

The Federation of the Church Schools of Shalfleet and Yarmouth

Achieving Together for a Brighter Future



ACTS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP A STATEMENT OF POLICY

Approved by	TG
Portfolio	SIAMS
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Review Cycle	3 Year

Signed: _____ Date: _____

ACTS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Philosophy

As a Church of England Federation our daily acts of worship are at the very heart of our school life and contribute to the spiritual foundations being laid in the lives of the children.

The aim of the collective worship is to provide the opportunity for pupils to:

- worship God
- reflect on Christian values, character and their own beliefs
- develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- provide a space for reflection, offer a sense of occasion and introduce children to the spiritual dimensions of life through a variety of activities.
- respond to the worship offered.

Principles

- Through participation in celebration and thanksgiving, meditation and prayer, collective worship should provide an opportunity for the sharing of special times, achievements, happy times, sad times, feelings. It encourages a sense of community and caring in all.
- Collective Worship should give opportunities for children to be introduced to Christian Worship. It should include relevant features from Christian Worship such as prayers, hymns and readings from the Bible.
- All members of the school community –staff, governors, parents/carers as well as children – should be encouraged to take part, when possible, in the different acts of collective worship.
- Visiting speakers should be invited, to provide a rich variety of input.
- Acts of collective worship should increase the sensitivity of the children to the mystery of life and the idea of sacredness both in religious and wider human experience.
- Within the school setting as a whole, and within each class, there should be a special place which is recognised as a focus area for worship, and where children become aware that a reverent and thoughtful approach is appropriate.
- All who take part should feel comfortable with their own personal response to the experiences encountered within the act of worship – whether their response is active, or that of being an observer.
- Collective Worship should therefore be inclusive of all who participate, not violating the integrity of any individual but enabling spiritual gain for all, as each individual is able to recognise and celebrate the beliefs and values of people within the school, the community and the world they live in.

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 of a Christian character, and in keeping with Christian beliefs and values and reflecting the ethos of Church of England schools, although information with regard to other beliefs is permitted and encouraged within the setting.

Procedures

1. Collective Worship takes place each day either as a whole school gathering, key stage, singing worship or within a smaller class based group.
2. The planning of all Collective Worship is Christian in content, falling within the broad traditions of Anglicanism.
3. Links with the Churches of All Saints' Church, St. Michael the Archangel, St James', Christchurch and other Christian communities are developed through regular visits to school by the local clergy and other outside speakers and through visits to the Churches
4. Spiritual awareness is fostered through:
 - a. music which helps create a worshipful atmosphere,
 - b. participation in singing, prayer, reading, dance and drama relevant to the particular children involved,
 - c. the use of stories and visual aids such as the lighting of a candle
 - d. the use of Christian symbols and a focus area for worship, found centrally in the Hall and also in each classroom,
 - e. and also through the use of some traditional Christian responses and greetings such as 'The Lord be with you...and also with you.'
5. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take an individual, active role in collective worship through sharing thoughts, readings and prayers.
6. Each week has a specific theme. These are drawn from the cycle of the Christian year, events in the life of the school, national commemorations and concerns, themes relevant to the pupils' lives etc. A daily record is kept of the content of the Acts of Collective Worship including visits, visitors, and a brief reflection. These records are available to parents on request.
7. Each week a special Celebration Collective Worship takes place where achievements and events in all aspects of the lives of the children and the school are celebrated with the whole school community as the main focus of the act of worship.
8. At the beginning of each new year there is a special Celebration Collective Worship where God's blessing is asked on the school for the year ahead
9. Pupils are asked to give feedback on their experience of collective worship and findings are looked at by the Church School Group and results used to develop future plans. Collective Worships are regularly observed and evaluated by senior teachers and Governors.
10. Visitors are always welcome to join us in our school acts of worship.
11. The school acknowledges the right of parents to withdraw their children from collective worship as outlined in the school handbook.

Signed:

Date: