

St. John the Baptist RC Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Approved	Spring 23
Renew	Spring 24

Collective Worship: policy and practice

Importance statement:

The daily act of collective worship at St. John the Baptist RC Primary School plays a central role in our life and work. It provides us with valuable opportunities to reaffirm our values and ethos. It offers important opportunities to strengthen our sense of community, belonging and inclusiveness and to reinforce the respect and care we have for each other. Through collective worship we make a significant contribution to the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of those present. Special festival worships, such as Harvest, Christmas and St John the Baptist are also held where members of the wider community are encouraged to attend. We want all our children/young people to 'enjoy and achieve' and collective worship provides a valuable vehicle for this.

We aim to:-

- Encourage children to recognise and express the feelings and senses from which worship naturally arises. In particular, the senses of beauty, wonder, pity, smallness, grandness, sadness, loss, peace, thoughtfulness, stillness and pride.
- Place worship in the centre of the children's lives and in its rightful place in the curriculum. As such it will be planned like any other subject. Children can be involved in planning and leading worship.
- Provide a wide variety of approaches towards worship, using any of the following to illustrate a point; music, The Bible, other literature and visual materials. This will aim to take into account the fact that we are all different and all have different preferences and needs.
- Involve all staff, if possible, as we believe that children need to be given as broad an experience of different types of worship as possible.
- Make staff, children and parents feel free to attend
- Provide an agreed, flexible programme of topics for collective worship on a termly basis
- Encourage children to take part in every possible way
- Include speakers from the wider community
- Be sensitive towards other faiths and encourage a free dialogue between the children emphasising that there is no element of one being better than another

These aims mean that our collective worship programme is such that we can include all our school community.

Practice

- Children are seated comfortably on the floor and listen quietly to music. A focus for worship (candle, picture, OHP) is usually provided.
- The children are asked to sit comfortably, eyes closed with their hands in their lap ready for prayer.
- Children are encouraged to take part in the prayers and are invited to respond to questions posed during the "story" part of worship.
- The majority of Acts of Worship are Christian based
- Within the worship a time of quiet and prayer is usually experienced
- The development of the spiritual nature of the child is seen as having great value and collective worship is used to promote this
- Parents are made aware that it is their right to withdraw their child from these acts of worship

The head teacher has the responsibility of ensure that the children are having a meaningful experience during collective worship and regularly reviews the process in conjunction with the Governors (ie regular review of policy)

Staff are encouraged to regularly attend Acts of Worship arranged for the children.

Collective worship and the law:

We comply with legal requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship for all pupils/students on the school roll, unless they have been withdrawn by their parent(s) 'on grounds of conscience'. The majority of our acts of collective worship are 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' whilst recognising the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural insights provided by other principal religions and life-stances represented in Devon and in Great Britain.

Collective worship organisation:

- Use of the Bible and other sacred texts as a source for stories and teachings, emphasising common themes and ensuring the inclusiveness of the school community is reinforced. Moral tales/teachings and contemporary situations may also be drawn on where appropriate;
- Marking of appropriate festivals and other significant days;
- Opportunity for Christian children to pray 'the Lord's prayer' as an important traditional Christian prayer periodically and that others listen to it respectfully together with our school prayer.

Whole school/key stage acts of collective worship:

- We aim to create an atmosphere of stillness and calm. To aid this, appropriate music is played for entry and exit from the hall.

- The usual format consists of an input from the leader, an appropriate hymn or song, followed by a time of prayer and/or quiet reflection. Leaders are encouraged to actively engage pupils/students through for example questioning and drama;
- The act of collective worship is kept separate from any notices or other items which may be included in this assembly time, with a different person leading each section;
- Visitors may be invited from time to time to lead one of our whole school acts of collective worship;
- The assembly, including the act of collective worship, usually takes 15 minutes altogether.
- Pupils regularly lead whole school worship. These can be the Pupil Chaplains or other pupils. Pupils are also involved in Class worship, leading and taking part in it.
- Ten: Ten Resources can be used to plan worship on a Tuesday or a Wednesday as this online resource follows the same theme as the Sunday Gospel and Monday Liturgy.
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Class-based acts of collective worship:

- We aim to give our children/young people some 'space' to be quiet and to think reflectively during collective worship in their classroom;
- These acts of collective worship may be led by the class teacher or by one or more of the pupils/students/School Chaplains;
- They usually take 10-15 minutes.

Use of Visitors

The co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with any visitors who come into school to lead collective worship. Practical arrangements such as timing, age range of audience and appropriate content are agreed through discussion. By drawing on people from the local community to lead acts of collective worship we enhance community cohesion.

Health, Safety and Well-being

In collective worship we follow the school's health, safety and well-being policy. For example, appropriate care must be taken when using lighted candles and electrical equipment. In line with our 'net-safety' policy any internet resources used must be checked by the leader prior to their use in act of collective worship. In the event of fire all pupils must be familiar with exit routes from the halls and other areas of the school where collective worship takes place. Visitors are not left unaccompanied with children/young people.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Collective worship will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, ethnicity, religion and gender. During collective worship, religions will be presented fairly and accurately and diversity and equality will be affirmed.

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Resources

A range of resources, including age-appropriate DVD material and PowerPoints, is available to support teachers and pupils with collective worship and is situated in each class and the RE cupboard. The School Chaplains have their own resource box to use for worship

Appendix 1

Organisation of Collective Worship

Monday	Liturgy based upon Sunday Gospel- Teacher led. This can be supported by the School Chaplains.
Tuesday	Development of the theme/link to Come and See /PSHCE theme- Class worship. This is often led by Chaplains or children in the class
Wednesday	Development of the theme/link to God Matters /PSHE theme(whole school) This is often led by Chaplains or children in the class
Thursday	Worship by song
Friday	Celebration act of worship

