Holymead Primary School
Collective Worship Policy 2022

Rationale

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires that 'all pupils in attendance at a maintained school shall on each day take part in an act of Collective Worship'. We seek to do our best to keep the spirit of this legislation by providing as many acts of worship as practically possible.

Collective worship should offer pupils opportunities to:

- explore and share beliefs
- consider the importance of prayer
- experience meditation and silence
- consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to their own lives
- think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community
- appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them
- provoke thought as well as a developing sense of wonder
- enquire about the world

Collective Worship also offers an opportunity to reaffirm, interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides a time to celebrate the various achievements of members of the community that are held to be of worth, which will help to promote community cohesion.

Definition

Collective Worship is an opportunity for a group of children and staff to gather to consider a specific subject, which fulfils the statutory requirements. Although it is not worship in the sense in which a religious community would conduct itself where beliefs are shared, it should be a worshipful occasion where teachers and children share concerns and experiences, and affirm beliefs and values.

Acts of Collective Worship will take into account the children's ages, aptitudes and family background.

Aims/Purposes

Taken from Bristol SACRE Guidance on Collective Worship (2018).

Collective Worship:

- gives time to breathe, offering space and stillness before, during or at the end of a hectic and pressured day to be oneself, to reflect or just to sit at rest;
- helps to foster a spirit of community in a school, year group or class;
- can enable the joys and sorrows of those present, those local to the school, and the joys and sorrows of national and international news, to be reflected upon and shared in a way which is otherwise not possible in school;
- enables the overall personality and ethos of the school to come across to everyone;
- is an opportunity to share and reinforce the values the school seeks to live by;
- enables individuals and groups of staff and pupils to share their concerns, interests and reflections;
- can help pupils ponder on the many ultimate questions life presents, and know that others of all ages ponder these too;
- can be a time of sharing those things that unite, whilst acknowledging or celebrating the diversity of beliefs and values within and beyond school;
- may provide an opportunity for pupils (and staff) to come close to God/Higher Being and to reflect on the most important directions and values for their lives;
- may provide a time which pupils can make their own;
- is one of the few occasions in a week of schooling that offers, or should offer, space for the spirit.

Guidelines

Bristol SACRE (2018) – 'Bristol SACRE's approach should help schools to facilitate a version of collective worship that

eases and promotes a polite and vigorous expression of faiths and a dialogue between them. It should emphasise a community ethos that celebrates all that is shared. The unifying element for each act of collective worship will be a central theme focusing the attention of all taking part on a single idea. School or local events, a topic explored by one class, the lives and experiences of people past and present, current religious festivals, national and international days, and the school's agreed shared values are examples of suitable themes for collective worship.'

This is supplemented by relevant materials set out by the PSHC scheme of work, British Values and the Rights, Respecting Schools (RRS) overview.

- Assemblies will be a mix of staff/child led and participatory events.
- Parents and carers will be invited in to celebrate class assemblies.
- Members of the wider community are welcomed in to school to share their knowledge and beliefs.
- Parents may choose to remove their children from Collective Worship after discussion with the head teacher about the content of assemblies.
- All staff have the right of withdrawal from the act of Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship may either be for whole school, key stage, year group or class.
- It is not the role of Collective Worship to engender belief. Therefore, when talking about religions, it is important to state:
  Some Christians / Hindus believe that.....
  A child may of course wish to state "I believe....." But this does not insist that other children believe.

Each class leads an assembly once a year for parents/carers/governors to attend.

Prayer and reflection:

The focus of an assembly can be encapsulated in a prayer or time for reflection. Children should, on occasions, be guided to be still, quiet and to discover their deeper self and to think on the issues of the assembly.

Being part of the RE policy Collective Worship will cover:
Explicit features of religion and their world
Implicit features of inner feelings, experiences, thoughts and questions

Monitoring and review

The governors will be involved in the monitoring and review of the scheme of work for Collective Worship.
This policy, PSHC and RRS documents and the programme for Collective Worship will be reviewed after 2 years or earlier if statutory requirements necessitate.

Conclusion: Assemblies will reflect the multi faiths present in our society. This policy is closely linked to the school's RE, PSHC and Behaviour policies.

Reviewed: June 2022
Next review: June 2024

Article 14: (freedom of thought, belief and religion). Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and also to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children guidance about this right.