

WEST WITTERING C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy



1 Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for pupils to worship God
- to offer a unique contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- to contribute to a positive school ethos
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs through active participation
- to develop in children a sense of community
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- to provide a range of practices which support reflection
- to appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them
- to develop an awareness and experience of the use of symbols, ritual and religious language

2 Collective worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

In line with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (section 70 and Schedule 20), which states that collective worship must be Christian in character, we normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Anglican Church, and other Christian denominations. We conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith, beliefs, needs and abilities of all members of the school community.

Whilst acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions which may be represented in the school, or the wider community.

3 Organisation of collective worship

Currently, the headteacher holds the role of Collective Worship Co-ordinator, but this arrangement is flexible.

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. One assembly each week has a singing focus, and includes opportunities to consider the meaning and thoughts behind the songs and a linked prayer opportunity. At times collective worship may be organised in Key Stages in order to more closely meet the needs of individuals.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. Children understand that assembly time is a period of engagement and reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. Over time they develop the capacity to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to

the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, candles, flowers, still and moving images, sound, and a range of artefacts. Older children are responsible for preparing the hall and music etc.

Following the themes planned by the school, a range of staff members plan and lead assemblies, with the local vicar leading worship on a fortnightly basis. Other invited visitors lead collective worship from time to time. Through class and whole school worship pupils develop confidence to plan and lead worship for peers and staff. Resources to support planning for collective worship are stored in the hall, and the collective worship co-ordinator is available to offer support/advice on themes, suitable websites etc.

We support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils through our acts of collective worship. Our themes are taken from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. We also encourage pupils to learn about and appreciate the place of other World Religions, promoting awareness, understanding and tolerance. At times the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum, or link to our Core Learning Values or Vision Statement. The programme is drawn up on a termly basis and short-term planning is recorded on the school's Collective Worship planning sheet.

Music themes are often planned in advance to complement the assembly focus. Hymns are planned in advance to complement the assembly themes and in preparation for any special services.

Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements, both in and out of school.

Practical arrangements for collective worship, such as timings, are reviewed termly and adjustments made, after discussion, where doing so is likely to improve the quality of provision and/or opportunities for developing the involvement of pupils.

4 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 and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The headteacher keeps a record of any children who withdraw from collective worship.

5 Monitoring and review

It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher and reports to the governing body. Other suitable adults (including Headteacher and senior leaders) informally monitor the provision of collective worship. Staff are encouraged to reflect on their delivery of collective worship, and to develop confidence to lead pupils and staff in line with this policy.