



THE BLUE COAT CHURCH OF ENGLAND (AIDED) INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS' FEDERATION

BELIEVING, CELEBRATING, SUCCEEDING

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHER: MR A. ORLIK



Blue Coat C of E (A) Infant and Junior Schools' Federation

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT AND INTRODUCTION

This Policy is carried out within the context and spirit of the school's Mission Statement. It supports and reinforces the aims of Blue Coat C of E (Aided) Infant and Junior Schools' Federation valuing all children equally.

The ethos of the school is distinctively Christian, encompassing all that we stand for, is reflected in and expressed through Collective Worship; it derives from the Christian tradition and seeks to activate our beliefs and values which are set out, clearly, in the School Prospectus.

Collective Worship, within a Christian context, plays an important part in the life of our school. It is an oasis in the school day when children meet together with members of staff in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and where all present are given the opportunity to reflect and participate. It is regarded as 'quality' time and represents something special or separate from ordinary school routine.

DEFINITIONS

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.

Worship: can be defined as paying homage to (revering) that which is of worth ("Worth-ship.") 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.

Corporate Worship: is a gathering of a body ('corpus') of believers and presupposes a particular religious commitment.

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

Our Collective Worship is in accordance with the Trust Deed. This requires worship to be consistent with the principles and practices of the Anglican Church and will, therefore, be wholly Christian in character.

RATIONALE

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

The following principles guide our approach to Collective Worship at Blue Coat Infant and Junior Schools' Federation.

1. Collective Worship should have a sense of occasion.
2. Collective Worship should provide experiences within which pupils' spiritual development may flourish.
3. Collective Worship should be a means of expressing the ethos and values of the school.
4. Collective Worship should be educational and should contribute to the Religious Education of all pupils.
5. Collective Worship should be shaped to the needs of the school, (time, place, content, style etc.)
6. We should provide a varied pattern of worship to broaden pupils' experience of its different forms.
7. Collective Worship should recognise that the school includes children from different religious and non-religious backgrounds.
8. 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 worshipping.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Collective Worship are to:-

1. affirm the Christian faith and the Christian status of Jesus as Son of God in accordance with the foundation of Blue Coat Infant and Junior Schools' Federation.
2. introduce pupils to the practice of religious worship through music, art, story, poetry, movement and prayer so that they are able to respond in their own way, if they wish to.
3. create a warm, caring and respectful atmosphere in assemblies, conducive to worship; including the manner of entry and exit.
4. enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
5. encourage, in children, a thoughtful and reflective attitude.
6. help pupils experience a sense of awe, wonder, reverence and inner stillness.
7. enable pupils to use silence for reflection and contemplation.

8. raise pupil's curiosity about the ultimate mysteries of life.
9. enable pupils to learn about and consider in depth Christian teaching, Christian festivals and Biblical material.
10. help pupils appreciate that Christians and other people may see themselves as 'stewards' of God's world.
11. enable pupils to reflect upon their own beliefs in relation to those of others.
12. help children distinguish between right and wrong.
13. affirm pupils' personal worth and responsibility.
14. celebrate individual and collective achievements.
15. develop a sense of community within the school.
16. celebrate religious festivals and special occasions with specified worship.

MANAGEMENT OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The Governing Body is responsible for:

1. Ensuring that the Foundation of the school is honoured and that the worship policy is firmly based upon the intentions set down in the Trust Deed.
2. Ensuring that the Collective Worship Policy is put into practice and monitored by the appropriate Governor.
3. Engaging an appropriate inspector to carry out the SIAMS Inspection of a church school alongside the OFSTED Inspection.

The School Development Plan cycle regularly reviews Collective Worship and gives an indication of the intentions and arrangements for review concerning the following:

- Themes and approaches.
- Development of resources.
- Staff training and support.
- Pupil participation and response.

The Collective Worship Co-ordinators have responsibility for managing the worship on a day to day basis, ensuring that all legal requirements are complied with. The co-ordinators also keep in touch with national developments in school worship and acts in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues.

Monitoring and evaluating Collective Worship is an on-going process carried out on a weekly and termly basis.

ORGANISATION

Junior School

- Acts of Collective Worship, take place in the school hall from 8.55am –9.15am on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Acts of Collective Worship take place in classrooms from 8.45am to 8.55am.
- The themes are planned by the Executive Head and Worship subject leaders and reflect the readings of the Church of England's lectionary during the year.
- The structure of assemblies includes reflective music, the lighting of candles for birthday and prayer requests, a story or talk based on a biblical text or theme, a worship song, a closing prayer and extinguishing of the candles.
- The Lord's Prayer is used regularly
- Worship on Wednesdays is led by a member of the clergy from one of the local churches
- Classroom Worship may be combined with Personal and Social Education.

Monday: Whole School worship led by a member of the Executive Leadership Team. Story/talk based on weekly theme.

Tuesday Class (classroom): Teacher talk/discussion on weekly theme

Wednesday: Whole School worship led by visiting clergy.

Thursday: Class based act of worship.

Friday: Whole School Celebration assembly led by Executive Head

- Parents are encouraged to attend the celebration assembly, particularly if their child is taking part. Parents are invited to attend by either text or written invitation.
- Staff attend assembly worship.
- The school worships in church on the following occasions: Christmas, Easter, End of Summer Term and Blue Coat Sunday.
- A communion service is held for Year 6 in the Junior School in the Summer Term – parents/carers are invited to attend.

ORGANISATION

Infant School

- Daily acts of Collective Worship, except on Wednesdays, take place in the school hall from 9.05am – 9.20am.
- The themes are planned by the Head of School over a term and reflect the core values.
- The structure of assemblies includes call to worship, reflective music, the lighting of candles for birthday and prayer requests, a story or talk based on a biblical text or theme, a worship song, a closing prayer and extinguishing of the candles.
- The Wednesday act of worship takes place in the classroom or year group area.
- Singing worship takes place on a Friday.
- Classroom Worship may be combined with Personal and Social Education.

Monday: Whole School worship led by a member of the Executive Leadership Team. Story/talk based on The Core Christian Values.

Tuesday: Clergy led

Wednesday Class (classroom/Year group area): Staff led on Core Values or linked to current topic

Thursday: Whole School worship led by Executive Head Celebrating achievement.

Friday: Hymn practice

- Parents are encouraged to attend acts of worship, particularly if their child is taking part. Parents receive a text message to invite them to attend.
- Staff attend worship.
- The school worships in church on the following occasions: Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Blue Coat Sunday.

ELEMENTS OF WORSHIP

“There are times when worship will be quiet, contemplative and serene and others when laughter, music and dance will be the appropriate form of expression.”

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

Music is played at the beginning and end of worship.

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 anecdote from pupils, teachers and visitors is effective in expressing that which is important in our own

lives. Particular emphasis is given to 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, some are learned by heart and actions are incorporated, whilst others are displayed on the overhead projector. Hymns and songs create the opportunity for children to express thoughts and feelings that are difficult to put into words; and they provide a real source of pleasure.

Prayer and reflection are the most personal part of an act of worship. Collective Worship in school provides opportunities for children to be taken to the threshold of prayer, and to cross it if they wish, in a way that respects the integrity of all present. Participation in prayer can never be imposed but we stress the need for stillness, reflection and respect for others. Silence, written prayers, impromptu prayers, The Lord's Prayer, children's prayers and the school prayer may be used. Candles are lit and provide a focus for pupils' thoughts. Reflection and thinking time are given some direction by the leader in order to concentrate pupils' response.

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.

Presentation sets the tone within the act of worship. In keeping with the reverent atmosphere, use is also made of visual aids, artefacts, drama, demonstration and video.

CONTENT

Planning for Collective Worship is the responsibility of the Head of School. Plans and schedules are ratified by the Governing Body. Suggestions and requests from staff are welcomed, whilst input and guidance from the incumbent on the selection of themes is valued. The Music Coordinator collaborates in the selection of songs/hymns,

Themes. They may:-

1. have a specific religious base such as 'the early Christian Church' or 'miracles of Jesus.'
2. reflect a theme common to all religions such as 'creation.'
3. be concerned with common values held by religious and non-religious people alike such as 'caring and sharing.'

Themes are closely related to the school community and are often illustrated by stories of human endeavour. The final planned programme is based on a 3-year cycle.

Links with R.E. and the Curriculum are incorporated wherever possible. Common themes link R.E. and Collective Worship. The apt choice of story can link worship with current topic work e.g. 'Caring' = 'Florence Nightingale' = 'Victorians'. Assemblies can be followed up in the classroom by further discussion and emphasis throughout the day. There is often an overlap between Collective Worship and Personal and Social Education.

N.B. No worship programme can ever be entirely pre-planned. There will always be the spontaneous moment or occasion when it is important, spiritually, to focus on the immediate, so that pupils become aware of how the spiritual dimension transcends all our experience.

RESOURCES

These include:

- Staff, pupils, visiting speakers.
- Candle and stand.

- Selection of religious artefacts.
- Selection of assembly song books Taped music - classical, folk, ethnic
- Overhead projector Piano/Instruments/CD/Tape player

RECORDS AND ASSESSMENT

- Themes for Collective Worship are noted on the assembly rota, a copy of which is displayed in the staffroom and year group areas
- Stories, songs, prayers/thoughts and music are entered on the daily Collective Worship planning sheets which are kept in the Worship Co-ordinator's assembly file.
- Assessment of Collective Worship is carried out by the Head of School and RE Coordinator. The monitoring focuses on:
 - 1) Checking that practice matches aims and objectives.
 - 2) Observation of childrens' attentiveness and level of interest.
 - 3) Classroom feedback from pupils.
 - 4) Comments from parents, visitors and governors.
 - 5) the extent of the influence of themes upon pupils' attitude and behaviour throughout the school day.
 - 6) Self-evaluation/comment by the teacher.
 - 7) Staff meetings are used for discussion and the update of information as and when necessary.
 - 8) Lichfield Diocese monitors worship regularly.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All pupils have equal opportunity to take part in Collective Worship and to benefit from the experience. The school prospectus and website informs parents of their right to withdraw pupils from Collective Worship. Such pupils are fully supervised in another part of the school.

MULTICULTURALISM

A variety of multicultural material is available throughout the school. Stories are shared and festivals celebrated in accordance with the major faiths represented within the school. Tolerance and understanding of other religions is upheld.

ROLE OF Collective Worship CO-ORDINATOR

- 1) To write the school's policy for Collective Worship in consultation with the foundation governors.
- 2) To ensure that all staff are aware of and use the policy document.
- 3) To review the policy on a regular basis.
- 4) To plan an overall balanced programme of worship for the year.
- 5) To draw up assembly rotas.
- 6) To involve colleagues, pupils and visitors in worship.
- 7) To advise on planning, ideas and resources.
- 8) To be responsible for ordering
- 9) To oversee the budget for Collective Worship.
- 10) To ensure that Collective Worship maintains a high profile in the School Development Plan.
- 11) To monitor and evaluate, with others, Collective Worship in all its forms.
- 12) To maintain a Collective Worship display board
- 13) To arrange INSET for staff.
- 14) To keep up to date with recent publications, attend Diocesan courses and disseminate information and feedback to staff.
- 15) To liaise with the incumbent, governing body and Diocesan officers on matters relating to Collective Worship.

REVIEW

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