

Collective Worship Policy

Ermine Street Church Academy

First approved by Governors	20th July 2016
Policy to be reviewed annually	
Reviewed by Governors	3rd May 2017
	16th May 2018
	26th June 2019
Reviewed by Governors	18th October 2023

1. Philosophy

Collective Worship is an important part of our school's life and every school day. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that Collective Worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base Collective Worship on the teachings of the Bible and traditions of the Anglican and Methodist Church. However, we also regularly incorporate World faith festivals, events and themes, such as British Values, into Collective Worship. By doing so, we ensure that Collective Worship is representative of the individual beliefs, backgrounds and faiths of all members of the school community, whilst also helping our children to grow into responsible, respectful citizens. We conduct our worship in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school. For example, children are invited to join in with prayers by responding with 'Amen' at the end, but we respect the fact that some children may not wish to do this. However, all children are expected to respect the faith of others by sitting quietly.

We expect everyone to take an active part in Collective by listening respectfully, and encourage children to join in with songs, activities, and prayers if they feel they would like to do so. It is an opportunity to reflect, celebrate and learn. It is also used to encourage our pupils to think about their place in the world, through Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. We will not shy away from our responsibilities in enabling children to think deeply about themselves, the world in which they live and the place that faith has in our society. Spirituality is therefore at the heart of Collective Worship at Ermine Street.

2. Aims and Purpose

- To enable pupils to explore and respond to a variety of forms of worship, thus enabling those pupils with a religious commitment to deepen their experience of worship, and to allow those without a religious commitment to begin to explore their own beliefs;
- To foster in the pupils an attitude characterised by feelings such as humility, awe, wonder, appreciation, thankfulness, respect, reverence and elation;
- To contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- To develop pupils' understanding and commitment to The Ermine Street Ethos;
- To develop a sense of community within and beyond the school;
- To celebrate achievements, special occasions and special events in relation to individual pupils within school, to the school as a whole, or to the wider community;
- To acknowledge, respect and celebrate difference and diversity.

3. The Contribution of Collective Worship to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development of Pupils

One of the key aims of collective worship is to offer pupils opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Spiritual Development is promoted by:

- the celebration of special achievements
- guided reflection
- consideration of a variety of beliefs, values and feelings
- appreciation of aspects of life which have special meaning and which contribute to a sense of awe and wonder

Moral Development is promoted by:

- consideration of moral codes found in school, in religions and in society
- consideration of relationships
- encouraging empathy by the consideration of moral issues from different perspectives

Social Development is promoted by:

- coming together as a school / class group
- bringing visitors into school from the community
- sharing values and matters of concern

Cultural Development is promoted by:

- using music, art, drama, story and artefacts from a range of cultural backgrounds
- exploring and celebrating aspects of religion and culture

4. Organisation and Planning

Collective Worship takes place daily.

Collective Worship is led by different members of staff and representatives from the local Anglican and Methodist Churches. In addition, Church groups visit (e.g. GenR8) are scheduled. Children contribute the

prayers on a weekly basis during Nurture time and a children also fill in their comments in our Collective Worship reflection book.

The content of Collective Worship is planned on a termly basis, with one main, over-arching theme which is then broken down to an individual theme for each week. World Faith festivals and other significant events become the main theme at appropriate times in the calendar.

Collective Worship always begins with the lighting of a candle and ends with the candle being extinguished. A prayer will always be shared which the children have the option to make their own by joining in with the 'Amen'. In no way are children expected to join in with a prayer if they don't wish to, but they are expected to show respect for those who want to pray. A hymn/song will usually be sung.

During the year we hold Collective Worship for the entire school community. This service is linked to particularly significant times in the Christian calendar, such as Advent or Easter, and key events such as children leaving at the end of the school year.

Class assemblies take place **throughout the year**. Each class prepares and presents an assembly to entertain their peers and parents/relatives. These assemblies should showcase the children's learning and they should also be an opportunity to share their talents and develop their self-esteem and confidence. In the Autumn term, Christmas productions are shared with parents.

5. Right of Withdrawal

Our school is based on an inclusive ethos; we ask that all children attend Collective Worship. However we respect the right of any parent/guardian to request permission for their child to be excused. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education reform Act. Withdrawal will be made following parental discussion with the Head teacher and written confirmation of withdrawal. The school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of those children granted withdrawal from assemblies.

6. Monitoring and Review

Collective Worship will always be thoroughly planned. The themes for Collective worship are published at the beginning of the term. Those leading worship that week are expected to relate their worship to this theme. The themes chosen are broad enough to allow all those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective.

At the end of each Collective Worship some children are asked to record their reflections and thoughts on it. Different children are given this responsibility each day and their comments are collated into a book. The comments are reflected on by staff in order to inform and improve subsequent Collective Worship.

Governors monitor Collective Worship. In addition to observing Collective Worship, they also monitor planning, children's feedback and developments in this aspect of the school.