



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Policy Creation & Review

Author(s)	Khudeza Qureshi <i>in consultation with Claire Clinton LA RE Advisor</i>
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Ellen Wilkinson Collective Worship Policy

Aims

To provide a time when children come together to celebrate, reflect and learn from experiences of religion, world events, music and celebrations.

The four main aims are:

Spiritual development

- To provide an opportunity for students to experience worship;
- To foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy;
- To respond to the aesthetic (music, poetry, art, literature);
- To explore sense of sacred;
- To help students explore their place in the world and their search for meaning;
- To provide an opportunity for reflection and contemplation;
- To heighten awareness of ultimate questions.

Moral development

- To encourage respect for others and care for the environment;
- To understand the importance of commitment to human living;
- To foster the virtue of fair-mindedness and a willingness to consider the views and values of others;
- To help students understand the balance between rights and responsibilities;
- To help students make informed moral choices.

Social development

- To reflect the school as an inclusive community;
- To promote a feeling of community, with a shared ethos and values;
- To provide an opportunity for students to become acquainted with school governors and other community leaders;
- To celebrate gifts, talents and achievements;
- To foster a sense of belonging.

Cultural development

- To reflect the school as a diverse community;
- To provide an opportunity for students to become acquainted with local leaders, including religious ones;
- To provide an opportunity to celebrate cultural and religious festivals;
- To appreciate the dynamic nature of culture and how it impacts on society.

The school also understands the importance of:

- actively promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that there is rounded programme of assemblies that help to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, providing clear guidance on what is right and what is wrong
- that collective worship promotes tolerance of and respect for people of all faiths (or those of no faith), cultures and lifestyles

The legal position of collective worship (CW)

The school has a statutory requirement to have a CW policy. This law was established in the 1988 Reform Act and subsequent amendments occurred in 1993 and 1996.

Worship itself is not clearly defined in the Education Act but the following is stated in the DFE circular 1/94:

'Worship must in some sense reflect something special or separate for ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power...worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common'.

Schools cannot compel people to worship, but the purpose of CW is an educational one that promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the following manner:

- Active, rather than passive (actively involved in answering questions).
- Directed towards something (a value/someone).
- Personal (time for reflection).

This policy helps to ensure that the whole school community, parents, staff, governors and students have a shared understanding of this important area of the curriculum.

Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the acts of Collective Worship although it is always hoped that here at Ellen Wilkinson Primary we can find a way to keep all children involved. Should a parent/carer be considering withdrawing their child, they must firstly request a meeting with the Head teacher to discuss their concerns in order to come to an agreement. In the unlikely event that a solution cannot be found the parent needs to confirm their intention to withdraw their child from collective worship in writing. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in collective worship until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Please note that parents are responsible for the care of their child if they want to proceed with withdrawal during the time of the act of Collective Worship and must provide the child with activities to do during this time. The school if it can will provide a safe place for the child to be, but does not have to do this if their resources are unable to do this. In this case it will need to be that the parent comes to be with their child during this time.

Organisation

Collective worship takes place during assemblies twice a week for the whole school, twice a week in key stage groups and once a week in class groups in the classroom. Where a class is sharing their learning in an assembly, at the end of the assembly pupils are given the time to reflect on the theme/ moral learnt from the class assembly.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', and in recognition of the fact that the majority of our pupils are practising members of other faiths we base our assemblies on those aspects of Christian teaching that are shared with other faiths. We do this by basing assemblies on ultimate questions such as: "Does charity begin at home?" and "What does it mean to be honest?" During these assemblies pupils are encouraged to engage by sharing their views and opinions about these questions. At the end of each assembly pupils sit quietly to reflect on what has been discussed through the assembly.

At the Early Years Foundation Stage, collective worship may not be delivered in a whole key stage format; sometimes it will be delivered in individual classes. It is expected that the Reception Classes will follow the same themes and thoughts as planned for the rest of the school.

Foundation timetable of phased inclusion into wider school assemblies:

- Reception to join whole school assembly every Friday.
- Reception to participate and deliver assemblies for parents in the summer term.

At Key Stage 1 and 2, the delivery of collective worship will be through class presentations, singing, stories, drama, awards, birthday celebrations and guest speakers. Strategies may include the use of interactive presentations.

An effective practice model for an act of Collective worship is as follows:

PLUG IN – this is about awakening the children.

Using a stimulus e.g. music, picture, quotation, candle, flowers. We need to give the children time to prepare. A well-chosen piece of music can help create an atmosphere for worship and reflection.

SWITCH ON – this is about engaging the children.

It will usually focus on a particular story, article, drama or message. Using different approaches and involving different people will provide variety in worship. The material needs to be presented in an appealing way. The material should be appropriate to the age group. Visual aids and artefacts can provide useful illustrations of key points and help the children to remember the message.

LIGHT UP – this is about allowing the children to respond.

It must include an opportunity for the pupils to reflect and if appropriate for them, to think about God. It may be a prayer, poem or guided reflection. This part must take place for it to be collective. For this to be Collective Worship a period of silence for students to reflect must be allocated as silence can allow for individual thought and reflections.

The key to excellent CW is effective reflection. Some examples of we achieve this at EWPS are:

- Silent sitting
- Visualisation
- Using a visual stimulus
- Focusing on a specific message
- School reflection or poem

Use of Guest Speakers

From time to time guest speakers may be involved in assemblies. These may be from organisations such as TFL, NSPCC, Drug Awareness etc. or they may be from a specific faith background. If it is the latter we ensure they are supported and endorsed by SACRE so that content is appropriate & age specific and that speakers are clear they are not to promote their specific faith. At all times speakers are accompanied and supervised by school staff. For further details please see PREVENT action plan.

Collective worship and inclusion

In line with the other school policies, CW aims to meet the needs of all children through questioning and presentation techniques resources and resources. Such needs may include, but not be limited to, those to whom English is an Additional Language (EAL) and children with Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND).