

Collective Worship Policy

Author: Marguerite Roberts (Associate Governor) 2013
Revised by: Nigel Moorhouse (Foundation Governor) 2019
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Park Street Church of England Primary School

Statement of General Policy on Collective Worship

1. Introduction

Park Street School is a Church of England school. It draws its ethos from the life, faith and teachings of the Christian Church. It lives in close relationship to the Diocese of Ely and its mother church, Ely Cathedral.

The Christian faith which underpins the school is a message of faith in God and each other, recognising the full potential of each; love, which gives a basis of reconciliation, forgiveness, and tolerance to the community; and hope, which commits us to strive for growth and maturity for all. These qualities are found in Christ with his message of salvation to a needy world.

The whole experience of the school should be integrated into its Christian life. Learning, teaching, care, respect, growth and truth, are all qualities lived out by Christ and experienced and shared in the life of the school.

The school is a community, committed to care for each other, which should meet each day to share its concerns, to celebrate its achievements, to pray for those in its family, to reflect on the wonder of learning and development, and to respond to the gifts of life and learning which come from God.

There is a legal requirement for Collective Worship to take place in the school every day, but the school's desire for Collective Worship stretches beyond the demands of the law and touches its fundamental purpose as a school. Our daily act of worship is an opportunity to build the school together in faith, hope and love.

Each act of worship should involve as members of the school community. Bearing in mind that pupils and their families come from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and faiths, worship should be inclusive and not confessional or evangelistic. Staff should usually attend, and governors should make an effort to attend as often as they can. Each act of worship should be carefully prepared and follow an agreed programme.

The school will loyally and joyfully follow its Christian tradition in offering worship of a primarily Christian character.

Collective Worship plays a central role in a Church School; it models the school's Christian ethos and values, and proclaims its Church School identity.

2. Aims

The aims of Collective Worship are:

- to worship God, using music, singing, and also silence; and
- to reflect on and discuss together the values taught by the Christian and other faith traditions; and
- to develop a spirit of community, a common ethos and shared values; and
- to become aware of spiritual and moral issues; and
- to encourage a sense of awe and wonder at the world around; and
- to provide opportunities for celebration and thanksgiving.

This can be achieved in various ways:

- Providing an opportunity for the children to reflect upon God and to give Him honour.
- Helping children discover their place in the world.
- Highlighting the spiritual dimension through experiencing worship.
- Providing children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery.
- Providing an opportunity to celebrate major, and some minor, Christian festivals.
- Heightening awareness of the ultimate questions / realities of life and to provide the opportunity to reflect upon these. To support the search for meaning.
- Enabling children to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to the community, and to respect the integrity of all individuals as a child of God
- Enabling pupils to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer.
- Celebrating gifts, talents and achievements.
- Establishing, exploring, and reinforcing the common Christian values of the school community such as love, peace, kindness, compassion.
- Fostering a feeling of community and belonging in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings.
- Developing personal relationships and to encourage social development.
- Providing an opportunity to empathise with the needs of others.
- Providing an opportunity for children to become acquainted with people from the local and wider community, particularly the local church.
- Encouraging respect and care for God's creation by a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues.
- Fostering feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy.
- Giving memorable and enjoyable experiences.
- Providing an opportunity to bring before God in prayer personal needs and those of others.
- Sharing with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level, and thereby giving them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Christian framework.

3. Legal Framework

There must be a daily act of Collective Worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude (Section 70 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

It is recognised that parents have a legal right to withdraw their children from acts of worship in the school. Parents are asked to discuss this matter with the Headteacher in the first instance.

4. Planning

The Headteacher is responsible for planning Acts of Worship and liaising with visitors.

Each Act of Worship at the school should last for 15-20 minutes.

Acts of worship in school will familiarise pupils with liturgy: a table covered with an altar cloth, the lighting of candles, the use of a cross and an open Bible, the learning of the Lord's Prayer and the enjoyment of hymns and songs.

When planning Collective Worship, the following may be used:

- The Bible (as a source book or as inspiration for themes and stories)
- The cycle of the Church Year (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Saints' Days)
- Learning and saying traditional prayers, in particular the Lord's Prayer and the Grace
- Singing a wide variety of hymns, from traditional to contemporary
- Christian symbols of worship with reflection on their meaning (e.g. cross, crucifix, bread and wine)
- Prayer, silence and reflection
- Psalms with simple responses

Where practical, the week's acts of Collective Worship should be as follows. What happens on each day is at the Headteacher's discretion dependent on availability of clergy and the school hall.

- Key Stages led by relevant staff
- Whole School Singing led by the Headteacher and Music co-ordinator
- Classes led by Class Teachers
- Whole School led by Clergy from Great St Mary's
- Whole School Celebration led by the Headteacher

The school is supported by Great St Mary's Church. Christian festivals and significant times in the school year may be celebrated at the church. These include Christmas, Easter, Harvest Festival and Leavers' Day. Members of the clergy will regularly visit the school and lead Collective Worship.

5. Recording

A record is kept by the Headteacher of each term's planned Collective Worship themes.