



St Andrew's CE (A) Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Mission Statement and Introduction

Mission Statement

St Andrew's offers a nurturing environment underpinned by Christian values, in which children can develop a sense of self worth and skills to prepare them for the wider community. We strive to provide an inspiring journey through a creative, balanced curriculum, enabling every child to reach their potential.

St. Andrew's CE Primary School aims to ensure that children and staff share in Christian Worship. This is reflected in and expressed through the daily life and the ethos of the school, and encompasses all that we stand for. Our worship is derived from Christian tradition and seeks to express our beliefs and values which are set out clearly in the School Prospectus. Daily worship is intended to expand spiritual awareness both within and outside of school.

Collective Worship, within a Christian context, plays an extremely important part in the life of our school. It provides an oasis in the school day when children meet together with members of staff in a calm and peaceful atmosphere 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 routine.

"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

Worship: can be defined as paying homage to (revering) that which is of worth ("Worth-ship.")
Religious Worship is the acknowledgement of the worth of a supreme being and in a Christian context is the acknowledgement of the worth of God. Worth can also be found in other people, values and attitudes.

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

Corporate Worship: is a gathering of a body ('corpus') of believers and presupposes a particular religious commitment.

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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.

NB: We note that Collective Worship and Assembly are not one and the same thing. They are, in essence, different from each other, but in practice they often overlap.

Rationale - Legal

- In Anglican schools worship is to be consistent with the principles and practices of the Church of England and will therefore be wholly Christian in character.
- The 1988 Education Reform Act states that Collective Worship should be part of a broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and society.
- All maintained schools - including church schools - must provide a daily act of Collective Worship for all registered pupils.

Rationale - Religious/Educational

Collective Worship gives children the opportunity:

- To enter into experiences which lie at the heart of religion.
- To learn about religious worship and provide a framework for later understanding.
- To foster a reverential attitude to a Divine, Transcendent God.
- To encourage pupils to consider fundamental questions about the purpose of being and moral and ethical stances.
- To participate in religious worship.
- To learn and celebrate values we hold to be important.
- To be together and experience the security of belonging to a community with an identity of its own.
- To discover interesting and thought provoking knowledge.
- To demonstrate their abilities in literature, art, music and drama.
- To be developed spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.

Aims and Principles

"Collective Worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and 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 and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes." (DfEE - Circular 1/94)

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The following principles guide our approach to Collective Worship at St. Andrew's CE (A) Primary School.

- Collective Worship should have a sense of occasion.
- Collective Worship should provide experiences within which pupils' spiritual development may flourish.
- Collective Worship should be a means of expressing the ethos and values of the school.
- Collective Worship should be educational and should contribute to the Religious Education of all pupils.
- Collective Worship should be shaped to the needs of the school, (time, place, content, style etc.)
- We should provide a varied pattern of worship to broaden pupils' experience of it's different forms.
- Collective Worship should take into account that the school includes children from different religious and non-religious backgrounds.
- There will be varying levels of response amongst the children during Collective Worship and each will be acceptable and encouraged.
- During Collective Worships pupils will be encouraged to learn from one another about worshipping.

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, movement, meditation and prayer.
- Create a warm, caring and respectful atmosphere in assemblies which will be conducive to worship. This will include the manner of entry and exit.
- 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 pupil's curiosity about the ultimate mysteries of life.
- Enable pupils to learn about and consider in depth Christian teaching, Christian festivals and Biblical material.
- Help pupils appreciate that we are 'stewards' 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 children towards the spiritual and religious options open to them.

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- 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.

Management of Collective Worship

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the Foundation of the school is expressed and that the Worship policy is firmly based upon the intentions set down in the Trust Deed.
- Ensuring that the Collective Worship Policy is put into practice and monitored by the appropriate Governor.
- Engaging an appropriate inspector to carry out the Section 23 Inspection of a church school alongside the OFSTED Inspection.
- The School Development Plan which includes a section on Collective Worship. This section gives an indication of the intentions and arrangements for the review of themes, approaches, development of resources and staff training, support, pupil participation and response.

The Collective Worship Coordinator has responsibility for managing the worship on a day to day basis and ensuring all legal requirements are complied with. The coordinator is also responsible for keeping in touch with national developments in school worship. They acts in an advisory Capacity and support colleagues.

Monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship is an on-going process carried out on a weekly and termly basis so that effective review can take place by the appointed date.

Organisation

Daily acts of Collective Worship take place in the school hall and follow a planned theme, which are taken from the Diocese. The structure of assemblies includes some or all of the following: music, a song of praise, a story or talk, a reading from the Bible, a period of reflection, a prayer, the Lord's Prayer, the school prayer and a reminder each day of the theme for the week which may have an accompanying 'saying.'

The School's weekly plan is as follows:

- Monday: Whole School Head Teacher

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- Tuesday: Whole School teacher /Minister based on weekly theme
- Wednesday: Whole School Music/RE Teachers Hymn practice with brief act of worship
- Thursday: Whole School Teacher
- Friday: Whole School Head Teacher Celebrating Achievement

All staff should aim to attend Collective Worship twice a week.

On special days the Act of Worship takes place in St. Andrew's Church, usually led by a minister or invited speaker. Visitors and outside speakers are invited to lead our worship on a regular basis.

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 essential 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 covered table with flowers /a cross /a bible 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/description may be given in the Hymn Practice.

Stories and talks are carefully chosen to fulfill 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. Particular emphasis is laid upon helping 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 and choruses. One or two are used at each assembly, relative to the theme and there is sometimes percussion accompaniment provided by the children. Some are learned by heart and actions are incorporated, whilst others are displayed on the overhead projector. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words. These provide a real source of pleasure.

Prayer and reflection are the most personal part of an act of worship. Collective Worship in school should provide opportunities for children to be taken to the threshold of prayer, and to cross it if they wish, in a way that respects the integrity of all present. Participation in prayer can never be imposed but we stress the need for stillness, reflection and respect for others.

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Silence, written prayers, impromptu prayers, The Lord's Prayer, children's prayers and the school prayer may be used. A large candle is lit and provides a focus for pupils' thoughts.

Reflection and thinking time are given some direction by the leader in order to concentrate pupils' response. A prayer book is available for children to write down their own thoughts and prayers and can express if they would like the prayer to be read in assembly.

Scripture sentences may be quoted from the Bible and, where appropriate, from sacred books and 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, demonstration and video.

Content

Planning for Collective Worship is the responsibility of the coordinator for Religious Education and Collective Worship. Plans are taken from the Diocese and schedules are approved by the Head and ratified by the Governing Body. Suggestions and requests from staff are welcomed, whilst input and guidance from the incumbent on the selection of themes is valued. The Music Coordinator collaborates in the selection of songs/hymns.

Themes vary and may have a specific religious base such as 'the early Christian Church' or 'miracles of Jesus.' They may also reflect a theme common to all religions such as 'creation or focus on common values held by religious and non-religious people alike such as 'caring and sharing.'

Themes are closely related to the school community and are often illustrated by stories of human endeavour.

Links with R.E. and the Curriculum are incorporated wherever possible. Common themes link R.E., P.S.H.E and Collective Worship. The apt choice of story can link worship with current topic work e.g. 'Caring' = 'Florence Nightingale' = 'Victorians'. Assemblies can be followed up in the classroom by further discussion and emphasis throughout the day. There is often an overlap between Collective Worship and Personal and Social Education.

N.B. No worship programme can ever be entirely pre-planned. There will always be the spontaneous moment or occasion when it is important, spiritually, to focus on the immediate, so that pupils become aware of how the spiritual dimension transcends all our experience. If a theme is neglected occasionally all records will show why!

Resources

- Staff, pupils, visiting speakers.
- Candle and stand,
- Selection of religious artefacts

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- Cracking R.E./Journal - RE Today
- Selection of assembly topic books for teachers Primary Assembly File
- Selection of assembly song books Taped music - classical, folk, ethnic
- Overhead projector Piano/Instruments/CD/Tape player

Records and Assessment

Themes for Collective Worship are noted on the assembly rota, a copy of which is displayed in the staffroom. The assessment of Collective Worship is carried out jointly by the Head Teacher and the coordinator through:

- Checking that practice matches aims and objectives.
- The observation of childrens' attentiveness and level of interest.
- Written and verbal classroom feedback from pupils.
- Comments from parents, visitors and governors.
- The monitoring of the influence of Collective Worship upon pupils' attitude and behaviour throughout their school day.
- Self-evaluation/comment by the teacher on the daily planning sheet.

Staff meetings are used for discussion and the update of information as and when necessary. Formal evaluation takes place with the whole staff once every half-term.

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. Such pupils are fully supervised in another part of the school.

Multiculturalism

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

Special Assemblies and Visitors

Within a Christian context, special assemblies are held for Harvest, Diwali, Christmas, Easter and End of the School Year. Parents, Governors and visitors are especially welcome to attend. Occasionally outside speakers, such as representatives from charitable organizations, will lead assemblies.

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Role Of Co-Ordinator

- To write the school's policy for Collective Worship in consultation with the head teacher and foundation governors.
- To ensure that all staff are aware of and use the policy document.
- To review the policy on a regular basis.
- To plan an overall balanced programme of worship for the year.
- To draw up assembly rotas.
- To involve colleagues, pupils and visitors in worship.
- To advise on planning, ideas and resources.
- To be responsible for ordering, maintaining and displaying resources.
- To administer the budget for Collective Worship.
- To ensure that Collective Worship maintains a high profile in the School Development Plan.
- To monitor and evaluate, with others, Collective Worship in all its forms.
- To report to the Head teacher and governors.
- To maintain a Collective Worship display board in the hall and in the school entrance.
- To arrange INSET for staff.
- To keep up to date with recent publications, attend Diocesan courses and disseminate information and feedback to staff.
- To liaise with the incumbent, governing body and Diocesan officers on matters relating to Collective Worship.

NB. All notices and achievements are given out and acknowledged after the Act of Worship.

Review

The Governing Body will review this policy, formally, two years from the date of its adoption. Informal Review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required.

This Policy has been formally adopted by the Governing Body of St. Andrew's CE (A) Primary School. It will be reviewed by the Governors, the Head Teacher and the Collective Worship Co-ordinator in conjunction with all staff two years from the date of the signature below.

Signed _____ Date _____
Chairman of Governors