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Collective Worship Policy	Issued: June 2020
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APPROVAL BY	STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Collective Worship Policy

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1. Rationale

Collective Worship is a significant part of the school week. It is seen as a special time where there is an opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate those issues which we consider to be important. It is an occasion when those present can reflect on their own experiences and share their thoughts with others.

Collective Worship promotes the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

2. Aims

Our aims, in order to meet our statutory requirements, are:

- To enable pupils to explore a variety of forms of worship;
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- To promote pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- To prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life as young citizens living in a multicultural and multi-faith society;
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- To instil a ‘worshipful’ and reflective attitude.
- To encourage participation and response

3. Legal Requirements

The most recent legal statement of the requirements for collective worship are contained in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 [1]. These build on similar requirements in Section 346 of the Education Act 1996 [2], the Education Reform Act 1988 [3], and Section 25 of the 1944 Education Act [4], where the law on compulsory collective worship began. Section 70 of the 1998 Act [3] states that, subject to the parental right of excusal or other special arrangements, “...each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship.”

The majority of acts of collective worship in any given school term should still be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” which must contain some elements which relate to the traditions of Christian belief. (Circular 1/94, paragraph 63 [5]).

3.1. *Right of withdrawal*

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act [4] and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act [3].

Teachers similarly may exercise the right of withdrawal but in such a case schools must ensure that provision is made for all pupils to receive the Collective Worship that is their entitlement. Staff cannot be required to attend or lead collective worship, but do not have a right to withdraw from the non-worship part of assembly (a reasonable requirement because of the need to supervise pupils).

4. Current Practice

We hold acts of collective worship five times a week in our school; this takes the form of whole-school assemblies.

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 way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully and participate fully.

The Head teacher or other members of staff normally conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups conduct them instead. We also invite other guest speakers, such as representatives from a charity group or community groups such as the local police, road safety or library service.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of a range of different faiths, reflecting festivals, events and moral values; sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on our PSHE and school values themes.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the values of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

Acts of worship take account of the pupils’ ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds and pupils are given an opportunity to worship inwardly if they wish to do so. This is achieved

through a moment or two of reflective silence during each act of collective worship. This will therefore allow a meaningful experience for all pupils, whilst giving time for individuals to worship in the spiritual sense.

School collective worship will encompass all aspects of school life so that every member of staff and every pupil may feel involved; it both reflects and nurtures the whole ethos of the school. In particular, assembly (our usual context for collective worship) develops the feeling of belonging to a community, which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

We see assembly as an educational opportunity with clear objectives:

- To show interest in and concern for members of the school community
- To celebrate special occasions together
- To show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and wider world
- To share appreciation of worthwhile activities undertaken by groups within the school
- To explore and review the variety of values, attitudes and standards manifested in society
- To reflect upon dimensions of human life (the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, ugly, sorrowful, solemn etc.)

Different approaches to Collective Worship are employed, choosing from the following:

- Pupils' contributions
- Stories or readings
- Dance and drama
- Prayer and reflection
- Songs and music
- Sacred/secular readings
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids or focal points

4.1. Assembly arrangements

Monday	2.20 – 2.35pm	Class Assemblies – Stories / School Council Feedback and Discussion
Tuesday	2.20 – 2.35pm	Diversity or Global Theme and/or Singing
Wednesday	2.20 – 2.35pm	Religious Visitor
Thursday	2.20 – 2.35pm	Values Assembly
Friday	2.20 – 2.35pm	Celebration Assembly

A record will be kept of themes and content by the Head teacher in their office. This ensures a broad and balanced range of themes and content.

Parents are invited to attend special assemblies, such as end of term celebrations.

5. References

[legislation.gov.uk, "School Standards and Framework Act 1998," 1998. [Online]. Available:
1 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents>. [Accessed 30 April 2020].
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[GOV.UK, "Education Act 1996," 1996. [Online]. Available:
2 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>. [Accessed 19 February 2020].
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[legislation.gov.uk, "Education Reform Act 1988," 1988. [Online]. Available:
3 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents>. [Accessed 30 April 2020].
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[legislation.gov.uk, "Education Act 1944," 1944. [Online]. Available:
4 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/7-8/31/contents/enacted>. [Accessed 30 April
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[gov.uk, "Religious Education and Collective," 31 January 1994. [Online]. Available:
5 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachme
\] nt_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf). [Accessed 30 April 2020].

[Alfred Street Junior School, "Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy," 2020.
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[Northamptonshire County Council, "SACRE Religious Education Agreed syllabus," 2020.
7 [Online]. Available: [https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-
\] families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/curriculum-and-
resources/Pages/religious-education.aspx](https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/schools-and-education/information-for-school-staff/curriculum-and-resources/Pages/religious-education.aspx). [Accessed 7 May 2020].

6. Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children is our priority – see our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy [6]. All concerns must be reported to our Designated Safeguarding leads:

ASJS: Mrs K O'Connor, Mr C Butler, Mrs S Smith, Mrs W Watts, Mrs A Love