



Hatherley
INFANT SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy

Agreed: September 2020
Review: September 2023

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admin@hatherley-inf.gloucs.sch.uk

Rationale

An individual's spiritual growth and development continues throughout life and is nurtured in many different ways. A planned programme of collective worship can make a contribution towards this.

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.

Collective worship is central to the school's vision statement where children are nurtured to develop self-belief and respect; learning and growing together.

Introduction

We are aware that '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'.

(Religious Education and Collective Worship (Circular Number 1/94) (DfE))

We understand collective worship to be a special act or occasion whose main purpose is to show reverence to God and involves pupils and teaching staff (and at times parents, governors and other visitors) coming together every day.

We will ensure that collective worship, which can take place at any time during the school day, will be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief without being connected to any particular Christian denomination.

We believe that in our daily collective worship when all members of the school come together, we try to create an occasion which produces a variety of responses, one of which is worship. We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God.

However, we believe we must conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school. Therefore, throughout the academic year we will hold collective worship that reflects other world religions as we want all children to feel included whatever their beliefs or background.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

We acknowledge that children's entitlement to acts of collective worship should not be affected by gender, culture, race or special needs. We will ensure that there are no barriers to this equality of opportunity.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Statutory Requirements

- All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship. This must reflect the traditions of this country which are, in the main, broadly Christian.
- The act of collective worship can be held at any time and in any grouping.

- Collective worship should be appropriate for the ages, aptitudes and family and religious backgrounds of the pupils to encourage participation.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the daily act of collective worship.
- The responsibility for the collective worship arrangements lies with the governing body in consultation with the headteacher.

We have a legal requirement to provide religious education and daily collective worship for all our registered pupils but with the exception of those pupils who are withdrawn from these activities by their parents. The Education Reform Act states that collective worship need no longer be at the start of the school day, and worship may take place in a single act of worship or separate acts of worship in different age groups.

Aims

The aims for Collective Worship at Hatherley Infant School and Nursery are:

- to help children develop an awareness of God in everyday life
- to help children develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them
- to offer opportunities for the celebration of religious and other festivals
- to provide opportunities to worship by participating, responding and for reflection
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs.
- to enhance the sense of belonging to a community which has shared values and attitudes and where respect is shown to all
- to praise the achievements of others and appreciate their own worth and potential
- to enjoy singing together in praise and celebration
- To ensure that all pupils take part in a daily act of worship of a wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.

Guidelines

The act of collective worship should be spiritual:

- By providing a time of quiet during which those taking part can reflect on the thoughts and themes presented;
- By focussing on aspects of our lives that identify and promote a sense of awe and wonder;
- By providing opportunities for those taking part to engage in a variety of spiritual activities such as singing, dance, drama, readings, prayer and sharing;
- By creating a special time conducive to promoting an understanding of and participation in faith and worship.

The act of collective worship should be inclusive:

- By establishing a relevance to the age and experience of those taking part;
- By involving children actively;
- By focusing on the needs of the members of the school's community;
- By promoting a sense of belonging through developing a shared set of values, identity and purpose amongst those taking part.

The act of collective worship should be a learning experience:

- By having a clearly defined objective;
- By ensuring a relevance to the stage of learning reached by those taking part;
- By providing opportunities to learn how to behave in our community;

- By responding to significant current issues or events;
- By celebrating educational achievements and special occasions;
- By involving members of the wider community.

The daily act of collective worship will take place in a variety of groupings following the timetable set out in Appendix 1

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly 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.

The assemblies 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 assemblies are related to Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies well in advance of the day they take place.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies provide 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.

Parents are specifically invited to share in acts of collective worship during the year. 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 is always welcome.

Length, Time and Pace

We are aware that we have to fulfill a statutory amount of teacher-pupil contact time namely, 22½ hours for infants. Collective worship is not included in this time. Therefore, our collective worship will be kept to 15 minutes with several minutes being allowed for the pupils coming in making a maximum of no more than 20 minutes.

Composition

Music - CD music should be played at the beginning and end of collect worship which, if possible, fits in with the theme for the week. The title of the music and the composer should be written on the hymn list next to the CD player.

Hymns - should be chosen to reflect the theme for the week or the day. Taped hymn singing will be used for the children to sing along with when it is not possible to use piano accompaniment.

Prayers - the children should be introduced to several prayers which we expect them to learn. The compilation of pupils' prayers should be actively encouraged and made into a book of prayers to be used at relevant times.

Provider - the provider may be the Headteacher, Assistant Head, class teacher, pupils, vicar, or lay reader/outside speaker.

Theme - the theme to follow will be that planned by the co-ordinator.

Activities

In planning collective acts of worship we must bear in mind the following activities: -

- singing, readings and storytelling, rituals, drama, music for listening, responses, audio-visual presentation, interviews, symbols, prayer, dance, visiting speakers and cooking

Planning the Year

When planning the year we will think carefully about the inclusion of the following :-

- High days and holidays
- Saint Days
- Feasting for Festivals
- World Faiths
- National
- World Events

Planning for the academic year will take place before the end of each half term and all staff will then be given a year plan of the proposed collective acts of worship.

Right of withdrawal

It is hoped that all parents will appreciate the importance of pupils' involvement in a daily act of collective worship. Parents however, have the right to withdraw their child from attending any aspect of collective worship organised by the school. In such cases the headteacher should be contacted so that adequate arrangements can be made for supervision. 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 and amended by the Education Act 1993.

Evaluation, monitoring and record keeping

It is our intention that collective worship will contribute to the whole curriculum and in particular to the spiritual development of our children. The evaluation and monitoring of the contribution which worship makes is through discussion with and observation of children as they respond to and reflect upon experiences. Our aims for collective worship are reflected in teaching styles across the whole curriculum and contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children e.g.

Spiritual – listening and responding to music, visual stimuli

Moral – behavioural expectation

Social – autonomy, self-esteem, independence

Cultural – art, history

Leaders of collective worship are invited to keep a brief record of themes, styles and approaches used in each service. This record is kept in the staffroom/hall.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Governing Body for further discussion and endorsement.

Linked Policies

Curriculum	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
RE	Equalities
Safeguarding	Ethos