

Collective Worship Policy

Policy Statement

At St Catherine's Church of England School, we strive to educate our children to realise their aspirations and to contribute positively to society, guided by our Christian principles.

An integral and important part of school life is the daily act of collective worship. Through this and in the general ethos of the school we seek to promote the basis of our vision.

Through the story of 'The Good Samaritan' the children learn to be curious about the world, open in their experiences, overcome prejudices, encourage dignity and respect, live well together, celebrate individual differences and encourage kind, hopeful actions – working together towards a hopeful, inclusive world.

Collective Worship is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements (and sometimes failures) together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly.

Christian Values

Although difficult to define, we identify the values of forgiveness, fairness, respect and tolerance of others, integrity, compassion, honesty and self worth.

These values are embodied in Luke 10 v27:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your strength; and love your neighbour as yourself."

We also actively seek to encourage the attitudes of awe, wonder and reflection.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement stated in the 1988 Education Reform Act 6 (1) and 9 (3), which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship either as a whole school, class or group. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Head teacher. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Organisation

We recognise that collective worship should have something to offer and include all the members of the school community, including the adults who attend the worship.



An Daras Trust
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We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the all. Our current schedule is as follows:

Monday - Worship led by the Headteacher
Tuesday – Worship led by Reverend Alison
Wednesday – Open the Book Worship
Thursday – Praise and Worship led by the Head of School
Friday – Celebration Worship led by a member of the SLT

When the classes do not gather together as a school, they have class worship. Once every half term, children work together in mixed age groups to create their own collective worship to share with the whole school. These are specifically aimed at inspiring their fellow pupils to take action. The children are encouraged to respond to collective worship through our reflection slips and class follow-up to whole school collective worship.

The school council has a collective worship committee who consider, reflect on and help organise collective worship themes.

Planning, Content and Detail

The themes for collective worship reflect the Church calendar, our school ethos and current events, both national and global. The Head teacher is responsible for creating the Collective Worship Plan for each term.

The Head Teacher makes available resources, powerpoints etc for staff to use if they wish. Pupils take it in turns to operate the system for the services and to support various aspects of the collective worship – eg. Taking part in bible stories for Open the Book, leading the Grace, gathering or sending responses, prayer, etc. The school council has a collective worship committee who consider, reflect on and help organise collective worship themes.

The Head Teacher will send the programme to the Reverend so that the clergy are aware of the term's themes and focus areas.

The worship begins with the children entering the hall accompanied by a piece of music. The candles on the altar table are lit and the worship incorporates the children singing a worship song. The children are involved in the worship throughout and this finishes with a prayer. The children then lead out as the music is played.

Praise and Worship includes the lighting of candles to focus the children's attention and aims to develop the children's understanding of new hymns and worship songs as well as learning them. The session ends with a time for reflection or a prayer. The children leave in the same way as before.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, including Praise and Worship. A range of prayers is used including the Lord's Prayer, prayers written by the children and others. They are introduced in an appropriate manner with a short time of quiet. This time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of candles. A cross is also displayed on the altar table.

At the end of the morning session, grace is said by either an adult or child in each class. Teachers say a prayer with their class at the end of the school day.

Other Faiths

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing tolerance and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs. The class-led acts of worship may portray other cultures and beliefs as they reflect the RE studied as part of the curriculum requirements.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, St Catherine's School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship.

Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences and knowledge.

The Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the whole school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter Services. The local clergy visit regularly to lead Worship.

Parents/Governors/Diocesan Liaison and Local Community Issues

Children may be withdrawn from R.E. lessons at the wish of their parents. The Headteacher will ensure that suitable provision is made for such pupils.

In line with the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education, the role of link governor for R.E. has been created on the governing body. The R.E. Lead and link governor liaise to discuss various aspects of R.E. and this ensures an effective line of communication between the Lead and the governing body.

Equal Opportunities and special needs issues

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, age, gender and ethnic origin will have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of R.E. At each Key Stage, the teacher will draw from other religions as appropriate to acknowledge and celebrate the religious beliefs of the children within the class.

This policy will be reviewed annually.