

Deerhurst and Apperley C of E Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

Reviewed: June 2014

Policy for Collective Worship

The Governors and staff of Deerhurst & Apperley C of E Primary School place importance on the daily act of collective worship, and fully comply with the requirements set out in the Education Reform Act (1998).

We recognise that 'worship' is a difficult concept to define. We do, however, accept the definition of worship as 'worth-ship', in some sense reflecting something special or separate from ordinary school activities, and concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power. For Christians, this includes a belief in the Bible as God's Word and a pattern for us to live by. We further recognise that 'taking part' in collective (not corporate) worship implies eliciting a response from children and opportunities are provided for affirmation and celebration, for reflective thought and a deepening of understanding.

Worship is central to the life and purposes of our school and will reflect the Christian understanding of God as Trinity. This will include belief in God the source of all being and life, belief in Jesus who reveals God's love by his life, death and resurrection and belief in the Holy Spirit who makes the presence of Jesus known in the world.

The Legal Requirements

The Education Reform Act (1998) requires that all registered pupils take part in a daily act of collective worship, which takes account of their age and aptitude. It is the Headteacher's responsibility, together with the school governors to ensure this provision. Collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', that is worship which reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief. Parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and if this happens, suitable arrangements will be made to accommodate these children. Since this is a church school, however, worship is central to its life and work and is regarded as a very important part of children's education.

Collective worship may take place at any time in the school day and be a single gathering for all pupils or separate assemblies for smaller groups.

Aims of collective worship

Collective worship at Deerhurst & Apperley C of E Primary School aims to provide the opportunity for children to:

- 1) Provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God;
- 2) Introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year;
- 3) Explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well known Christian prayers, e.g. the Lord's Prayer;
- 4) Strengthen and support the school community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school;
- 5) Celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God;
- 6) Encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them;
- 7) Foster a concern for others within the school and wider world;
- 8) Foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

We encourage participation and response through active involvement in the presentation of worship and through listening to and joining in the worship offered. We aim to develop a sense of community spirit, to promote a common ethos and shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes. Our aim is that worship should be inclusive, enabling all members of the school to participate with honesty and freedom. This means that children of other faiths or no particular faith are able to join in our 'broadly Christian' worship, reflecting on their own beliefs and that children of Christian faith will be able to participate and reflect during occasional assemblies structured around other religions or beliefs.

Structure for worship

A varied style of provision is maintained each week at Deerhurst & Apperley C of E Primary School. A typical pattern for a week follows:

Monday	-	Whole school worship taken by vicar; supported by the HT/CT
Tuesday	-	Class assembly
Wednesday	-	Open the Book taken by the ministry team
Thursday	-	Choral Worship led by class teachers;
Friday	-	Celebration assembly led by senior staff (To which parents are invited twice per half term).

We recognise that 'collective worship' and 'assembly' are distinct activities; however, at Deerhurst & Apperley C of E Primary School, they normally (although

not exclusively) take place as part of the same gathering. Where the word 'assembly' is used in this document, this will include an act of collective worship. Most assemblies take place at the start of the school day. Parents are invited to special assembly services (e.g. Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Leavers). Some of these take place in one of our local churches.

The children are encouraged to say grace before eating their lunch, and a prayer is said in each class at the end of the school day.

Planning for worship

Assembly themes are taken partly from the 'Values For Life' programme issued by the Diocese, and partly from the SEAL programme (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning). Resources are available (although staff are welcome to use their own). The themes are mostly adhered to, but on occasion we will prefer to respond to current events, e.g. national or local tragedy or disturbance. On yet other occasions a need will be perceived within the school for an assembly which promotes or celebrates, for example, kindness or helpfulness. The record of assembly themes is kept with the worship resources, and updated regularly by all those taking collective worship.

Resources available for worship

There is a selection of teacher resources available to help with leading collective worship. These are kept in clearly labelled boxes with other teaching resources. We use songs and hymns from a variety of sources, normally using O.H.T. sheets. [We hold a 'Christian Copyright Licence' to cover this]. We use the Bible as a source book of inspiration and learning.

Arrangements for withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship and this is clearly stated in the school policy. Parents do not need to give a reason for their request, which will normally be discussed with the Headteacher first. If children are withdrawn, assembly time will be spent with a Learning Support Worker, perhaps to consider matters around the assembly theme, but without any religious content.

Evaluation and monitoring

At Deerhurst & Apperley C of E Primary School, we recognise the importance of ensuring that children are fully involved in our acts of collective worship and that they are gaining meaning from them. We shall therefore ask the children to complete an evaluation from time to time.

Monitoring and Review

This written policy was drawn up by the Headteacher, after full consultation with all staff. It will be formally reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with the school improvement plan.

The written policy will be formally approved by staff at a meeting in June 2014 and will be presented for Governor approval at the next Governing Body Meeting on July 9th 2014.

Reviewed June 2014

Chair of Governors: Cate Morris

Date:

Head teacher: Pauline McEvoy

Date: