

Church Aston Infant School



Worship Policy

September 2017

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Introduction

The staff and governors at Church Aston Infant School ensure that collective worship forms a part of the entirety of all pupils' daily assembly experience. Collective worship is a part of Church Aston Infant School's contribution to promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every child.

The Purpose of Collective Worship

During collective worship we are working to create experiences that provide a time for reflection, a time to recognise and celebrate the values and beliefs of the whole community. The whole community includes both in school and the wider community. The inward response of each person present constitutes worship.

The purpose of collective worship is:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues to enable children to explore their own beliefs
- to encourage participation and response
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- to teach children how to worship

Statutory Requirements

Collective worship at Church Aston Infant School complies with the legal requirements as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The law states that:

'Collective worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character which means that it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief'.

We normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school. Not every act of school worship will comply with this requirement, provided that, in any one term, the majority of such acts of worship do so. While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

Collective Worship and Assembly

Each day the whole school gathers for assembly. This is an important time when pupils and staff can share their commonality in some way and have fellowship together. They are able to share common values and recognise that each person exists as an individual within a social framework in which they are interdependent.

This is a right and proper time for collective worship to take place and it is important that stimulating an appropriate atmosphere creates a sense of occasion.

Assembly is an intentional learning experience to the education of all pupils. If it is appropriate some of the Religious Education requirements are developed at this time.

Implementation

At Church Aston Infant School all members of teaching staff take an active role in leading worship, with the Head teacher taking a more prominent role. Parents, governors, faith community representatives and other community groups are encouraged to be involved where appropriate by specific invitation.

The Nature of Collective Worship

Collective worship requires careful and professional preparation, execution, evaluation, and resourcing. In our school the process of worship takes place through; song, story, drama, music, poetry, etc. and a variety of other media.

The physical environment is designed to create a calm and worshipful atmosphere. A central stimulus enables the pupils to focus on the occasion.

We have embarked upon a whole school approach to collective worship planning and have adopted an annual cycle of themes for each half term. Within this we have allowed for flexibility to respond to changing situations both in school and outside. The themes are developed into individual units in a planning session each term and every member of staff has a copy.

Withdrawal of Pupils from Collective Worship

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 main aim of the collective worship at Church Aston School is for it to be meaningful and relevant for all pupils and staff, for those with faith backgrounds and those with none. It is hoped that few parents will feel that they have to remove their child from collective worship as this breaks down the unity of the school.

Conclusion

Collective worship at Church Aston School complies with all the recent requirements and wherever possible acts upon advice from relevant educational bodies.

We offer pupils opportunities to explore and become aware of the beliefs of others in our community and to be aware of cultures from further afield.

We provide them with opportunities to consider the relevance of ideas, beliefs and values in their own lives as well as others and to think about the needs of others.

A variety of means are used to stimulate ideas and discussion. Through prayer, meditation and silence the children are encouraged to concentrate on their own ideas and those of others in a personal way.