisation and structure of Collective Worship

Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together on a daily basis for a period of calm reflection, conducted in a dignified and respectful way. We expect children to behave in an appropriate manner for this special time, asking them to be quiet and listen carefully to the teachings, with the opportunity to participate in prayer and hymn.

Collective worship at the Junior School takes place from 2:50 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. and at the Infant School from from 10:15 – 10:30 a.m. and 9:05 – 9:20 a.m. on Wednesdays.

At the Junior School, we create a suitable atmosphere by using music, candles, a cross and other objects that act as a focal point for attention.

The head teacher or other members of staff normally conduct the collective worship and one worship each week at the Junior School is taken by the incumbent of the village. Occasionally, visitors from charities, educational groups or representatives from local religious groups conduct them instead and, at least twice a term, Junior School pupils lead either whole class, or group spontaneous assemblies.

Themes for our collective worship are taken from the traditions and values of the Christian faith and often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. We mark major Christian Festivals and plan church services to support our worship at these times.

We use collective worship to reflect the understanding, achievements and learning of the children and encourage them to participate in termly class assemblies by showing and discussing their work with other children and parents. Assemblies provide opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their social and academic achievements both at the weekly 'star' assembly and termly 'celebration' assembly.

We invite parents to the celebration assemblies in church. This promotes community spirit and reinforces the home school partnership, working together to support the achievements of our children. We also welcome governors to attend any of our assemblies.

Right of withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Parents do not have to explain or justify this. The school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during any collective worship. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from collective worship.

This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Monitoring and review

The Subject Leader of collective worship will regularly monitor collective worship by evaluating content and children's understanding and enjoyment. This will be either by observation or collecting opinions from the children. It is also the role of a named governor with responsibility for collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.

The policy was reviewed by the Governing Body in September 2017 and will be reviewed again in September 2018.