



Collective Worship Policy

Rationale

Our daily act of Collective Worship is a special and distinctive time of our school day. Collective worship at Burnshall VA, Cracoe & Rylstone VC Church of England and Grassington VC Church of England Primary Schools means we gather together and provide the opportunity for worship to take place. We do not assume participants will have any particular beliefs or make particular responses. It provides the children with the opportunity to worship God and consider, with reverence, issues of a spiritual nature. Collective Worship develops in the children an awareness of the fundamental questions of life as raised by human experience.

We understand collective worship to be educationally valid and inclusive. Our school worship gives us an opportunity to look within and beyond ourselves and some of us might encounter God. It is an occasion which allows space for worship to take place but allows other responses from participants.

An act of worship is an important part of our whole curriculum which empowers children to be open to life, feelings, celebrations, values and visions.

Legal Framework

The aim of a daily act of collective worship, according to 1993 Education Act is to "provide an opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs."

Acts of Collective Worship need to be 'broadly Christian'.

It should also be in accordance with the schools' foundation.

Our collective worship reflects the Church of England and Christian foundation of these schools. It can take place at any time of the day and involve a variety of groupings.

Parents' right to Withdraw

Parents have the legal right to withdraw children from worship and parents are made aware of this right.

Teachers' Rights

Appointed teachers at Burnshall VA Primary School should be sympathetic to the aims of the schools and therefore should be willing to fully participate in school worship.

At Cracoe & Rylstone and Grassington Primary Schools the staff although encouraged to participate, do have the right to withdraw.

Aims of our school worship

From the Christian perspective of the schools foundations the aims of our school worship are:

- reflect the aims of the schools Aims and Vision statements;
- take into account the educational, social and religious context of the school and wider community;
- provide children with the opportunity to worship God;
- be ecumenical in nature emphasising similarities yet identifying and embracing differences;
- respect the integrity of all concerned.;
- be accessible and meaningful to all;
- encourage questioning and develop thinking skills;
- celebrate aspiration and achievement;
- develop a sense of community in which the children can contemplate the meaning and mystery of the world.
- To reflect the Christian Foundations of the Schools

Objectives

To give the opportunity:

- To give children spiritual dimension to life and personal values
- To experience the feelings of awe and wonder;
- To explore different emotions;
- For a sense of group identity,(class, key stage or school)
- For others to join our school community
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs and values

Worship should develop each individuals understanding of themselves and the world around them and may be;

- An individual response to God
- An awareness of beauty and goodness
- A sense of awe and wonder
- Feelings of sorrow or regret
- Praise or thanksgiving
- Reflection or prayer
- A celebration about things we care about/special occasion
- Thinking together about things of concern
- Sharing thoughts, ideas or class activities
- Sharing experiences of living in and responding to the world around us
- A deepening of religious understanding
- An opportunity for participation
- About worth

Responsibility for Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the legal responsibility of the Governing Body following consultation with the Headteacher. Foundation Governors have a particular responsibility to take an interest in Collective Worship.

Leadership of Collective Worship

Leadership of Collective Worship is the shared responsibility of teaching staff and the children. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that there is a daily act of Collective Worship.

Policy into practice

Acts of worship should be:

- **Inclusive** and therefore child centred. They should relate to children's experiences, be relevant to children's concerns and should involve children as active participants. Acts of worship should foster a sense of community, shared values, identity and purpose.
- **Educational** and therefore learning experiences of real quality. Acts of worship should be prepared, delivered resourced and evaluated. School records of our acts of worship will be kept. There is a partnership between the content and conduct of school worship and the ethos of our school.
- **Spiritual** and therefore a special time where an atmosphere conducive to worship is created. Pupils should feel relaxed, secure and calm. Spiritual development can be fed through words, music, images and atmosphere.
- **Planning for worship** Themes will be chosen at the beginning of the term. This planning will be flexible enough to allow for sudden events, disasters, celebrations and sadness and joy in our community. They will be closely linked to Christian values but remain broadly Christian.

Organisation

All children should take part in an act of worship each day.

Sometimes our Acts of Worship may be held off the school premises

The length of daily acts of worship will normally not be more than 20 minutes in length.

There will also a quiet place for private worship and prayer in school.

Planning

The Collective \Worships should be planned around the theme.

Things to consider;

- How will you introduce the idea?
- Will there be a prayer or reflection time?
- Are hymns or songs needed?
- What resources do you need?
- Do participants need to be prepared?
- How will you seat the children?
- Can the children be involved in the planning/lead the worship

Evaluation

Governors will informally evaluate acts of worship per term.

Headteacher, other teachers and governors may evaluate our Act of Worship.

Children will evaluate each theme and individual collective worships.

Teacher's role

Acts of Worship are essentially shared experiences for our school community. Teachers should normally be part of that experience to help the children get the most from it i.e. teachers will be able to respond to questions later. Teacher's presence values the activity. All teachers should lead Acts of Worship.

Class based worships

In a small group children are able to participate, express feelings and the needs and ages of the children are more easily addressed. Leaders are more likely to be able to link worship with class experiences and should include time for thinking, listening and stillness. It may be more appropriate to consider difficult concepts such as death, in the warm supportive atmosphere of the child's own classroom.

Preparation for the hall/Dormitory/outside

Physical surroundings are important in creating the right atmosphere for Acts of Worship. Children may sit in a circle, square horseshoe or anywhere. The usual arrangement is for the children to sit in rows.

Focal point

Could be: flowers, candle, thought, object, symbols, picture, sculpture, phrase, PowerPoint presentation

Approaches to Worship

Presentation/ expression of worship may include

Story drama candles prayer flowers
religious readings artefacts video songs/hymns
dance art poetry sharing food reflection
experiences aspect of school natural materials
celebration of festivals

This list is not exhaustive

Story

The use of story is a powerful tool and may be perceived at different levels by those involved. Story can;

- Raise awareness
- Set the scene outside the children's realm of experience
- Increase the children understanding of themselves
- Enlarge their perspectives of the world
- Increase empathy
- Increase knowledge and understanding
- Demonstrate joys and difficulties of life children have not experienced
- Provide insights in to the lives of others

- Pose moral questions
- Develop language and listening skills
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Prayer/reflection/directed silence

Children should be **invited** to listen or think about prayer. It is important not to exclude anyone. Prayers should be appropriate, may be expressed by the children or may be silent.

Music

Adds an extra dimension to worship and can help create an appropriate atmosphere. Music can help the children to be involved. Children can respond physically, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually. Not every act of worship will have a song.

Other religions and Christianity as a world religion

This content could be enriched by using different cultural and religious traditions. Using multi faith materials will help children to recognise and respect, reflect on and respond to our multi faith society in which we live.

To be reviewed March 2020