

SURFLEET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy

1. The Legal Requirement

All children take part in the daily act of collective worship that is required by law in all schools. This act of worship is consistent with the faith and practice of the Church of England.

It is the role of the Governing Body and staff to ensure that this policy is implemented

However, where parents have strong objections to this due to their own religious practice or beliefs they must inform the school in writing, stating their reasons, and ask for their child to be withdrawn from all religious teaching and collective worship. However such children will still continue to receive spiritual, moral and cultural awareness through P.S.H.E. and be part of the information sharing aspects of collective worship or assembly.

2. The Nature of Collective Worship

Collective worship should be an 'experience' as much as an educational opportunity and aims to cultivate a sense of awe and wonder at our natural world and the wide range of human experiences. It aims to develop understanding, patience, wisdom, kindness, empathy and self-control in our children and also help them understand that the church represents a community of which the school is a significant part.

Whilst being broadly Christian some acts of collective worship will share the stories, truths and experiences of people of other faiths and cultures, and highlight the moral dilemmas and experiences of the human race as a whole.

Within a Christian context Collective worship aims to introduce children to:

- Key Old and New Testament stories and characters and to be able to relate them to the lives of people today.
- The life and teachings of Jesus and his disciples.
- The life of the early church
- The Key teachings of the Church
 - The unconditional love of God
 - Repentance and forgiveness
 - Responding to God through acts of loving service
 - The role of worship in forming our corporate identity as Christians
 - The major festivals, saints days and seasons of the churches year
- Significant Christian teachers and role models from history and recent times
- The Lord's Prayer and other well-known prayers
- Being able to offer their own prayers in either words or silence
- The use of simple symbols and rituals to aid worship eg. the lighting of candles, use of incense and oil and exchanging the Peace.

3. Implementation

Every child in the school attends daily Collective Worship and weekly hymn practice. The leadership of collective worship is shared by the staff, the parish priest and by lay ministers the children are encouraged to take an active part. The staff will follow a weekly theme

through a daily plan that states the content and context of which is shared. The themes link into the Whole School Curriculum and the SEAL topics. The themes change every year and are displayed in the staff room.

Collective Worship takes place during a dedicated part of the day in the school hall and lasts approximately 15 minutes. Assembly on a Friday is an Achievement Assembly and the purpose of this is to celebrate the children's achievements.

Resources used include a selection of hymn books with backing tracks provided on CD, prayer books, modern edition Bibles and religious artefacts and literature appropriate to the particular weekly theme. All of these are regularly updated.

We believe that the act of collective worship is an important part of the curriculum in that it is a kind of meeting place. It also gives the children a focus that they may carry with them for the rest of the day. In a small school it informs staff more about the individual and their opinions.

We treat every child equally and listen and value all comments regardless of gender, age and social background, but we do not necessarily avoid contentious issues, sometimes taking votes. Staff do not present a biased point of view and set aside their own opinions so that the children can make up their own minds.

Teaching staff attend and participate on a rota basis in collective worship in order that the children shall have good role models.

Collective worship will normally have the following format:

- Gathering – appropriate music from a range of sources and traditions accompanied by a seasonal or topical power point display (developed as part of the curriculum by the children) which helps the children gather respectfully and expectantly.
- The lighting of a candle to signify the start of worship
- A welcome and greeting from the worship leader
- A story or presentation on the theme
- A hymn or song relevant to the theme (if possible)
- A prayer or a focussed quiet reflection
- The blowing out of the candle to signify the end of worship
- Announcements etc
- Departure again accompanied by music

If hymn practice is used as an act of Collective Worship then the words of the hymns are explained to the children and the practice ends with a prayer.

4. Role of visitors in collective worship

School may wish to enhance their collective worship provision by inviting in visitors from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. These might include local clergy and other members of faith communities, representatives of charitable organisations and members of the local community.

5. Recording, monitoring and evaluating

As part of the school's quality assurance programme, it is the role of the manager to monitor individual acts of collective worship and feed back to the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Governors who visit collective worship are invited to provide informal feedback to the manager. As part of our Pupil Voice a random selection of pupils will be asked to comment on their experience of and response to collective worship at least once a year.

The staff complete a daily diary of the subject of their Collective worship this should include hymn, story and the prayer used. This will be monitored by the manager.

Revised Sept. 2014

To be revised Sept. 2016