Priory Junior School

Collective Worship Policy

Policy Date: February 2020

Review Date: February 2023

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Definition of Collective Worship

Collective worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Aims and Objectives

Through collective worship, we aim to:

- provide an opportunity for pupils to experience worship in which God is the focus
- foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy
- help pupils discover their place in the world
- establish and reinforce the shared values of the school community
- highlight and nurture spiritual development through experiencing worship
- promote a feeling of community in the school through a sharing of experiences and feelings
- develop personal relationships and encourage social and moral development
- encourage respect and care for the world by nurturing a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues
- celebrate gifts, talents and achievements
- provide an opportunity to celebrate Christian and other festivals

Collective Worship - Legal Requirements

The main requirements are:

- worship should be held daily
- it should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. However, it should still be non-denominational.

Organisation of Collective Worship

An act of collective worship takes place every day – this forms part of each assembly. It may include music, a song, stories, shared experiences, readings, prayer and reflection.

Assemblies usually follow the timings / formats below:

Monday – 10.30am – Whole-school
Tuesday – in-class reflection time
Wednesday – 10.30am Whole-school including class assemblies, visitors
Thursday – 10.20am – Whole–school, within singing assembly
Friday – 10.30am – Whole-school, within Sharing Assembly

Whole-school assembly themes are planned for the year, with a programme of class assemblies, music assemblies and visitors incorporated into this plan. Regular visitors to the school contribute to assemblies, such as our parish vicar. Every member of the teaching staff will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year.

In addition to these, we also hold a Harvest Festival Assembly, a Christingle, and a Leavers' Assembly each year.

Parents are invited to attend their child's class assembly and the Harvest Festival assembly.

How We Lead Collective Worship

We aim to ensure that worship provides an opportunity for reverence for a divine being, power, or personal God. During any act of collective worship, we respect the integrity of all those taking part – this is reflected in the material chosen. Pupils are invited to join in prayers, they are not required to do so. The phrase 'If you would like to make this prayer your own, please say 'amen' at the end' is used to introduce prayers.

Whenever the beliefs of the Christian faith are referred to, it is done so with 'Christians believe'. This is extended to all other faiths too.

Assemblies are closely matched to the values and ethos of the school. The values were drawn up in consultation with parents, staff, governors and children. A monthly 'values' focus takes place throughout the year, to reinforce these. The importance and value of learning is reinforced and celebrated weekly in our sharing assembly.

Involvement of Pupils and Visitors

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies – sharing their work with other children, answering questions, and playing an active part in leading assemblies. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, where all children are valued and all achievements recognised.

We invite visitors to attend assemblies; our local parish vicar regularly leads assemblies (once a half-term), and through this, children are able to recognise the wider context of faith in the community.
Where relevant, other members of the community may be invited from time to time – to share the work they undertake in the wider community.

Record Keeping and Resources

Records are kept of themes, and leaders throughout the year.
Additional records of sharing assemblies, and assemblies led by the Headteacher are kept centrally.

Books that contain useful resources for assemblies are located in the staff-room. Additional resources can be found on-line.

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, on religious grounds, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Teachers also have a right to withdraw from collective worship, on religious grounds.

Monitoring

Monitoring occurs informally through staff discussion with valued feedback from parents and visitors, including governors.
It is the role of the Teaching and Learning Committee to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.

It is the role of the collective worship leader to ensure all assemblies are planned for, and records kept. The collective worship leader will also respond to parents who have concerns about school worship.

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February 2013
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