

LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

HIGHGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Collective Worship

POLICY

2019

Collective Worship Policy Jan 2019

To be reviewed Spring 2021

Highgate Primary School

'Learn, Live, Laugh Together'

Introduction

This policy should be taken and used as part of Highgate Primary School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision, instrument of government aims and values as a County Primary school. This policy has been formally adopted by the governing body, in consultation with the Headteacher. This policy is consistent with the overall aims of the school.

There has been no significant change in the law about collective worship since the Education Reform Act of 1988 or the Education Act of 1996.

Aim

In our Collective Worship we 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 and through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop a community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes." (DFES Circular 1/94)

Principles

The following principles guide our approach to Collective Worship:

- 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 welcoming ethos and values of the school.
- 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 its different forms.
- Collective Worship should recognise that the school includes children from different religious and non-religious backgrounds and celebrate this difference and diversity.
- During Collective Worship some will be worshipping and some will be experiencing something approaching worship; others will be finding out what it is like to worship by being with those who are.
- Collective Worship supports the broader curriculum through the use of the highest standards of music, art, drama, literature and other forms of expression. Collective Worship is an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, to support our curriculum and to provide an opportunity for stillness and reflection in the midst a busy life.

Legal Requirements

The Schools Standard and Framework Act 1998 (Section 70 and Schedule 20 as identified in the DfE Guidance Document Religious Education and Collective Worship Circular 1/94) requires-

- 1) All registered pupils (Apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdrawal) must on "each school day take part in an act of collective worship." Along with the parental right of withdrawal, teachers retain the right to withdraw from collective worship.
- 2) The requirement is for 'Collective Worship' rather than 'corporate worship' or 'assembly'. 'Assembly' is simply a gathering of the school community and does not necessarily include worship. 'Corporate worship' (e.g. in church) assumes a group of

people with shared beliefs and pre-supposes a particular religious commitment. 'Collective Worship' recognises the different background, experience and commitment of children gathered together in school and does not pre-suppose a particular religious commitment.

3) For collective worship, pupils can be grouped in various ways: as a whole school, according to age, or in groups (or a combination of groups) which the school uses at other times. Pupils cannot be put into special groups just for collective worship. Acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils, in that they should take account of the pupils' age, aptitude and family backgrounds.

4) The daily worship will normally take place on the school premises. All schools are now able to hold their Act of Worship elsewhere (e.g. the local Parish Church) on special occasions.

5) The daily worship may take place at any time of the school day. However, acts of worship are not curriculum time and should not be subsumed into any part of the curriculum. Acts of worship must be distinctive from other aspects of school life and able to be identified as such to meet legal requirements.

6) Requests from people outside the school to be involved in the worship should be studied carefully to ensure that they are sympathetic to the school's worship policy. The legislation governing religious education and worship is required to ensure pupils gain both a thorough knowledge of Christian heritage and values of this country and a knowledge of other principle religions represented in Great Britain, reflecting diversity and British values

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Collective Worship in our school are to:

- introduce pupils to the practice of religious worship through music, art, story, poetry, movement and prayer.
- create a warm, caring and respectful atmosphere in assemblies, conducive to worship; including the manner of entry and exit.
- encourage, in children, a thoughtful and reflective attitude.
- help pupils experience a sense of awe and wonder.
- enable pupils to use silence for reflection and contemplation.
- enable pupils to learn about and consider in depth religious teaching, festivals and biblical material.
- 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.
- 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

ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

Atmosphere should be understood by all staff, pupils and visitors to be important in creating the right foundation for Collective Worship. Quiet, orderly behaviour and respectful attitudes on entering, leaving and throughout the time of worship are expected. All those involved in the occasion enhance the atmosphere by their presence and participation

Music may be used to stimulate thought and create a mood as well as being a vehicle for worship.

Stories and talks are carefully chosen to fulfil 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.

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. Silence, written prayers, impromptu prayers, The Lord's Prayer, and the children's prayers may be used. Reflection and thinking time are given some direction by the leader in order to concentrate pupils' response.

CONTENT AND ORGANISATION (see Appendix 1)

Equal Opportunities Statement

Equal opportunities should be promoted on the basis that every person deserves equal respect irrespective of age, race, culture, capability or gender.

Our approach to Collective Worship takes into account issues related to multicultural education, special educational needs, gender and personal and social education.

REVIEW

The Governing Body will review this policy, formally, three 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 Highgate Primary School. It will be reviewed regularly by the Governors, the Head Teacher and all staff

Date written: January 2019

Date to be reviewed: Spring 2021

APPENDIX 1

CONTENT AND ORGANISATION

Planning for Collective Worship is the responsibility of the headteacher, in consultation with staff, governors, pupils and visiting speakers.

The themes for collective worship are planned each term and may include themes recommended by the SEAL programme as well as themes appropriate to school concerns and current issues.

The structure of collective worship usually includes music, a song of praise, a story, talk, or a reading from the Bible or other religious text, a period of reflection, a prayer, quiet thinking time, or the Lord's Prayer.

The usual weekly pattern for worship is as follows:

- Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday – In-Class Assemblies – Class Council / PSHE / Current Issues
- Thursday – Head Teacher & visiting Clergy linked with Sileby Parish – No Outsiders Assembly & Current Issues
- Friday Head Teacher - Celebrations

[Each year group will hold a Class Assembly over the year where parents will be invited in so children can share some of the things they have learned with the wider community. This will usually commence with Year 6 leading their assembly in the September before being followed by each other year group in turn.](#)

Collective Worship will be held in St Mary's church to mark a special festivals or a celebration of achievement. Parents, Governors and visitors are especially welcome to attend.

Occasionally outside speakers, such as representatives from charitable organisations, may lead additional whole-school assemblies.

All members of staff who contribute to the worship in school will

- Check that practice matches the aims and objectives.
- Discuss observed pupil attentiveness and interest.
- Consider any feedback from pupils (particularly regarding their opportunities to lead worship). This information may come via the School Council.