



Porthcawl Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

AIMS

Collective worship is as an affirmation of our school ethos and values.

We aim to:

- unite the whole school and develop a sense of community
- promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of every child
- ensure that family backgrounds, age, aptitude and interests are taken into account
- celebrate the worth and value of everyone in the school community
- create experiences, which recognise the integrity and dignity of all members of the school community, both those who adopt a religious life-stance and those who do not
- provide educational collective worship which stimulates inward reflection and leads our pupils to develop an outward and open lifestyle in which they will live generously with others

Our collective worship therefore involves us gathering together to think and to express feelings of respect and worth for ourselves, others, for our local community and our world, as gifts from God. Childhood experience of stillness, peace, awe, wonder, mystery, celebration, reverence and belonging are of central importance in promoting spiritual development.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) lays down a number of requirements for collective worship.

There must be a daily act of worship for all pupils at the school and this should take place on the school premises, but any area within the school and its grounds may be used. Any acts of worship held off the school premises must be in addition to the statutory ones. The act of worship can be at any time of day and does not have to be the gathering of the whole school together. A number of acts of worship can take place in any one school on any one day, as long as the pupils are in a normal teaching group or a group that exists for other school activities. A group cannot reflect the beliefs of a particular religious tradition; it is intended that any group shall comprise the normal mix of pupils found in the other educational activities of the school.

Parents may withdraw their children from acts of worship and teachers may also opt out of participating in them, but they may be required to attend assembly! Responsibility for the arrangement for collective worship rests with the headteacher in consultation with the governing body.

Most acts of worship in any one school term must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. An act of worship is such if it "reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination".

In planning broadly Christian worship schools are required to ensure that such acts are appropriate for their pupils taking into account such considerations such as

circumstances relating to the family background of the pupils concerned and the ages and aptitudes of the pupils

This means that all acts need not be Christian or contain Christian material only. (DFE 34) Such beliefs that are broadly Christian are inclusive to other major world faiths. Beliefs such as God, justice, love, peace, good, evil, greed, poverty, charity, pollution, morality, tolerance, co-operation, selfishness, war and prejudice. Thus if such a broad and flexible approach is adopted collective worship will not affect the integrity of anyone taking part at our school but may develop the spiritual awareness of every individual. Our school exerts no pressure on children to become worshipping Christians

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Collective Worship is educational and includes quality learning experiences, related to the pupil's own experience. It is properly prepared, executed and resourced. It provides opportunities for us to reflect on our own educational purpose and celebrate a range of achievements (social, sporting and academic). .

Collective Worship is spiritual and provides a breathing space to gather, be still and reflect in an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity; it is a special time to refresh the spirit. A spiritual atmosphere is created through music, ambience and visual focus. It is a time to feel calm, relaxed, secure and comfortable. Consideration is given to the way pupils enter and leave. Children have opportunities to take part in a singing, dancing, drama, food and drink, prayer contemplation and meditation. They also have opportunities for individual reflection and responses in silence and stillness. Anything that may disturb the spiritual atmosphere engendered in collective worship, such as giving out of notices, telling-off or clatter is not be allowed to intrude. Where an act of worship is designed to send pupils away in a reflective mood, notices etc. come first.

INTERPRETING WORSHIP

An act of worship is generally understood in its specifically religious sense as being an act of adoration offered to God. Such worship cannot be compelled: it is an inward response freely given by believers.

A school is a worship enabling community. At Porthcawl Primary School, worship has to do with worth and worthiness. Activities which celebrate the things that the school considers to be important or of "worth" can be legitimately termed an act of worship. At Porthcawl Primary School, the things that we consider to be of worth are consistent with "Christian" values, and so our worship is broadly Christian in character.

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

The ERA states that school worship should reflect "Christian beliefs" (not worship practices). The principle Christian beliefs are in the creation, the fall, the incarnation and the kingdom of God. Issues of ecology, pollution, the stewardship of the earth's resources are Christian concerns which arise from the doctrine of creation.

Human capacity for prejudice, cruelty, war and alienation are Christian issues arising from the belief that the world is fallen. That all people are valued despite handicap, age, race or gender is implicit in the doctrine of incarnation. Belief in the kingdom of God, where justice, peace and harmony are to be established, means that young people's yearnings, concerns for causes and impatience with unfairness are implicitly Christian. Worship, which raises these issues, will be Christian and yet need not alienate non-Christians.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND ASSEMBLY

Collective worship and assembly are not the same thing but it is usual for an act of worship to take place during an assembly either as a part of it or its entirety.

Collective worship is a special time for pupils to reflect upon their life experiences and to seek out answers to ultimate questions as far as their intellectual and spiritual capacities will allow them. It is a time when the individual child can be celebrated for social and academic achievements, and a time to foster the positive values held by the school, the local community and the wider world.

An assembly is a gathering together of part or all of the school and is concerned with administration and announcements.

At our school every assembly includes an act of worship which aims to be inclusive, educational and spiritual.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We meet as a whole school in the hall five times a week at 10.25am. Fifteen minutes is allowed for the service including movement time.

Pupils enter and leave the hall respectfully. Special arrangements are made for pupils withdrawn from the service. Currently we have no one withdrawn, as worship is an inclusive activity that contributes to the life and ethos of the school. Non-teaching staff in a classroom will supervise withdrawn pupils with work provided by the relevant class teacher.

Pupils sit in their designated year group positions. The Headteacher or Deputy headteacher lead 3 assemblies a week. Teaching staff lead 2 assemblies a week on a rota basis. One assembly each week is led in welsh.

Visitors such as faith leaders and charity representatives are welcomed to lead assemblies and are given guidance.

Worship is enhanced by the singing of a suitable song and always contains a time for quiet reflection. We share together the faiths of the major religions.

Achievements and 'special mentions' are celebrated on a Friday with a focus on worship at the end of the service.

THE CONDITIONS FOR WORSHIP

Children must be escorted to the school hall.

Children must enter the hall silently with staff support and leave respectfully.

Staff must supervise the children proactively whilst they are in the hall and do so without compromising the atmosphere – quietly and unobtrusively.

Children must be appropriately placed by staff, to ensure every opportunity is exploited for a calm, positive and productive atmosphere.

Children must be able to sit comfortably on the floor and learn to stand and sit without noise and bustle.

Children must be directed to sit where exits and entrances are not blocked.

The hall must be clean, tidy and well ventilated.

.

HYMNS AND PRAYERS AND SILENCE

Many children do not share the faith sentiments that are expressed. Hymns and prayers are selected carefully. During prayers, pupils are invited either to share the sentiments of the prayer in their own thoughts or to think about what the prayer means. Children are invited to join in with the prayer ~ “We will now finish with a prayer. Please listen carefully to the words. You can choose to put your hands together or in your lap. Your eyes can be open or closed.”

The use of silence provides an opportunity for a variety of individual responses, including personal prayer. A silent time can be introduced – “ We are now going to share a few moments of silence in which you can quietly think about what you have just heard or seen, or in which you may like to say your own quiet prayer to God.”

A CALENDAR FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

A calendar will be drawn up each year and will include:

- Religious events (festivals, special times, saints’ days)
- Secular events (local, national and global)
- Commemorative days and anniversaries
- Special events in the life of the school
- Topics and other curricular activity being undertaken

.