

South Kilworth C of E Primary School

'Tall oaks from little acorns grow'

Collective Worship Policy

Agreed by the governing body

To be reviewed autumn 2013

South Kilworth C of E Primary School Collective Worship Policy.

Introduction

At South Kilworth School Collective Worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life.

This policy supports and reinforces the aims of our school, valuing all children equally. Our aims are to

- Help all pupils develop within a happy, caring, Christian community.
- Encourage lively, enquiring minds and foster a love of learning.
- Develop pupils' ability to question and to argue rationally and to think for themselves.
- Enable pupils to work independently and cooperatively and to appreciate the will to succeed.
- Ensure a fulfilment of potential in all spheres of education - academic, creative and cultural.
- Teach moral values and the basic tenets of the Christian faith while having an understanding of other cultures and religious beliefs.
- Help pupils acquire the knowledge and skills relevant to their lives in a fast changing world.
- Appreciate all human achievements and to develop a sense of self respect and a consideration of others irrespective of ability, "social standing", age, sex, race or religion.

Collective Worship is a time when we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school. The contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are highly valued.

Definitions

Worship: can be defined as paying homage to that which is of worth. Religious worship is the acknowledgement of 'worth' which is attributable to a supreme being. Worth can also be registered in other people and in values and attitudes.

School Assembly: is a gathering of the school community; it is often used to celebrate and focus on the life and values of the community itself.

Collective Worship: is a gathering of a 'collection' of people of diverse, religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment.

(We note that Assembly and Collective Worship are not the same thing. They are, in essence, different from each other, but in practice they often overlap.)

Rationale-Legal

We acknowledge the legal requirements stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group. Parents have the right to withdraw their child/ren from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Head teacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Rationale- Religious/Educational

Collective Worship:

- Gives children the opportunity to enter into experiences which lie at the heart of religion; these experiences help them to learn about religious worship and provide a framework for later understanding.
- Fosters a reverential attitude to God, the Divine, the transcendent.
- Encourages pupils to consider fundamental questions about the purpose of being and about moral and ethical stances.
- Provides an opportunity, for those who can use it, to participate in religious worship.
- Allows us to learn and celebrate values we hold to be important.
- Brings children together, enabling them to experience the security of belonging to a community with an identity of its own.
- Is the source of much interesting and thought provoking knowledge.
- Offers pleasurable expression through literature, art, music and drama.
- Makes an important, though not exclusive, contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Aims and principles

- 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 ethos and values of the school.
- Collective worship should be educational and should contribute to the Religious Education of all pupils.
- 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.
- 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.

Objectives

- Affirm the Christian faith and the Christian status of Jesus as Son of God;
- 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, wonder, reverence and inner stillness.
- Enable pupils to use silence for reflection and contemplation.
- Raise pupil's curiosity about the ultimate mysteries of life.
- Enable pupils to learn about and consider in depth Christian teaching, Christian festivals and biblical material.
- Help pupils appreciate that we are 'stewards' of God's world.

- 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.
- Celebrate religious festivals and special occasions with specified worship.

Organisation.

Monday	Whole school worship led by the Head teacher.
Tuesday	Whole school worship led by senior teacher.
Wednesday	Whole school worship led by other class teachers on a rota basis.
Thursday	Whole school hymn practice, with prayer or reflection time led by the Head teacher and music co-ordinator.
Friday	Class worship in classrooms.
Daily	Before the children eat, the saying of grace is led by an adult or child. Teachers make an individual decision about whether to say a prayer with their class at the end of the day.

In addition to this, visiting groups and individuals are welcomed into the school regularly to lead worship.

Collective worship should last approximately 15 minutes.

Planning, content and detail.

The themes for collective worship reflect the Church calendar, our school ethos and current events. The worship begins with the children entering the hall accompanied by a piece of music for the week. The title of this piece of music is displayed for the children to see throughout the week and could come from a variety of cultures. The candle on the altar table is lit, the children are involved in the worship throughout. The worship includes the singing of a hymn and ends with a prayer. The candles are then blown out before any messages are given to make a clear distinction between worship and assembly. The children then lead out as the music is played.

Thursday's hymn practice includes the lighting of candles to focus the children's attention and aims to develop the children's understanding of new hymns as well as learning them. The session ends with a time for reflection or a prayer before the candle is blown out and messages are given. The children leave in the same way as before.

Records

Themes for collective worship are noted on the assembly rota, a copy of which is displayed in the staffroom. Stories, songs, prayers/thoughts and music are entered on the weekly collective worship planning sheets which are then kept in the collective worship file.

Elements of Worship

Atmosphere- is all-important in creating the right foundation for Collective Worship. Quiet, orderly behaviour and respectful attitudes on entering, leaving and throughout the assembly are expected. Staff enhance the atmosphere by their presence and participation. A covered table with a cross and a candle help to set the scene.

Music- is played at the beginning and end of the assembly. One piece is selected each week appropriate to the theme. Pupils' attention is drawn to it each day and a simple explanation/description may be given in the Hymn Practice.

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 anecdotes 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.

Songs- are chosen from a wide variety of traditional and modern hymns and choruses. One or two are used at each assembly, relative to the theme. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words.

Prayer and Reflection- Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including hymn practice. A range of prayers is used including the Lord's Prayer and prayers written by the children and others. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. At the beginning of whole school worship a time of reflection is encouraged by the lighting of a candle. A cross is also displayed on the altar table with appropriate coloured ribbons representing different times in the church calendar.

Scripture- sentences may be quoted from the Bible and where appropriate from sacred books and writings of other world faiths. Longer passages may be used as readings.

Other Faiths

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, South Kilworth School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge- their role is to educate, not to evangelise. St Nicholas' Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the whole school attending and contributing towards services through the year.

Plans for Review

The Governing Body will review this policy, formally 3 years from the date of its adoption. Informal Review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required.