

Cavendish Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

- Summer 2009
- To be revised 2013

Statutory Duty of School

All maintained schools provide daily collective worship for registered pupils (apart from those who have been **withdrawn by their parents**). This is usually provided within a daily assembly.

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. Daily collective worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The precise nature will depend on the family background, ages and abilities of the pupils. However, if it is inappropriate for some or all of the pupils to take part in Christian collective worship, the head teacher may apply to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for a determination to have this requirement lifted.

Introduction

At Cavendish Primary School collective worship is set within the context of 'Assemblies' – which may include other features besides those required of collective worship.

Worship has a wide range of meanings and forms of expression. For some people this might be devotion to a divine being, power or personal God; for others it might mean reflection on and understanding of those elements of life which are of value and worth. Whilst recognising our statutory duty, Cavendish is a multi-faith school and our assemblies reflect this. Our prayers and forms of worship are inclusive and broadly non-denominational.

Aims and Purpose

During collective worship we aim to:

- Fulfill the statutory requirements of a daily act of collective worship for all pupils;
- Reflect on and understand elements of life which are of value and worth;
- Provide a variety of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Provide opportunities for expressing shared experiences and interests and for celebrating special occasions together;
- Provide opportunities in which pupils interact with other year groups, staff and, on occasions, the wider community;
- Provide an all-inclusive opportunity to build and reinforce community values.

The definition of school worship adopted by the school

Worship is regarded as a collective act or opportunity to think about and relate to God, and to consider and reflect upon how belief and faith in God may affect our lives. Worship regularly incorporates prayer and reflection. Through collective worship we aim to:

- Contribute to the personal development of the individual;
- Enhance pupils' spiritual and moral development;
- Encourage our pupils to explore and question their own beliefs and to consider the beliefs and feelings of others;
- Build a community identity through which individuals feel valued;
- Offer the opportunity for celebration and reflection;
- Offer consideration of issues which are important to the ethos of the school and the wider community.

The School Community

Our school community is made up of people from many different religions and cultures.

Assemblies are non-denominational and conducted in a manner which is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school community. We are proud of the diversity of our school community and as such hold assemblies that reflect and celebrate the traditions of the main religions, particularly those that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Organisation of Collective Worship

Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly every day. These assemblies normally involve all of the pupils in the school and may be whole school assemblies or separate key stage assemblies, with their times varying accordingly. Assemblies will usually last about 15 minutes.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate manner. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully.

Our assemblies also reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage children to participate by holding, each week, achievement assemblies and workshare assemblies, during which children can show their work and successes to others.

These assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school and to celebrate them together. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school - that all children and their achievements are valued.

Assemblies are normally conducted by the headteacher, deputy head or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by visitors to the school.

Assemblies are planned around weekly themes. Themes are very broad to allow for flexibility and variety of delivery and include the major religious and cultural festivals and the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) themes.

Children in the Foundation Stage do not attend assembly, other than 'special' whole school assemblies, such as Harvest Festival. Reception aged children are gradually introduced to assembly over the course of the year.

Right of Withdrawal from Collective Worship

Every effort is made to show sensitivity towards personal faiths and to include all pupils and staff in collective worship. For example when using a prayer from a particular faith, this is introduced with sensitivity and pupils are not required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe.

There may be parts of an assembly, for example when a Christian hymn is sung, in which a pupil does not wish to participate. It is perfectly acceptable to withdraw from a part of the assembly by not participating.

A parent may make a request for their child/children to be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship at school.

Staff should ensure that they have informed the Head of their decision to exercise their right of withdrawal from collective worship, but should note the requirement that they may be required to assist in the supervision of pupils in assembly, as necessary.

The Contribution of Collective Worship to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

One of the key aims of collective worship is to offer pupils opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Spiritual Development is promoted by:

- the celebration of special achievements
- guided reflection
- consideration of a variety of beliefs, values and feelings
- appreciation of aspects of life which have special meaning and which contribute to a sense of awe and wonder

Moral Development is promoted by:

- consideration of moral codes found in school, in religions and in society
- consideration of relationships
- encouraging empathy by the consideration of moral issues from different perspectives

Social Development is promoted by:

- coming together as a school / class group
- bringing visitors into school from the community
- sharing values and matters of concern

Cultural Development is promoted by:

- using music, art, drama, story and artefacts from a range of cultural backgrounds
- exploring and celebrating aspects of religion and culture

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

It is the role of the Governing Body to monitor and review the policy and practice of collective worship in the school. The school will review this policy every four years and report annually to the governing body on its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Anne-Marie Inwood

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