



Collective Worship Policy

Date adopted by full governing body: Summer 2014

Review date: Summer 2018

Background to Collective Worship

Ickleford Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled School and this influences the collective worship, which is underpinned by Christian values and the aims of the school.

It is a legal requirement that all school aged children take part in a daily act of worship. These acts of worship must be Christian in character. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”.

The rights of parents to withdraw their children from the act of collective worship are stated in the Education Reform Act 1998. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher. Staff may also withdraw from worship.

Aims and Principles

- to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment, which challenges and encourages each child to achieve to the best of his or her individual ability;
- to treat each child as an individual, taking into account varying needs and abilities, so that each achieves his/her full potential;
- to provide a wide, balanced and challenging curriculum guided by the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and National Curriculum, to which all have equal access, so that each child is equipped with the skills necessary for his/her future;
- to work alongside the child's family, enabling us to provide the best education possible;
- to encourage self-confidence, self-discipline and independence of learning;
- to encourage each child to be respectful of others regardless of age, ability, race, creed or gender and to foster respect for his/her environment;
- to offer our children the best possible education within the context of a caring community which promotes Christian values and fosters spiritual and moral development.

Values Education

One of our core aims is to build on our high standards by promoting a school ethos which is underpinned by core values that support the development of the whole child. To achieve this we have adopted the national initiative called Values Education. It is a deliberate and systematic approach to promoting a set of universally held positive values including: hope, truth, honesty, respect, tolerance, love and unity. Through the process of Values Education, the children will be provided with opportunities to reflect upon these values and will be actively encouraged to use them in their school life and in the wider communities. Each month we champion a new value; time will be given in a selection of assemblies to introduce and explore that value.

Collective Worship

We believe at Ickleford Primary School that Collective Worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value that we place on the development of the whole child is reflected in collective worship, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually. We see Collective Worship as an important part of the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express these reflections in a traditionally religious way or in any other appropriate manner.

Through our Collective Worship we are providing a caring and supportive environment for children:

- to encourage sensitivity to the wonder and mystery of the world and people,
- to reflect on their own experience and the experience of others,
- to experience and reflect on the universal aspects of awe, mystery, sense of transience, pattern of order, personal worth, limitations, loss, grief and death,
- to heighten awareness of 'a sense of commitment' and its consequences,
- to recognise and respect that people hold different beliefs and commitments,
- to develop awareness and experience of the use of symbol to express feelings and beliefs e.g. light, darkness, water, food, season etc,
- to express the values and concerns of the school, local community and wider world.

The Arrangement and Practices for Collective Worship

Style of collective worship at Ickleford Primary School

- Collective Worship is an opportunity for children to explore the spiritual dimension of their world.
- Collective Worship will include stillness as well as words, stories, pictures and symbols, prayers and hymns, songs and music.
- There will be room for questions and answers - and sometimes the admission that there are no answers.
- There will be expressions of thankfulness, praise and joy. Feelings of sadness and loss will be included when appropriate.
- Collective Worship should allow ethical and moral questions to be explored.
- Collective Worship allows opportunities for community information sharing. Care will be taken to differentiate between worship and notices.

The Content of Collective Worship at Ickleford Primary School

- Collective Worship will be Christian in character. Other religions will be treated with respect but will not provide the basis of worship.
- Collective Worship will take place each day, although the actual time may vary as circumstances require.
- Collective Worship can involve the whole school together or individual classes can hold their own acts of worship. Children will not be passive but encouraged to be active by participating in appropriate ways.
- Themes for assembly will be chosen reflecting a wide variety of approaches. Our Values Education scheme provides one focus. There may be seasonal concepts or themes related to a continuing story or the religious cycle of the Christian Year.
- Respect is shown to all pupils and the celebration of shared values and beliefs. This might include the recognition of other key religious festivals such as Passover, Id-ul-fitr, and Divali.

- When appropriate, Collective Worship may include topical issues of school, local, national or world events, of which the children may be aware, and offer appropriate worship in response. There is room for spontaneity.
- Most acts of Collective Worship will be held in the school building. On special occasions, acts of worship are held at St. Katherine's Church, Ickleford.
- The incumbents regularly lead Collective Worship, usually once a week.
- From time to time it may be appropriate for visitors representing charities, organisations or projects to lead, or contribute to Collective Worship.
- Collective Worship can connect with and reinforce the curriculum but not be constrained by it.

Planning and Record Keeping for Collective Worship

Monday Whole school assembly led by the Headteacher or Deputy headteacher

Tuesday Whole school assembly led by a class teacher or values lead

Wednesday Whole school singing assembly led by the deputy headteacher

Thursday Whole school assembly led either by the incumbent, class assembly

Friday Key Stage 1 Celebration Assembly led by a class teacher on a rota basis

Key Stage 2 Celebration Assembly led by a class teacher on a rota basis

A record of assemblies is kept, highlighting the focus, stimulus, reflection, prayer and hymn.

The school has a range of materials for teachers to use to plan assemblies.

The Role of Prayer/Reflection in Collective Worship

Pupils are not required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. Nevertheless, time is set aside for prayer. Prayers might include prayers the children have written themselves as well as a collection of identified prayers e.g. The Lord's Prayer which are felt the children should encounter before they leave school. The prayer is generally led by the person leading the act of collective worship, although occasionally there is time for silent prayer or reflection where children are able to focus their thoughts or respond in a personal way. Silence is expected in most prayers and respect is expected in all of them.

The Role of Music in Collective Worship

A hymn or song is sung in whole school acts of collective worship. Singing, indeed music in general, is important to the school's acts of collective worship. We select our songs/hymns carefully to match the theme. During singing assembly we reflect upon the words of the song.

Recorded music is played as the children enter and leave the hall. It is used as a means of creating the right atmosphere and unifying the school community.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A working party including: the Headteacher, a Foundation Governor, the RE Coordinator and Values Coordinator regularly evaluate and monitor the planning and provision of worship. The SIAS framework is used as part of the monitoring process. Feedback is given to help improve the quality of worship offered to the pupils. The Governing Body then receive a report so that the Collective Worship policy can be reviewed regularly.

The foundation governors have a key role in this process to ensure that the legal requirements are met and that worship offered to the pupils is of the highest quality.