



Rawdon St. Peter's

CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Unlocking every child's potential.

Rawdon St. Peter's C of E Primary School

Policy for Collective Worship

Collective Worship has a central place in the life of this Voluntary Controlled School. It can be defined as the coming together of our school community to consider matters which we hold in greater worth. It is an affirmation and celebration of ideals and values of central importance to our school community.

The daily Act of Collective Worship will:

- Be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the school's Trust Deed and the Ethos Statement in the Instrument of Government:
"That education in school shall always be in union with and conducted upon the principles and furtherance of the National Society and the established Church."
- Fulfill the legal requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act (see appendix)
- Be conducted in a way that recognises our duty to be inclusive, meeting the needs of all members of the school community with regard to age, ability, faith, family background and special educational needs.

Aims

1. To enable pupils to explore and respond to a variety of forms of worship, allowing those pupils with a religious commitment to deepen their experience of worship and those pupils without a religious commitment to appreciate what worship means for others.
2. To encourage a sense of awe and wonder and foster a respect for the environment, the world and its peoples.
3. To provide children with an understanding of the beliefs of the Christian Church, including God as Creator, the life and teachings of Jesus and the Holy Spirit as part of the Holy Trinity.
4. To engender a respect for the diversity of and differences between people.
5. To provide opportunities for children to consider spiritual and moral issues that they encounter in their daily lives.
6. To promote the values encapsulated in our school Mission Statement, particularly our **Key Christian Values: Love and Friendship, Honesty, Fairness, Endurance and Thankfulness**
7. To develop a sense of community within and beyond school.

Learning Opportunities:

1. Time for stillness, reflection and the exploration of inner thoughts and feelings
2. Understanding/ knowledge of the beliefs of Christianity and other faiths;
3. Sharing feelings of appreciation, joy, hurt, sorrow, sadness and compassion;
4. Celebrating shared values and achievement;
5. Prayer expressing the essential beliefs of Christians and prayer which recognises that there is more to life than the ordinary.
6. Acknowledging the struggles and sufferings of other human beings;

7. Listening and responding to visitors who can contribute to Collective Worship.

Collective Worship and the Anglican Tradition

In seeking to provide acts of Collective Worship, which are both distinctive and inclusive, the following strategies are implemented:

The Bible is used on a regular basis as a source for inspiration and learning and is a key feature of our alternate Tuesday Collective Worship which involves the Open the Book Team from our local St. Peter's Church.

The cycles of the Anglican Year are observed to include Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost and also Christian themes such as: sacrifice, forgiveness, honesty and bravery.

The Lord's Prayer is shared.

Traditional and modern hymns and psalms are a part of Collective Worship.

The local vicar regularly leads acts of Collective Worship.

Symbols of Christianity are used in reflection, including the cross and a candle.

Opportunities for silent reflection are given to enable pupils to make a personal response.

Pupils from other faiths and their parents are made aware that they will not be required to say Christian prayers - they will be encouraged to use their own private devotions by thinking of prayers they have learned in their own faith traditions when Christian prayers are used. Pupils are encouraged to understand the beliefs of others including those of no faith.

Stories from other faith traditions form part of Collective Acts of Worship where common values can be explored and shared.

Festivals from other faiths are marked and acknowledged and celebrated– see calendar of themes and celebrations.

In 2019 the whole school was involved in the writing of a new school prayer – this is now a key element of Collective Worship. Our school prayer and class prayers are used regularly in Collective Worship but teachers may also use other prayers suitable to themes. Pupils use our prayer tree and also write the prayers for Collective Worship when their class has the responsibility of leading the week's theme. Each year classes write their own prayers for inclusion in a school prayer book kept in the KS2 Hall. These prayers are regularly used in Collective Worship. The Collective Worship Evaluation Group also writes prayers for specific themes e.g. transition and moving on.

Collective worship refers most specifically to the prayers and songs of praise that pupils take part in during assembly; this special time is marked by the lighting of a candle.

Organisation

All registered pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw) participate in a daily act of Collective Worship. Arrangements for this are as follows:

Mondays	Key Stage Collective Worship led by the Headteacher
Tuesdays	Key Stage Collective Worship led by class teachers
Wednesdays	Songs of Praise
Thursdays	Class Reflection involving local clergy or other visitors
Fridays	Whole School or Key Stage Collective Worship, to incorporate celebrations of achievement.

Pupil Involvement

Pupils are encouraged to contribute to Collective Worship and to lead it also. An example of this is classes at KS2 taking a lead for the preparation of prayers and music for the weekly theme and for leading class-based worship in their own classes and in other classes.

Pupils (and other stakeholders selected the school's key Christian Values).

Visitors

Visitors who are invited to participate in an act of Collective Worship are chosen carefully so as to enrich the experience. The purpose of the visit is discussed and agreed in advance to ensure that they are clear about their role.

Evaluation of Collective Worship

There is a strong Church Links group chaired by a foundation governor from St. Peter's Church, this group meet to discuss Collective Worship, Church and community links etc. The Headteacher meets regularly with the elected Collective Worship pupil group who assist in organising our Collective Worship themes and selection of hymns etc. Senior Leadership Team also consults with different stakeholders on a termly basis to gather views and opinions about Collective Worship and how effective it is.

The Headteacher also reviews and evaluates the way in which Collective Worship is being delivered and ensures that established themes are being followed.

School Collective Worship & the 1988 Education Reform Act

(Interpreted by DFE Circular 2/89 January 1989)

A Summary of the Legal Requirements

Below is a summary of the main requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act regarding Collective Worship in maintained schools.

1. ATTENDANCE

Section 6 of the Education Reform Act states that

“all pupils in attendance at a maintained school shall on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship” apart from those withdrawn by their parents.

This applied to County, Voluntary (Church Aided and Controlled) and Grant Maintained Schools for all pupils, including the sixth form.

Every pupil in a special school should attend Collective Worship (unless withdrawn by their parents) “so far as it is practicable”. Nursery school and nursery classes are excluded.

NB The word assembly is not used.

2. RESPONSIBILITY

Arrangements for Collective Worship are made:

- I. In a County School by the Headteacher following consultation with the Governing Body
- II. In a Voluntary School by the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher
- III. In a Grant Maintained School by the Governing Body.

3. TIMING AND LOCATION

Collective Worship may take place at any time during the school day. It no longer needs to be held at the beginning of the day.

It may be organised for the whole school as a single act, or for separate age groups, or existing school groups (e.g. house groups, year groups, teaching groups). Pupils cannot worship in separate faith groups unless a determination has been granted (see below).

The daily act of Collective Worship must take place on the school premises. Only Aided, Special Agreement and Grant Maintained Schools are allowed to hold their Collective Worship elsewhere on special occasions if the Governors see this as desirable. Any acts of Collective Worship off the school premises in other schools must be in addition to the statutory daily act of worship.

4. CHARACTER OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP: VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS (CHURCH AIDED & CONTROLLED)

The Character of Collective Worship in Voluntary Schools is not changed by the 1988 Act. Therefore it continues to be determined by the Trust Deeds. In practice, this normally means in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. If there is any dispute about the interpretation of the Trust Deed the Bishop of the Diocese makes the final decision.

Policy must reflect trust deed statement e.g. in line with “C of E practices and principles”.

‘Interpretation’ is an important term for there have been great changes in religious practice in the UK since the Trust Deeds of most Church School were drawn up. School Governors may be seen as acting responsibly when they regard Trust Deeds as statements made in the past in which the principles of the Church of England need to be interpreted in the light of today’s circumstances.

5. CHARACTER OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP: COUNTY SCHOOLS

Collective Worship in County Schools shall be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, that is it shall reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. However, providing that the majority of acts of Collective Worship in any term comply with this ruling, it is not essential for every one to meet this requirement. The acts of worship must be appropriate for the pupils. They should take account of the pupils’ ages, aptitude and family backgrounds.

6. APPLICATION FOR A DETERMINATION

If the Head of a County School considers that worship that is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” is inappropriate for pupils, she/he can apply, after consulting with the Governors, to the local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) for a determination to have that clause lifted or modified. The determination made by SACRE ends after five years unless renewed. It should be noted that SACRE is not bound to grant every application.

7. WITHDRAWAL

Parents may withdraw their child from Collective worship. Teachers, too, retain the right to withdraw from Collective Worship. This includes Headteachers. When there are insufficient teachers prepared to take Collective Worship, the Headteacher must take all reasonable steps to find other people suitable to do so.

The Multi-faith Church School

An increasing number of voluntary Church schools contain pupils from a variety of religious traditions as well as many pupils whose families have no religious affiliation. The governors and the Headteacher therefore need to consider how to provide forms of school worship which reflect the Anglican, foundation of the school but which do not impinge upon the integrity of particular pupils or of the faith communities from which they come.

Aided schools, which admit pupils of other faiths have to accept the responsibility for this decision, and understand the implications of this for the nature of the participation and presence of those pupils at acts of worship. Equally, non-Christian parents who have sought the admission of their children to a voluntary aided Church of England school should be aware of the expectations of the school and its policy on school worship. As in all schools, they should be aware of their rights of withdrawal from school worship (and from religious education). All voluntary Church schools, whether they give priority to children of practicing Christian families or have an open policy on admissions, have to meet the same requirements for worship. The need remains for sensitivity towards the religious backgrounds and communities of the pupils and for a clear policy on worship.

Appendix 1, 'Legal Background' (page 24), indicates that worship in a Church school must reflect the traditions of the Anglican Church, based on scripture and the creeds. In addition there is within the Anglican Church a strong commitment to the application of tradition and reason. Diversity in religion, race and culture should be regarded as a positive contribution to the life of the school. Pupils will be able to bring a range of religious experiences, which will provide a focus for sharing values, beliefs and commitments. Pupils of different faiths should be encouraged to recognize the importance of a faith and of religious principles in a supportive religious environment.

In practice schools express this commitment to diversity in a variety of ways.

- In many schools all pupils are encouraged to be present at acts of worship but pupils of other faiths, and their parents, are aware that they are not required to say Christian prayers.
- Some leaders use Christian prayers but, in the time set aside for prayer, encourage pupils to engage in their own private devotions by thinking of prayers they have learned in their own faith tradition; Muslim and Jewish children, in particular, are aware that they will not be invited to pray to Jesus as God.
- Some Church schools have, over a period of time, built up relationships of considerable trust with their local faith communities. Pupils of other faiths and members of their communities are invited to share their experience of commitment and religious insight with the whole school on certain occasions.
- Times of silence and reflection invite the spiritual growth and response of all pupils. The exploration of silence through stillness and meditation is common to all faiths, and is often an aspiration of those who have no religious affiliation. Many schools see this as an important part of whole school or class acts of worship.
- Schools drawing pupils from a variety of faith backgrounds need to recognize the strength of a school community, which is based upon shared values and spiritual

reflection. Such schools cross barriers that can divide the society outside. That achievement should be celebrated.

- Christian love, humility, trust and reconciliation are of prime importance when meeting with people of other faiths.

Collective Worship - some definitions for consideration

a) *“Worship is acknowledging there is something greater than you The best way that we can begin those sorts of ideas and feelings in our young children is through nature and the wonder and the awe that nature can give us”*

Key Stage One Teacher

b) *“Thinking of the word worship, we have interpreted it to mean, worth-ship and at our assemblies we do want to consider topics and themes which are about matters which people hold in high value, which they hold in greater worth”.*

Head Teacher

c) *“Worship is something that is totally natural to human beings. I remember the first feeling of worship that I ever has was going through woodland near the moor and coming across a stag standing on the path and this tremendous feeling of mystery and excitement as though you moved into a different world almost I think people have got worship too much tied up in churches or mosques or synagogues”.*

Bishop of Stepney

d) *“Worship can be defined as having to do with ‘worth’ and ‘honour’. It would be concerned with, identifying, affirming and celebrating certain ideals and values held to be of central importance to the community which worships”.*

R. E. Adviser. Beds.

Worship in an Anglican School should reflect some of the essential features of Anglican prayer and worship: -

1. Using the Bible as a source book for inspiration
2. Reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship e.g. bread, wine, chalice, water etc.
3. Observing the cycle of the Anglican year.
4. Participating in the set order of Anglican worship – e.g. special services from time to time.
5. Using collect and set prayers – identifying a collection of prayers, hymns and psalms, which help create a framework for, worship within school.

6. Learning traditional responses and prayers, which express beliefs of Christians through the ages.
7. Opportunities to discover value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship.
8. Opportunities to experience the value of ecumenism – worship led by members of clergy from other churches.
9. Experience the bond of community, which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinions.
10. Sharing a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in the welcome we offer to all pupils and the celebration of shared values and beliefs.

This Policy will be reviewed in 2022