



North Tyneside Council

# **Collective Worship**

# **Guidance Booklet**

## **POLICY AND GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

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# Introduction

This is a guidance booklet about Collective Worship in community schools and not about 'assemblies'. Throughout the country teachers and pupils still refer to 'going to assembly' when in fact assembly and Collective Worship are two different and distinct activities. An assembly is a gathering together for the purpose of giving information, notices, reiterating school rules etc. Collective Worship is the part of that gathering together where an act of worship takes place.

Between the two activities, which are usually held together for logistical reasons, it is a good idea to have a pause or to introduce something like a candle for pupils to use as a focus, so that it is clear when assembly finishes and Collective Worship begins. Some schools begin Collective Worship by singing together.

As you will see in the legal section, it is still the law that children should take part in a daily Act of Collective Worship, although this can take place at any time of the day. In the busy school timetable this gathering together is an important community activity, and should not be squeezed out or used for additional non-contact time.

This guidance gives information on the law, policy and planning. There have been numerous books of ideas published and many of these can be borrowed from the North East Religious Learning Resources Centre in North Shields (0191 270 4161). Occasionally the centre runs courses which you may find helpful in planning Acts of Collective Worship.

This document is not intended to provide ready made ideas for Collective Worship, but it does include a section on 'useful resources' (p.14-15), and a list of possible themes (appendix B). These may give you some inspiration.

Good Acts of Collective Worship should help a school to deliver the priorities highlighted under the sixth outcome of Every Child Matters, 'Be Spirited'.

North Tyneside SACRE believes that it important that the school community periodically discusses and refreshes its awareness of the place of Collective Worship in the school. Providing consistently good Collective Worship can be challenging, but it does not have to be daunting. At its best it can achieve a great deal. It can be a daily collective activity which among much else can recognise and emphasise common values, aspirations and commitments. Each school needs to think about what is beneficial for the whole school community in the light of the diverse faith traditions and backgrounds of its children and adults.

Finally, two quotations which might help to put this document into perspective.

*'The challenge consists in creating an experience which neither compromises belief but rather recognises the integrity and dignity of all members of the school community; which is essentially educational and stimulates the possibility of reflecting inwardly, sharing outwardly and living upwardly..*

Angela Wood, *Assembly Kit* (BBC/Longman, 1991), p.8

*'Our fragmented society needs a whole series of reflective pools, places where the very deepest issues of life and death may be explored and understood away from the market place.'*

Terry Waite, *Taken on Trust* (Coronet, 1994), p.460

# Definitions of Collective Worship

The word worship comes from the Anglo Saxon word 'weorthscipe', and can be defined as either 'the adoration of God or a Supreme Being' or 'to honour, value and praise someone or something of worth'. In the context of worship in school, the aim is to provide experiences which deepen the inner senses and engender feelings of self worth and the uniqueness of the individual. It can give pupils a purpose and meaning to life, awe and wonder of the natural world, reverence, and respect and a sense of belonging to the community.

Your aim is to create an atmosphere in which genuine worship may take place, and where pupils' own beliefs are valued, and each one has the opportunity to respond in their own way.

Pupils should be encouraged to reflect on the ways in which worship affects the values, attitudes and spiritual dimensions of themselves, the learning community and society. It should be a celebration and a time for reflecting on things that have worth and meaning to the community.

The 'collective' part can take on different meanings depending on the setting. Ideally the whole school, all pupils and staff would be involved. However it is often not possible to gather all at once, and so there are variations in numbers, from small tutor groups to a class, to a year group, up to the whole learning community. The 1988 Education Act defines a school group as any group or combination of groups in which pupils are taught or take part in other school activities: this is not a group reflecting particular religious beliefs. The main point being that all members should be involved in some way in a daily Act of Collective Worship, unless withdrawn by parents for reasons of conscience. **(See The Law on Collective Worship, page 5)**

To give pupils the message that this is an important time of the school day, adults should also be involved rather than using the time as additional non-contact-time.

No pupil should be kept out of the worship time for extra reading or attendance at a School Council meeting, as this is a shared time when the community affirms its worth and togetherness by exploring its shared humanity.

Within your Collective Worship policy, it is a good idea to have a definition of Collective Worship that is true to your own school ethos, and to make that definition as open as possible to include all members of the learning community whether they have a faith or not. **(See Writing a Collective Worship policy, page 7)**

Taking part in the Collective Worship is more than passively attending; the content of the worship should elicit some response from the pupils. Ofsted assesses the contribution of Collective Worship to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the school. The celebration of success and worth is important, and should be an integral part of school life.

# Brief definitions of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education

Ofsted reports on Collective Worship within the context of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors assess the extent of the support and enhancement of the corporate life of the school, and the importance of celebrating that which is worthy and good within the school.

The Education Reform Act (1988) describes what is involved in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These are offered here for schools to use and adapt as they see fit.

## **To promote pupils' spiritual development is actively to encourage:**

- the growth of pupils' inner life, their capacity to relate to others and their non-material well-being; for example, their self-respect, their creativity, their will to achieve their full potential, and their ability to ask and try to find answers to life's major questions, including questions about the existence and nature of God;
- pupils' acquisition of the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and qualities they need to foster their own inner lives and non-material well-being throughout life.

## **To promote pupils' moral development is actively to encourage:**

- pupils' understanding of the difference between right and wrong, the will to do what is right and their willingness to consider others with concern and compassion;
- pupils' acquisition of the knowledge, understanding, skills, qualities and attitudes they need to do what is right and to cope with moral conflict.

## **To promote pupils' social development is actively to encourage:**

- pupils' understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being a member of families and various communities, local, national and global;
- pupils' acquisition of the knowledge, understanding, skills, qualities and attitudes they need to live up to these responsibilities and exercise these rights.

## **To promote pupils' cultural development is actively to encourage:**

- pupils' understanding of the cultural influences that affect them and others, a sense of belonging to local, regional, national, global cultures, and their appreciation and response to a range of aesthetic experiences;
- pupils' acquisition of the knowledge, understanding, skills, qualities and attitudes they need to understand, appreciate and contribute to their own and different cultures.

# The Law on Collective Worship

The Education Reform Act of 1988 sets out the law regarding Collective Worship and Circular 1/94 provides further guidance. The requirement is for a daily Act of Collective Worship which is “of a wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.”

The law states that Collective Worship in schools should aim to:

- provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to allow pupils to explore their own beliefs
- encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of the worship, or through listening to and joining in the worship offered
- develop a community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

Collective Worship is intended to be appropriate for, and to include, all pupils attending a school, regardless of their own personal faith. Collective Worship in schools differs from the corporate worship of believers of a particular faith.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship on the grounds of religious conscience. Parents might wish to provide some material from their own faith for the child to study.

Students in the Sixth Form can make their own decision to withdraw from Acts of Collective Worship. A sixth form student is any pupil who has ceased to be of compulsory school age and is receiving education suitable to the requirements of pupils over the compulsory school age. All pupils should attend the ‘assembly’ part of the proceedings, i.e. the general school notices and information, but can then withdraw from the worship

Teachers also have the right of withdrawal on grounds of religious conscience.

It is not always possible for the whole school to gather in one place, although it is desirable to try to do this at least once a week. Collective Worship can take place within the classroom or tutor group, it can be a single class, a year group, a key stage or the whole school community. Collective Worship should be appropriate to the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the pupils in each school. The head teacher must determine this after consultation with the governing body. If a school is found to be failing to meet statutory requirements, governors must draw up a suitable action plan.

- The majority of Acts of Collective Worship over a term must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character (character not content) i.e. which reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief and not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. It is not necessary for every Act of Collective Worship to be wholly or broadly Christian. During a term a school may have Acts of Collective Worship which include elements which are wholly Christian, those that are broadly in the tradition of another faith, for instance when celebrating a festival such as Divali or Eid, and some where elements are drawn from a number of different faiths. You can take Christian characteristics that are shared by other faiths and use these as your base. In most schools it is appropriate to bring ideas and festivals of other faiths to the pupils’ attention through Collective Worship.

- During Collective Worship there should be a time of quiet reflection, which is an opportunity for children to reflect inwardly in their own way. This may, or may not be prayer. No pupil should be expected to pray against their will.

# Writing a Collective Worship policy for your school

As with any other school policy the Collective Worship policy should be devised to suit your school and its needs while also adhering to the legal requirements that are specific to Collective Worship.

Collective Worship should have its own policy and be treated as a separate issue to the religious education carried out in school.

The policy needs to be a working document that is practical, relates to and has a similar format to other school policies.

It should not be too long a document and should consist of:

- a philosophical statement **(See Model Policy, Appendix A)**
- the legal requirements, including the right of withdrawal by parents and staff
- time: at what time each day will Collective Worship take place and for how long?
- planning: who plans the worship, is there a specific co-ordinator?
- how a record of the themes and content will be kept
- information for parents on the right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship, what provision the school is able to make and what the parent might provide for the withdrawn child
- information on the right of sixth form students to withdraw themselves
- information on the staff right of withdrawal
- future plans and date of review

It is good practice to use a planning template for members of staff so that planning and delivery are consistent. **(See Model Policy, Appendix A)**

There is no nationally agreed length of time for Collective Worship but fifteen minutes is usually a suitable length. Collective Worship can be held at any time during the school day, though a school may wish to consider a time of day when pupils' are likely to be fully attentive.

# Planning Collective Worship

Within the school, there should be a named co-ordinator for Collective Worship. Often this will be the headteacher or the religious education co-ordinator. It should be noted that religious education and Collective Worship are not synonymous, and although there will be links between the content of the agreed syllabus and Collective Worship themes, it should not automatically fall to the RE co-ordinator to deal with Collective Worship.

While having a member of staff in overall charge of Collective Worship, ideally it should be planned jointly, and led by different members of staff throughout the term to show that it is a meaningful act undertaken by your school community. The best Collective Worship sessions are those that are planned thoroughly with shared ideas and responsibility.

## Use of a planning sheet

A planning sheet, displayed in the staff room, gives everyone a chance to contribute (**Appendix C**). The following principles are offered to encourage best practice

- Collective Worship should be a specifically planned activity
- Clear forward plans should be available, for at least a term in advance
- Planning sheets should be kept in a file to show what has already been covered
- Major festivals should be approached from a different angle each year
- There should be an opportunity to monitor and evaluate the school's provision for Collective Worship.

Those who are responsible for the planning and delivery of Collective Worship should try to create an atmosphere which will encourage pupils to see Collective Worship as

- a special time
- in a special place

with the intention of

- creating a sense of occasion
- focussing on matters of worth 'beyond the everyday and mundane'

Collective Worship should also be educational and planned as an explicit and implicit learning experience. It should contribute to the education of pupils, and facilitate spiritual growth and respect for the beliefs and practices of others. This may be done by evoking a sense of beauty, awe, and wonder or feelings of pride, pity, and sharing or by exploring the spirituality of life and experience.

## Collective Worship in the classroom

Although the ideal practice would be to conduct Collective Worship with the whole school present this is not always possible, particularly in secondary schools where a hall may not be large enough to accommodate all pupils. Collective Worship can be carried out in the classroom or during form time and can be an equally enriching time for the pupils as long as it is a carefully planned activity.

It is important to make sure that the general features of good Collective Worship are adhered to, particularly the sense of occasion. It does not need to be as long as a whole school worship, between 5 and 10 minutes of 'special' time set aside should be enough. Putting up a picture for the pupils to focus on (perhaps via a digital projector), or lighting a candle are ways of indicating that this is a special time within the classroom setting.

Collective Worship in the classroom or with a form group can be more intimate than with a larger group of pupils and the pupils can be encouraged to ask and answer questions or lead the worship themselves. It is advisable that the same theme is kept throughout the school and some guidance on this from the co-ordinator would be useful for teachers. For instance a pack with the current theme, some ideas on how to expand on it and some ideas for the prayer or reflection to be used. Some schools have a 'Thought for the day' or a school prayer which can be used during this sort of worship. If the planning sheet is put up in advance in the staff room, teachers can all contribute ideas towards the content of the worship time.

### **The use of themes**

A theme can be a word or phrase or picture which acts as a trigger. Your choice of theme could last for one day, a week, a half term or the length of a season e.g. Lent. However, one theme used for too long can become boring.

A good choice of theme would:

- invite reflection, opening up matters of spiritual worth and value
- be multi dimensional and able to be developed in different ways
- be attractively worded, for instance using alliteration i.e. 'Festivals of Food and Fasting'
- be relevant to the audience, connected to something they have heard of
- be appropriate.

### **Variety of content and of presentation**

This can include:

- different presenters
- visitors from different faiths
- outside groups
- artefacts
- stories
- music
- overhead projection or PowerPoint
- video clips
- focal points e.g. a picture or candle.

The pupils should also be involved in a meaningful way:

- being encouraged to ask and answer questions
- acting a story
- miming to a story
- reading
- pupils' artwork can displayed during reflection time
- poems or prayers written by pupils can be read out

Sometimes the pupils themselves can be the presenters.

It is a good idea to have a different type of Collective Worship for each day of the week:

- led by a visitor
- led by the headteacher or deputy headteacher
- led by another member of staff
- led by a pupil or small group of pupils
- led by a whole class \*
- with praise through song (singing practice can be turned into Collective Worship by using the words of a hymn as a prayer or reflection).

\* It must be remembered that this is the time for the community to come together in worship and should not become a 'show and tell' session of all that the class has learnt this term. If it is your practice to invite parents to this event, it must be made clear that this is your Collective Worship time and not a show or exhibition of work. This is an opportunity for the RE syllabus work to link to Collective Worship. Pupils could act out a story they have heard, present a 'play' or drama based on a character from a book of inspirational writing, or discuss the artefacts associated with a religion or a festival. Pupils could even make up a 'Thought for the Day' for the rest of the school to reflect on.

# Reflection and prayer

As mentioned previously, there should be a time of reflection/prayer during the Collective Worship time for it to comply with legal requirements. Pupils must be allowed to respond in ways that are appropriate to them. The leader of the Collective Worship must respect the variety of faiths (and none) and therefore mainly Christian based prayer is not always suitable. We cannot pressurise pupils into praying, therefore you need to think of different strategies to introduce this part of the Collective Worship. The leader should make it clear when the time to be silent has come. This can be done in a number of ways:

- the leader can say 'I am going to say a prayer from the ..... faith now and I want you to listen and think about what I am saying'
- the leader can say 'I am going to say some words found in the inspirational writings of the ..... community which I want you to think about quietly'
- the leader can say 'Now, while we are quiet, I would like you to listen to the words of a well known prayer'
- the leader can say 'I would like you to think quietly about what we have heard this morning'
- by lighting a candle could also be a sign that this is a time of silent reflection
- by using an overhead projector with a suitable image for pupils to focus on.

Different faith communities pray in different ways and in different positions. Telling pupils to close their eyes and put their hands together may therefore not be suitable. It may be better to tell children to sit quietly and comfortably, and to suggest that it may help to either close their eyes or focus on a visual aid you have chosen. You may want to use the following sentence:

- 'I am going to say a prayer now and if you want to make it your prayer you can say amen at the end, otherwise just sit quietly.'

It should be remembered that it is the private response of each participant that constitutes the worship and not the repetition of prayers or the use of a particular deity's name. If each person has the opportunity to make their own response then no one is excluded by their religious or non-religious attitudes.

# Visitors in Collective Worship

A visitor may also be a councillor, a school governor, a parent or one of the youth/arts groups that bring prepared Collective Worship to schools.

Inviting a visitor from a faith community to lead your Collective Worship can be a valuable exercise.

A visitor can enhance pupils' self-esteem, particularly if they are of a minority faith in the school or community. They can demonstrate the idea of faith to those who have none, and can explain a celebration or festival from a personal point of view.

Having a visitor involves some preparation on the part of the Collective Worship Co-ordinator. A visitor should be chosen or selected carefully being especially mindful of how he or she will relate to pupils and make the Act of Collective Worship a worthwhile experience. However, it is worth the effort for the added interest a new perspective brings to the pupils.

Information for a visitor:

- the nature of Collective Worship
- the theme of the proposed worship
- particular subject matter
- the age of the pupils
- the number of pupils likely to be present
- approach
- the need to be aware of and sensitive to the socio-economic and family background of pupils
- length of the worship
- whether they will be expected to lead prayers
- resources you will provide
- an understanding that they are not there to proselytise.

Visitors should be greeted on arrival and shown the arrangements, afterwards it is nice to offer refreshments and to give some feedback on their contribution. It is good practice to arrange for a letter of thanks to be sent, maybe from some of the pupils, particularly if you want the visitor to come back on another occasion.

# Evaluating Collective Worship

Self-evaluation helps you to focus on an aspect of school life and as a community to set shared goals. Self-evaluation should be a built-in and on-going process which staff and pupils are accustomed to using, and which they believe will bring benefits and enhanced performance leading to school improvement. Evaluation can take place at any time.

Things to consider when evaluating Collective Worship:

## Time

- Is the programme carefully planned with themes, music and a time for prayer or reflection?
- No set time limit but generally 15 minutes is an acceptable time allocation.

## Aims

Does your Collective Worship:

- contribute to personal development?
- foster a corporate identity?
- enrich emotional responses by giving a sense of a 'special' occasion and focusing on matters of worth which are beyond the 'everyday'?
- enhance spiritual growth?
- provide opportunities to promote pupil's moral, social and cultural development?

## Balance

- Is the content of Collective Worship a balance of Christian teachings from the Bible, celebration and festival, teachings from other faiths and issues relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, matching the ethos of the school?
- Is it educational, inclusive and enjoyable?
- Are you giving the children a message that this is a very important time of the school day when all members of the community attend?
- Is there a time when success and achievement is celebrated?
- Is there a variety of leadership of Collective Worship? E.g. headteacher, staff, visitors or pupils?
- Is there a focus for worship with a clearly defined break between worship and an assembly?

## Resources

- Planning sheet (**see Appendix C**),
- Suitable music CDs and live music,
- Pictures,
- Candles/artefacts for children to focus on.

## Links

- With other events or celebrations in the school,
- Although religious education should be treated separately from the Collective Worship programme, it is good practice to link some of the learning from the religious education syllabus into Collective Worship.
- Are children of all faiths esteemed by mention of their festivals?

## Useful resources

For information about Christian festivals and festivals of other faiths you may choose to use the Shap Working Party's "Calendar of Religious Festivals", copies of which can be purchased from The Shap Working Party, PO Box 38580, London, SW1P 3XF. The calendar, published every 18 months, lists and briefly describes all major and many minor festivals, celebrations, commemorations and seasons in the world's major faiths. The BBC has a very good website which is free and lists the relevant dates up to three years in advance. Log on to <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/>

There are numerous books with ideas for Collective Worship for both primary and secondary schools. Many of these follow a format of song, story, reflection, song. However, throughout this guidance the advice has been to make Collective Worship special and something that the pupils will remember and, hopefully, put into practice in their lives. The following publications are recommended as useful for giving you ideas that you can expand on, or ready made sessions that the pupils can take part in. These and many others may be borrowed from the North East Religious Learning Resources Centre in North Shields.

**Collective Worship for Secondary Schools - Ready-to-Use-Assemblies** by Mike Anderson and Martin Grace. Rattlesden: Kevin Mayhew Ltd, 2001

**Prophets or Profits? A journey through Advent: 15 assemblies for secondary schools** by Mike Anderson. Rattlesden: Kevin Mayhew Ltd, 2001

**Cracking Junior RE with ideas for PSHE, Citizenship and Assemblies Volume 1: Issue 1, Autumn 2002** by Esther Bailey (ed). Nottingham: Stapleford Centre, 2002.

**Reflection 2002: New Ideas for Quality Assemblies and Collective Worship** by Lesley Beadle, (ed). Birmingham: Christian Education Publications, 2002.

**Ideas for Assemblies. Key Stage 1** by Georgie Beasley. Leamington Spa: Scholastic, 2000.

**The Rock Cake Assembly Book: 25 Primary School Assemblies** by Tony Bower. Stowmarket, Suffolk: Kevin Mayhew, 2005.

**Ideas for Assemblies. Key Stage 2** by John Buckley. Leamington Spa: Scholastic, 2000.

**50 Ready-to-Use Assemblies** by David Burt. Eastbourne: Kingsway, 2003.

**Assemble Together: sixty topical assemblies for secondary schools** by Tony Castle. Rattlesden: Kevin Mayhew Ltd, 1999.

**52 Ideas for Junior Classroom Assemblies** by Chris Chesterton and Pat Gutteridge. UK: Monarch Publications, 1995.

**Infant Assemblies** by Sheila Davidson. London: Scripture Union.

**Ready-Made Assemblies about Famous People** by Tony Dobinson. Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2000.

**Weekly Themes for Assemblies** by Phil Grice. London: Heinemann Educational, 1996.

**Collective Worship Unwrapped** by John Guest. Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2005.

**52 Ideas for Secondary Classroom Assemblies** by Janet King (ed) and Heike Schwarz (ed). UK: Monarch Publications, 1992.

**The Assemblies Resource Book: High quality assemblies for primary schools.** by Gordon Lamont (ed). London: SPCK, 2001.

**Activity Assemblies for Christian Collective Worship 5 – 11** by Elizabeth Peirce. Hampshire: The Falmer Press, 1991.

**Ready Steady Go!: Twelve Easy-To-Use Assemblies for Infants** by PowerPack and Kevin Mayhew. Rattlesden: Kevin Mayhew, 2003.

**Everyone can Know: Assemblies for multi-faith schools** by Andrew Smith and others. Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 1999.

**Assemblies for Infants. Book 1** by Diane Walker. Norfolk: RMEP, 1999.

**Assemblies for Infants. Book 2** by Diane Walker. Norfolk: RMEP, 1999.

**Assemblies for Infants. Book 3** by Diane Walker. Norfolk: RMEP, 2000.

There are also several good web sites that have ideas for Collective Worship. These are often arranged by theme and usually have ideas for specific festivals from all the faiths.

[www.assemblies.org.uk](http://www.assemblies.org.uk)

[www.assemblingcitizens.co.uk](http://www.assemblingcitizens.co.uk)

[www.culham.ac.uk/cw](http://www.culham.ac.uk/cw)

[www.natsoc.org.uk](http://www.natsoc.org.uk)

[www.reonline.org.uk](http://www.reonline.org.uk)

[www.retoday.org.uk](http://www.retoday.org.uk)

[www.schoolassemblies.btinternet.co.uk](http://www.schoolassemblies.btinternet.co.uk)

[www.staplefordcentre.org](http://www.staplefordcentre.org)

[www.hmd.org.uk](http://www.hmd.org.uk)

[www.reep.org/cw](http://www.reep.org/cw)

[www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar](http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar)

[www.interfaithcalendar.org](http://www.interfaithcalendar.org)

# **Wallsend Jubilee Primary School**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **The role of Collective Worship in the life of our school**

Collective Worship makes a valuable contribution to the life of Wallsend Jubilee Primary School. It provides an opportunity for members of the school community to pause from activity, to gather, to remind themselves of and to reflect upon the beliefs and values which bind the school community together. It also allows those with a religious commitment the possibility of entering into worship and those with no religious commitment to sense what worship is and to reflect deeply. In this way we aim both to affirm and to protect the integrity of all members of the school community.

In particular, Collective Worship in our school

- provides an opportunity for members of the school community to stop activity, to pause and to reflect on important issues;
- builds up the sense of group identity;
- gives pupils the experience of being still or silent;
- provides an opportunity for celebrating times of success or joy;
- provides an opportunity for meeting at times of sadness or sorrow;
- provides an opportunity for highlighting and reflecting upon core school values – such as striving to be honest and truthful, trying hard in all things, respecting oneself as well as other people, striving to be fair and just; and offers the opportunity to mark significant points in the year, such as festivals and school events.

### **Our School and the Law on Collective Worship**

At Wallsend Jubilee Primary School we acknowledge that the Education Reform Act of 1988 sets out the law regarding Collective Worship and we ensure that the 'broadly Christian character' requirement is achieved in the majority of our Acts of Collective Worship over the course of a school term. We do this in a number of ways, for example, by

- making reference to God or Jesus, when appropriate (but being sensitive to the nature of the school community and guarding against the assumption that simply to use such words somehow creates 'worship' or 'legality');
- encouraging a positive and responsible attitude to the environment;
- encouraging a quest for honesty, integrity, justice and truth;
- encouraging children to look beyond the obvious, the immediate and the material;
- encouraging love and respect for self and for the other person;
- encouraging service to others and to the community; and
- building Christian festivals into the yearly programme (which does not, of course preclude focusing on festivals from other faith traditions as well).

At Wallsend Jubilee Primary School we seek to make Collective Worship as inclusive as possible. Therefore we:

- recognise that there are many forms of commitment, religious and non-religious;
- regard variety – in religion, culture and belief – as something to be acknowledged and explored rather than avoided and denied;
- build festivals from a variety of cultural and religious traditions into our yearly programme.

### **Collective Worship and the School Curriculum**

At Wallsend Jubilee Primary School we recognise that Collective Worship is in ‘dialogue’ with the curriculum i.e.

- Collective Worship draws from the curriculum – by providing an opportunity to reflect on and highlight classroom work, for example; and
- Collective Worship feeds back into the curriculum – by providing ideas and suggestions which can be followed up in the classroom, for example.

### **The organisation of Collective Worship in our school**

Collective Worship takes place on a daily basis for all year groups either in a gathering of the whole school, a year group, or a class group

Acts of Collective Worship will usually last between 10 and 30. minutes, although it is recognised that the time may be extended or reduced, as appropriate.

### **Record Keeping**

We recognise the importance and value of record keeping. Collective Worship leaders are encouraged to keep a clear and simple record by using a simple grid.

Collective Worship Record                      Theme.....                      Week beginning .....

Date	Led by	Content	Method/ means	Focal point Time for reflection	Hymn/song/reading

- Records are kept in the staff room where staff can both complete details of Acts of Collective Worship for which they have been responsible and glance at the structure and content of those led by others. Records may be used to provide material to show to and discuss with OFSTED inspectors.

## **Evaluation**

The RE co-ordinator has an opportunity to review and evaluate Acts of Collective Worship through learning walks and discussion with both pupils and teachers/HLTA's/TA's.

## **The right of parents to withdraw their children from Acts of Collective Worship**

At Wallsend Jubilee Primary School we seek to be an inclusive community. However we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. This school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the headteacher/worship co-ordinator followed by written confirmation of withdrawal. Our school has a system of suitable supervision for pupils withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship. However, no additional work is set or followed in this time.

## **The right of members of staff to withdraw from Acts of Collective Worship**

All teachers, including the head teacher, have the right of withdrawal from the Act of Collective Worship, but the head teacher, should he or she wish to exercise this right, maintains statutory accountability for Acts of Collective Worship in our school. This right of withdrawal does not extend to assemblies.

## **The role of Governors**

The Governing Body will review this policy, formally, two years from the date of its adoption. Informal Review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required. This Policy has been formally adopted by the Governing Body of Wallsend Jubilee Primary School. It will be reviewed by the Governors, the Head Teacher and the Collective Worship Co-ordinator in conjunction with all staff two years from the date of the signatures below.

Policy drafted : 14.10.14

Agreed by Staff:.....

Agreed by Governors:.....

Review date: 14.10.16

# Appendix B

## Themes

Achievement	Fantasy	Neighbourhood	The Past
Advent	Fear	New life	The Unknown
Age	Feelings	New Year	The Word
Aims	Festivals	Old and New	Thoughtfulness
Ambition	Followers	One World	Time
Anger	Food and Fasting	Opportunities	Tolerance
Animals	Forgiveness	Ourselves	Trials
Art	Freedom	Outsiders	Trust
Authority	Friendship	Parables	Truth
Autumn/Harvest	Future	Parents	Turning Points
Awareness	Gifts and Talents	Patience	Ultimate Questions
Awe and Wonder	Giving and Receiving	Patriarchs	Understanding
Barriers	God	Patterns	United Nations
Beginnings	Good and Evil	Peace	Us and Them
Beliefs	Good News	People	Values
Birth	Greed	Pilgrimages	Victims
Blindness and Sight	Green Living	Poetry	Victories
Books	Handicap	Possessions	Virtues
Bridges	Happiness	Poverty	War
Bullying	Harvest	Praise	Water
Candlemas	Hearing	Prayer	Ways of Seeing
Candles	Heroes and Heroines	Prejudice	Wealth
Caring	Hobbies	Promises	Why are we here?
Celebration	Holidays	Prophets	Wisdom
Challenges	Holocaust	Proverbs	Wonder
Change	Homelessness	Quiet	Words
Charity	Honesty	Ramadan	Work
Children	Hope	Reflection	Worship
Choices	Humility	Refugees	Xenophobia
Christmas	Ideals	Relationships	You and Me
Co operation	Imagination	Remembrance	Youth and Old Age
Commitment	Influences	Respect	Zero Tolerance
Communication	Injustices	Rewards	
Community	Inspiration	Risks	
Conflict	Inspirational Writings	Roots	
Courage	Jealousy	Rules	
Creation	Jesus	School	
Customs	Journeys	Seasons	
Darkness	Justice	Secrets	
Day and Night	Key People	Selflessness	
Death	Kindness	Sharing	
Diaries	Language	Sins	
Disasters	Laws	Slavery	
Disciples	Leaders	Sorry	
Discovery	Lent	Spirituality	
Divali	Light	Strength and	
Easter	Listening	Weakness	
Education	Loneliness	Sukkot	
Endings	Loving	Surprises	
Environment	Loyalty	Symbols	
Expectations	Memories	Team work	
Explorers	Miracles	Temptations	
Failure	Mistakes	Ten Commandments	
Faith	Music	Thanks	
Families	Natural World	The Gurus	
Famous People	Naughtiness	The Mool Mantra	

# Appendix C

## Collective Worship planning sheet

A table designed to encourage ideas when planning a single Act of Collective Worship or a series on a particular theme.

Focus
People to involve
Activities to include
Experiences to share
Values to reflect on
Stories to use
Music to play
Ideas to explore
Issues to raise
Words to use
Things to tell
Opportunities to reflect
Sayings to repeat
Any other ideas:

# Appendix D

## Determination

If the headteacher of a school feels that the provision of Collective Worship within the broadest interpretation of the law is still not suitable for that particular school, then the headteacher needs to investigate whether it might be appropriate to ask the SACRE to grant a "Determination" in accordance with the law.

The determination is the decision of the SACRE as to whether it is appropriate for the requirement for Christian Collective Worship to apply in the case of the school, or in the case of any class or description of pupils at the school, having regard to any circumstances relating to the family background of the pupils at the school. The SACRE must review the determination if the school so requests and, in any event, within five years of the date when the determination was made or last reviewed.

## Guidance on the Determination procedure

The purpose of this guidance is to support a headteacher:

- (a) in clarifying whether seeking a determination is appropriate to the school; and
- (b) in collecting the evidence base and other documentation that will be needed in order to make an application to SACRE.

### I. Seeking a Determination

**I.1** The law states that the majority of Acts of Collective Worship in a term should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character and it is considered that this should be appropriate for most pupils across the country.

**I.2** In schools where the head teacher and the governors believe that this requirement is inappropriate for their pupils the school may apply to its local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) for a "determination" that the wholly or mainly broadly Christian criterion will not apply.

**I.3** This may be in respect of the whole school or a particular group of pupils within the school. However, the school must continue to make provision for Collective Worship for all pupils.

**I.4** Factors which may inform a head teacher's decision to make an application to the SACRE are:

- (a) the number of withdrawals from broadly Christian Acts of Collective Worship; and
- (b) where there are significant numbers of pupils from non-Christian backgrounds

**I.5** The determination procedure allows this requirement to be lifted in respect of some or all of the pupils in a school where the requirement is inappropriate.

**1.6** The head teacher of the school must first decide:

- (a) why wholly or mainly broadly Christian Collective Worship is not appropriate; and
- (b) what alternative form of Collective Worship would be appropriate, and why.

**1.7** The head teacher will need an evidence base for the school's proposals which should be submitted with the application. It could include:

- pupils' faith (or other relevant) backgrounds;
- information from the school's most recent OFSTED inspection;
- evidence of the number of withdrawals and the reasons for them;
- evidence of the views of governors, teachers and parents.

**1.8** There must be consultation with governors, parents and staff, all of whom will need the following information to guide their decisions:

- a statement from the school as to why the "wholly or mainly broadly Christian character" of Collective Worship is not appropriate (for all or part of the school);
- clear information about what the alternative form of Collective Worship would be and to whom it will apply;
- the SACRE's guidance on Collective Worship. Every school has been sent a copy of this and further copies may be obtained from the Clerk to the SACRE;
- an outline timetable of the determinations procedure; and
- any other information that the head teacher considers may be appropriate to supporting their application, e.g. relevant paragraphs from the school's OFSTED report, the school's current policy on Collective Worship.

**1.9** Governors, parents and staff must be consulted on the proposals. Governors and parents must also be given the opportunity to see Collective Worship in the school, should they wish. Governors must vote at a meeting of the full governing body. Parents and teachers must be given the opportunity to vote in a secret ballot which must be time restricted (i.e. there must be a published deadline).

## **2. Timetable**

**2.1** SACRE will consider determinations annually. This will normally be at SACRE's first meeting of the summer term. SACRE may consider an application at other times if it considers that an earlier decision should be made.

**2.2** In order to ensure that SACRE members have sufficient time to consider them, any applications for a determination must be sent to the Clerk to the SACRE no later than the half term holiday in the spring term.

**2.3** Applications received after the spring half term holiday will not normally be considered until the following year, unless there are special circumstances that may require an earlier decision.

**2.4** Therefore, schools will need to organise their consultations with governors, parents and teachers so that they allow reasonable time for them make a proper consideration of the head teacher's proposals. If a school wishes to make an application, SACRE recommends that the consultation process should begin during the autumn term.

**2.5** The headteacher and a governor of the school or their representatives should attend SACRE's determinations meeting to answer any questions or to provide supplementary evidence.

### **3. What if a determination application is agreed by SACRE?**

**3.1** Where a determination has been granted in respect of all or some of the pupils in the school, daily Collective Worship must still be provided for them. This will be in the form agreed by the SACRE to be more suitable for their needs.

**3.2** Where a determination has been granted in respect of a class or description of pupils of a particular faith or religion, the alternative Collective Worship may be provided for those pupils as a whole. It may not be distinctive of any particular denomination of any faith or religion, but may be distinctive of a particular faith or religion.

**3.3** Parents continue to have a right to withdraw their children from the Collective Worship. The parental right should be freely exercisable, and a school must give effect to any such request. Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal.

**3.4** Where a single determination has been granted for the whole school, it is not permissible for pupils to be divided into faith groups for worship.

**3.5** Where a determination, covers only part of the school, or where more than one determination has been granted in respect of different pupils at a school, a single Act of Collective Worship may be provided for each group of pupils covered by a single determination. Where such a group has been defined in respect of the pupils' faith background, it follows that the single faith worship may be provided for the pupils involved.

**3.6** Each group in respect of which a determination has been made may, of course, be further subdivided by school or age group if that is felt to be appropriate.

**3.7** Information about new arrangements for Collective Worship in the school should be published in the school prospectus. This information should also be made available to OFSTED.

# Appendix E

## Preparing for an OFSTED Inspection

A school might wish to address and consider the following questions prior to an OFSTED inspection.

- In what ways is the school seeking to meet legal requirements relating to *frequency* and *character*?
- What documentation do we aim to make available to the inspectors should they ask to see it?
- Who will be the best person within the school to meet with the inspector dealing with the section relating to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development? How should this person prepare for the meeting?
- Are we as a school aware of what OFSTED documentation says about assembly and Collective Worship?
- Are we sufficiently clear about the distinction between 'assembly' and 'Collective Worship'?
- What Acts of Collective Worship will take place during the week of the inspection?
- What is our thinking about how Collective Worship contributes to pupils' spiritual and moral development in particular? What is the evidence for this in practice?
- To what extent are pupils involved in Acts of Collective Worship? Should their involvement be greater? Should the involvement of others (staff, visitors etc) be greater?
- How many pupils (if any) are withdrawn from Collective Worship by parents? Have we formalised what they should be doing during Collective Worship time?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of current practice? How are we seeking to address weaknesses and to build on strengths?
- How effectively is the school environment used to foster spiritual development? For example, is pupils' work displayed and valued? Do displays support the SMSC development of pupils? Are there quiet spaces in school where pupils have an opportunity to be still and reflect?

Some OFSTED inspection reports have stated that particular schools are not meeting legislative requirements because not all class-based Acts of Collective Worship have been judged to be 'Acts of Collective Worship'.

In considering class-based Acts of Collective Worship, schools are advised to consider to what extent:

- an appropriate atmosphere (conducive to worship, albeit in an educational sense) is being created

*Means of doing this might include: using appropriate seating arrangements, subtly marking the transition into and out of the activity, e.g. by changing the tone and volume of the voice, using a visual focal point, playing music;*

- pupils are being given the opportunity to reflect and to think at depth

*Means of doing this might include: encouraging response and the asking of questions, using stories which have depth, using silence and quietness, reading out words which invite reflection (poems, prayers etc), encouraging response but not necessarily discussion; and*

- pupils and teacher adopt an appropriate bearing towards the activity

*This might include: quietening down, being prepared to listen to other people's responses, acknowledging 'deep' questions without necessarily attempting to answer them, accepting both religious and non-religious responses.*