



St. Michael's C.E. (VC) First School

Collective Worship Policy

Date Approved: October 2019

Date to be Reviewed: October 2021

Legal Requirement

As a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School we follow the guidelines for collective worship as indicated in the Education Reform Act 1988. This states that our worship should not be distinctive of any particular denomination. It is not necessary for every act of worship to be of this character, but within each school term, the majority of acts must be so.

Families who send their children to this school are in the main 'nominally' Christian with a small percentage of pupils from other faiths and no faith. In addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our children to worship we have to consider the background that our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child's family is respected at all times.

The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Parents of any pupil have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from collective worship.

Definition of Collective Worship

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.

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.

Values

We believe at this school 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 use Collective Worship as an opportunity to apply these values to our school mission statement 'Through God we love, laugh and learn'. 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.

Aims

Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supporting environment for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community and show interest, and concern for others
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of other people in every day situations and beliefs
- Develop awareness of how they can show our school values in their everyday life
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them and value the world in which we live
- Grow in confidence to contribute to discussions or when sharing their views or feelings
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not
- Celebrate special occasions together
- Explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards identified in religions and society including those identified as British values.
- Reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.

Planning and Organisation

The head teacher and the RE Subject Leader are responsible for the planning of collective worship. The theme is usually taken from the 'Roots and Fruits'

resource and follows a 2 year rolling programme. The whole school meets three times a week in the morning for collective worship, once a week a Year Group worship is led by the class teacher and celebration worship takes place on a Friday afternoon. Celebration worship celebrates the achievements of children throughout the week and also the house point totals are shared by the House Captains. House points are awarded to children during the week for showing our Christian values in action.

The format of assemblies is flexible to allow children to experience different approaches. These could include:

1. Whole school assemblies led by the Head-teacher, member of staff or a visitor. These visitors include our Vicar and local Christian groups.
2. Class based assemblies led by the class teacher, a designated member of staff or a visitor.
3. Special assemblies such as celebrations, achievement awards and hymn practice.
4. Assemblies planned and led by children
5. Christian Festivals celebrated in Church (i.e. Christmas, Easter and Harvest)

We believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. We plan the time so that there is a variety in content and methods, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection/worship.

We choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama/music
- Prayer/reflection/meditation

- songs & hymns
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

Prayer and reflection

Positive attitudes to prayer are modelled by all staff and all children are expected to behave in a quiet and respectful way. Children are invited to agree with 'Amen' if they wish. Staff sometime use different approaches to prayer such as silence or reflection or praying a prayer for the children to listen to rather than repeat.

Music and creativity

Music is used during the gathering, responding and sending phases of collective worship to encourage children to be still and to prepare for worship, to respond in worship and to signal the transition back to class time. A song is usually included which relates to the topic and hymn practises ensures this repertoire is continually being developed. Children learn sign language alongside the songs that are sung and this is modelled by the adults in school.

Visitors

We really value our links with St Michael's and St Saviours Church. We hold our Welcome service, Harvest and Christmas assemblies in the Church and children in Years 2,3 and 4 attend the Thursday Communion service once every three weeks. Our Vicar leads assemblies on a regular basis. Other appropriate visitors to the school are welcomed and share their experience and knowledge.

Volunteers from the church alongside members of staff run Adventurers club every week after school which focusses on children learning and understanding the bible stories through art, music and drama. This club ends with a collective worship to which parents are invited to attend with their children.

Resources

The Bible

Roots and Fruits planning guide

Books of stories and prayers

Posters, visual symbols

Display board

White board and computer

Candles

Artefacts

Music

Visitors