



Collective Worship Policy

'Equal opportunities lie at the heart of all that we do at Woolgrove. We are committed to ensuring that every member of the school community, whatever their position, race, gender, disability or religion is given the same chance as any other to access the services and support of the school'.

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Legislation and Standards

The 1988 Education Act requires that every school should provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The majority of which each term should be 'wholly, or mainly, of a broadly Christian character'. Collective worship should 'reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular denomination.'

The Education (Special Schools) Regulations 1994 state: 'Arrangements shall be made to secure that, so far as practicable, every pupil attending the school will attend daily collective worship and receive religious education, or will be withdrawn from attendance at such worship or from receiving such education, in accordance with the wishes of his parent.'

It is expected that special schools will be providing daily opportunities for collective worship. Circumstances may well prevent a school meeting on five days and in any case it would be legitimate for such a school to decide that small gatherings of pupils would provide a better educational opportunity for collective worship'.

The Head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the Governing Body. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Head teacher. Teachers or staff may also withdraw from worship.

Intent

At Woolgrove School, pupils will be given the opportunity to join in an act of collective worship every week and there will be daily additional opportunities for reflection, celebration, thanksgiving within class groups at other times during the week.

The Aims of Collective Worship are to:

- Provide a time each day when pupils can become aware of themselves, of each other and of the school as a community.
- To explain the main events in the Christian calendar in terms the children may be able to understand or aspects of other faiths being studied at school.
- To deepen pupils' sense of wonder when they think about God's universe and their own place within it.
- To increase their awareness of the needs of others and to understand how their own actions affect other people and, consequently, themselves.
- To learn to accept and value that each person is different and has his or her own contribution to make to the community.
- Encourage pupils to show a concern for each other, an interest in the wider world, to think about and experience a range of feelings and to explore new ideas.

Implementation

At Woolgrove School two or more classes of pupils gather together to celebrate an assembly including an act of collective worship, once a week. The class teachers timetable and run the small group assemblies. For larger assemblies, the department heads or Head teacher will lead. An individual class may present to the larger group as introduced by the Head. The assemblies may also be led by invited outside religious leaders such as the local curate.

The pupils should enter and leave the assembly area as calmly and quietly as possible. Planned appropriate music can be playing. The format of the assembly usually includes a song with a spiritual focus. A selection of appropriate songs and hymns are saved on the school server. The assembly also includes a story or discussion which illustrates and celebrates aspects of the spiritual dimension of life, reflecting the varied beliefs and experiences of the pupils and teachers. There is some personal space to be quiet, to think and to reflect on something special taking into account the development of our pupils' social, moral, emotional, spiritual and cultural well-being. The pupils are supported to engage in this reflection within their level of understanding. Visual aids, signing and teaching assistant support may be used for some pupils and all staff model appropriate sitting and listening behaviour. Staff model responses and encourage the pupils to do the same. The pupils are actively encouraged to contribute as much as possible in the activities, singing and responses.

The delivery of the assembly draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection for pupils and staff whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith, or none. In this way, collective worship is inclusive, not exclusive. The content can include pupils' contributions, live and recorded music, pictures, plants and artefacts, hymns, carols and songs, dance and drama, poems, stories and readings, writing with symbols and signing and contributions from visitors.

A part of the assembly can also be dedicated to celebrating the achievements of individual pupils or staff or groups. It can be used for an opportunity to introduce and welcome new staff or pupils and to thank and say good bye to others. Parents and carers may be invited to the assembly.

By arrangement pupils or staff may withdraw from the part of the assembly that is collective worship but they participate in the rest of the assembly.

Other additional opportunities during the school week for reflection, celebration, thanksgiving and collective worship include prayer before eating school dinners or packed lunches, the use of the WOW board and other reward systems, yoga, songs at the end of the day celebrating everyone's presence and the exploration and appreciation of our environment area. There are cross curricular links in collective worship to Personal Social and Emotional Development, Knowledge and Understanding of the World and Expressive Art and Design as well as links to other school policies including the Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy.

The Head teacher is responsible for ensuring that there is a system for recording the acts of Collective Worship.

Impact

Collective worship gives the school community an opportunity to come together to reflect on the values underpinning a Christian society and instilling a respect for those who follow other major religions and faiths as appropriate.

Collective worship supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child, is reflected in our worship. We pay attention to the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Our pupils are taught to value this special time in the school day, for the space it gives pupils to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

The pupils become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community and learn to care for and respect each other and for all living things. The pupils grow in understanding of the feelings of other people in everyday situations and beliefs and explore the language which people use to express their feelings. Pupils have the opportunity to deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them and grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school. Collective Worship involves staff and pupils coming together to reflect on God and His creation and to understand and the value of the life of Jesus.

We evaluate our acts of worship through monitoring the pupils increasing involvement, enjoyment, wellbeing, attention, and reaction through observations using the Wellbeing Scale. We record the growth of respect and tolerance within the school community as reflected in 'magic moment' on CPOMS and WOW boards and other reward systems. We assess the development of the pupil's progress in the skill of discussion in small and larger groups using our assessment system Classroom Monitor. We record the pupils' responses and requests during meetings at the School Council.