

OAKTHORPE PRIMARY SCHOOL

**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

Reviewed April 2015 (M.Stevens)

**DEFINITION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Collective worship should be regarded as a special experience, separate from the children's everyday experiences. It can therefore be interpreted very openly and widely as an act which brings a school group to a point where they are able to make an individual or shared reflective response mainly within the broad traditions of Christian belief. Collective worship is not only educational but also spiritual: it widens children's knowledge of the world and gives time for contemplating human values.

Worship is understood as an act of collective (rather than corporate) worship in a county school. As a multi-faith and multi-ethnic county school, Oakthorpe Primary School defines collective worship as the joining together of the school population, regardless of their individual beliefs or non-beliefs, to celebrate events and achievements felt to be 'of worth'. Collective worship is seen as an essential part of the school's broad and balanced curriculum, our underlying principle being 'the child first and foremost'.

It is a legal requirement under the 1988 Education Reform Act that all schools perform a daily act of collective worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature without being denominational. All children should be involved in the daily act of worship unless withdrawn by the parent or guardian. Teachers also have the right of withdrawal from collective worship.

**AIMS**

Through our collective worship we aim:

- To celebrate those things that we feel are of worth to individual pupils, the school and the community as a whole.
- To introduce children to a variety of faiths, showing some children what it is to worship while reaffirming the beliefs of others.
- To promote the spiritual and moral development of pupils as required by the ERA 1988.

**CONTENT AND DELIVERY**

Through our collective worship we hope to create an atmosphere that promotes thought and reflection and are inclusive of individual's beliefs and culture. This nurtures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Collective worship at our school aims to be interesting, informative and educational. It should be a time when ideas and beliefs can be explored, discussed and developed and, wherever possible, children are involved in presenting, performing in or responding to collective worship.

Full use is made of resources such as books, DVDs, slides, music and pictures. A variety of media are used to stimulate children, for example drama, song, poetry, story and dance. All of these enable pupils to become aware of a variety of beliefs and traditions. This leads to a greater understanding of the spiritual dimension to their lives and others.

We aim to make the environment in which our assemblies take place comfortable and stimulating, with an atmosphere of mutual respect.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

In terms of educational outcomes, we expect children to develop a wide range of important and valuable skills and attitudes such as understanding, tolerance, empathy, self-esteem and responsibility.

In the discussion paper on spiritual development issued by the National Curriculum Council in 1991 the following indicators were provided as to what outcomes actually constitute pupils' spiritual development. These were:

- Recognising the existence of others as independent to oneself.
- Becoming aware of and reflecting upon experience.
- Questioning and exploring the meaning of experience
- Understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations
- Developing personal views and insights
- Applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life

We have found the above indicators to be useful when monitoring and evaluating assemblies and acts of worship at our school.

## SUCCESS CRITERIA

In our monitoring and evaluation of collective worship we look for the following criteria as proof of a successful and worthwhile act of worship:

- A range of strategies are regularly used to 'engage' children's interest.
- A peaceful, reflective atmosphere generally prevails.
- Children are comfortable with silence.
- Children participate confidently and enthusiastically.
- Children can understand what collective worship is about.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children regardless of race, religion or gender are entitled to attend and participate in the acts of collective worship.

Our assemblies aim to take into consideration the ages and abilities as well as the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children in our school.

We aim to ensure that an equal balance is achieved regarding the race, religion and gender of the personalities chosen for the 'commend-a-person' assemblies.

## ORGANISATION

Collective worship is planned termly and includes a variety of themes based on the religious calendar. They may also be linked with religious festivals and saints' days as well as other significant days or events (such as 'Fair Trade Day') wherever possible.

The outline for the week's assemblies in KS2 is as follows:

<b>Monday</b>	An assembly to reflect on the previous week's achievements, usually led by the head teacher or deputy head teacher.
<b>Tuesday</b>	A music/singing assembly led by the music coordinator

<b>Wednesday</b>	A class assembly, led by a Class Teacher based on the religious or global calendar (Humanities link).
<b>Thursday</b>	An assembly based on a theme or value (Friendship, Honesty etc) led by a member of the SMT.
<b>Friday</b>	The 'Commendable' assembly, where the achievements of the children in each year group are commended.

The outline for the week's Assemblies in KS1 is as follows:

<b>Monday</b>	A music/singing assembly led by the music coordinator.
<b>Tuesday</b>	A class assembly, led by a Class Teacher based on the religious or global calendar (Humanities link).
<b>Wednesday</b>	An assembly based on a theme or value (Friendship, Honesty etc) led by a member of the SMT.
<b>Thursday</b>	An assembly to reflect on the previous week's achievements, usually led by the Head teacher or a member of the Senior Management Team.
<b>Friday</b>	The 'Commendable' assembly, where the achievements of the children in each year group are commended.

Reception children take part in smaller assemblies within their year group until the Summer Term when they attend some of the KS1 assemblies.

Parents and governors are invited to assemblies commemorating special festivals or school occasions.

## RECORD KEEPING

Teachers are given the opportunity to evaluate their assemblies and a record of these are kept centrally by the RE coordinator.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that daily acts of collective worship take place.

The R.E. coordinator is responsible for:

- the organisation of the termly rota for teachers taking assemblies,
- ensuring that collective worship explores the values and beliefs shared by Christians and other world religions,
- monitoring quality of delivery,
- collecting and filing assembly record sheets,
- maintaining the assembly resource base
- assisting teachers in planning their assemblies.

The teacher is responsible for:

- planning and delivering their assembly;
- meeting the requirements of the law;
- filling in the weekly record sheet;
- attending assemblies when requested.

It is recognised that any teacher has the right to withdraw from assemblies.

## RESOURCES

The school has a varied selection of resources, such as DVDs, CDs and books, which are kept in the R.E. resource room. It is the responsibility of the R.E. coordinator to ensure that the resources are organised and updated and that the teachers are made aware of the resources available.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring is a regular and ongoing process, with those responsible being the head teacher, R.E. coordinator and members of the Senior Management Team, as well as the school governors. Any of the above individuals may attend assemblies in rotation and evaluate and discuss any issues that arise with the R.E. coordinator and/or the person leading the collective worship.

Evaluation strategies currently used by the above include:

- Observation of the children's attentiveness and level of interest shown during the sessions
- Classroom feedback from pupils, written and/or verbal
- Observation of the children's general behaviour in and around school and to one another

DATE POLICY AGREED: April 2015

REVIEW DATE: April 2016