



Collective Worship Policy

June 2024

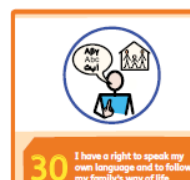
Article 6 - I should be supported to live and grow



Article 14 - I have the right to have my own thoughts and beliefs and to choose my religion, with my parents' guidance



Article 30 - I have a right to speak my own language and to follow my family's way of life



Key Contact Personnel in School

**Nominated Member of Leadership Staff Responsible for the policy:
Karen Robinson-Jones**

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Sarah Costain

Date written: June 2024

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: n/a

Date of next review: June 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and following any concerns and/or updates to national and local guidance or procedures

Five Acre Wood School Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

At Five Acre Wood we believe that collective worship plays a central role in our school's life. 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. We want all our children/young people to 'enjoy and achieve' and collective worship provides a valuable vehicle for this.

Collective worship takes place in a supportive, inclusive environment which recognises, and seeks to develop, the personal worth of each person. It does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment or affiliation, and the different experiences, beliefs and starting points of individuals are recognised and valued. Individual integrity is always cherished. We believe that our children should develop a love of learning and show care and respect for each other within the context of a happy, secure and challenging learning environment.

Rationale

Five Acre Wood will comply with the relevant legislation relating to collective worship in schools. The requirement applies to pupils at special schools **as far as is applicable** [Education Act 1982 s12(4)]. The policy will be promoted and implemented in school.

Aims

Collective worship should give pupils opportunities to:

- To develop cohesion amongst the school community, helping to promote and strengthen every member's belonging and unique contribution to the school
- To celebrate being part of a school community and the wider community
- To provide time and opportunity for thanksgiving and to enjoy the unity which derives from sharing friendship, acceptance, joys, hopes and fears.
- To help children to develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them.
- To develop an awareness of and concern for the needs of others as well as personal needs.
- To provide time to share with others the things we have been doing, our thoughts and ideas.
- To help our children develop shared values – honesty, respect, tolerance, self-discipline, forgiveness and fairness.
- To broaden pupils' awareness of themselves, others and the world in which they live
- To celebrate the achievements of pupils and others
- To experience religious worship
- To become reflective, deep thinking individuals in a busy and complex society
- To deepen understanding of their own culture and that of others, recognising that cultural diversity is enriching rather than threatening.

The legal requirements

At Five Acre Wood we are guided by the requirements of the Kent Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the Principal, in consultation with the Governing Body. The main provisions for collective worship are contained in the Education Reform Act 1988.

- All pupils must take part in an act of collective worship every day
- Parents/ carers have the right to withdraw their child from any or all acts of collective worship
- It is the duty of the Principal, the Governing Body to ensure collective worship takes place
- There may be a single act of collective worship through a whole School assembly or separate acts for pupils in different age groups. Collective worship can occur at any point during the school day
- In the light of the Christian traditions of Great Britain, section 7(1) of the Education Reform Act says that collective worship is to be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. However, it need not contain only Christian material
- Pupils who do not come from Christian families should be able to join in the daily act of collective worship even though this would, in the main, reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief
- Any departure from the broadly Christian requirement must be justified in terms of family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the pupils concerned
- Collective worship should be appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and attitudes. This is determined by the Principal after consultation with the Governing body
- Acts of collective worship should take place on the school premises
- It is suggested that the Principal ensures that the school's plans for collective worship, or some other record, are kept in case of queries

Implementation

The school provides a daily act of collective worship which is of a broadly Christian character and which draws inspiration from a range of faiths, beliefs and traditions. Collective worship incorporates school values and themes such as British values. This act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, phase or class.

As a part of every school day there will also be opportunities for reflection, celebration, thanksgiving or quiet within class groups. At a time of a teacher's choosing, time is set aside to 'review and reflect', where the pupils (with the support of staff) share their experiences of the day. This may include children expressing what they have enjoyed and staff celebrating children's achievement.

Collective worship is planned each term and consists of themes relevant to the season of the year, religious celebrations, personal/social/emotional themes, local, national and international events and festivals are celebrated and commemorated. Links are made to children's learning and their efforts and achievements are valued and celebrated. Collective worship themes are mapped out in a long term planning document.

Collective worship can take place in the hall in an atmosphere which promotes attitudes of respect, awe and wonder, enquiry and self-understanding. However, it is recognised that for some of our pupils this can be overwhelming and so may take place in classes. On the days that school

assemblies do not take place, each class should plan for a short act of collective worship and guided quiet reflection during which a prayer may be shared. This can be done at a time of their choice e.g. circle time.

A variety of resources and strategies are used to encourage and retain pupils' active involvement. Pupils participate, listen, watch, discuss, answer questions, sing and share in quiet, thoughtful periods of reflection or prayer. Stories are read, drama is performed, presentations are shared and music is used to engage and illicit a response from pupils. Visitors from religious groups, charities and other local organisations also make valuable contributions to collective worship.

Details of how the school plans collective worship:

Whole school acts of collective worship:

- We aim to create an atmosphere of stillness and calm.
- Whole school assemblies take place within Learning Approaches on a regular basis. This is different depending on the needs of the pupils.
- The usual format consists of an input from a member of school staff (with the assistance of pupils), an appropriate song, followed by a time of quiet reflection. Staff will encourage the active engagement of pupils/students.
- The act of collective worship is kept separate from any notices or other items which may be included in this assembly time.
- 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 fifteen minutes altogether.

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.

Meeting the needs of all learners

Five Acre Wood aims to provide pupils with stimulating and challenging activities which cater for the wide range of abilities throughout our school.

Collective Worship and Staff

Teachers and teaching assistants attend collective worship with their class. If an individual teacher feels their own beliefs might be compromised by our programme of collective worship they can discuss this with the Principal. However, due to the nature of the school and the many challenges presented by the students, it is hoped that all staff will feel able to remain physically present during acts of worship whilst not, necessarily, taking part.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

SMSC is intrinsically linked to collective worship. The school aims to develop a positive attitude towards individuality and a respect for different cultures. Learning resources are carefully selected to support and develop awareness of different cultures and faiths.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all children are treated equally, regardless of their background, gender, race or ability. We are an inclusive school and offer collective worship to all children respecting individual needs. We strive to meet the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs, disabilities, more able and talented and those learning English as an additional language. The school acts at all times in line with policies for SEND, Inclusion and our Equality Statement.

Use of Visitors

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team are 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. Parents, carers and Governors are invited to special collective worship services e.g. Harvest Festival, Christmas Carol Service and Easter Service.

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 'online safety' policy any internet resources used must be checked carefully by the worship leader, prior to their use in act of collective worship. In the event of fire all pupils and staff 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.

Right of withdrawal

Any parent / carer can request permission for their child to be excused from attending collective worship, or any of its aspects such as prayer. The school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain their reasoning for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Resources

A wide range of resources is available to support teachers and pupils with collective worship. These include examples of children's work, Bible stories, poems, stories from other faiths, news articles and other factual reports, music (played live and CD's), internet images, PowerPoint presentations, props, food, artefacts and visiting speakers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the school's quality assurance programmes it is the responsibility of the Learning Approach Leads and Senior Leadership Team to monitor individual acts of collective worship are taking place in accordance with legal requirements.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or at any other time if changes are required to comply with changes in legislation, regulation or National or KCC advice.