

Collective Worship Policy

Reviewed November 2017

Next Review 2020

Introduction

At the Raleigh School we believe that collective worship makes an important contribution to the life of the whole school community. It fosters the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. It supports the school ethos by promoting good learning and citizenship, providing opportunities for pupils to explore, appreciate and celebrate the values on which the school is based. Collective worship is also an opportunity to celebrate achievements and significant occasions for individuals, the school and the wider community. The majority of pupils come from a Christian background and the school serves a broadly Christian local community.

Aims

Collective worship should give pupils opportunities to:

- develop cohesion amongst the school community, helping to promote and strengthen every member's belonging and unique contribution to the school
- celebrate being part of a school community and the wider community
- reinforce positive attitudes and affirm the shared values of the school community
- broaden pupils' awareness of themselves, others and the world in which they live
- celebrate the achievements of pupils and others
- experience religious worship
- explore and question their own beliefs and values, alongside the beliefs and values of others
- become reflective, deep thinking individuals in a busy and complex society
- deepen understanding of their own culture and that of others, recognising that cultural diversity is enriching rather than threatening.

The legal requirements

At the Raleigh School we are guided by the requirements of the Surrey Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE). The responsibility for arranging collective worship rests with the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Governing Body. The main provisions for collective worship are contained in the Education Reform Act 1988. The Act does not specify the timing and organisation of daily collective worship or the size and make-up of pupil groups.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship. Staff may also exercise the right of withdrawal for participating in or leading collective worship but they do not have the right to withdraw from the non-worship part of assembly.

Collective worship must be:

- daily for all registered pupils on the school premises

- an opportunity for pupils to worship
- mainly of a broadly Christian character
- non-denominational
- organised to allow pupils and staff to withdraw.

Organisation and Content

The school provides a daily act of collective worship which is of a broadly Christian character and which draws inspiration from a range of faiths, beliefs and traditions. Collective worship incorporates school values and themes such as British values. Local, national and international events and festivals are celebrated and commemorated. Links are made to children's learning and their efforts and achievements are valued and celebrated. Collective worship themes are mapped out in a long term planning document.

A variety of resources and strategies are used to encourage and retain pupils' active involvement. Pupils participate, listen, watch, discuss, answer questions, sing and share in quiet, thoughtful periods of reflection or prayer. (See Appendix 2). Stories are read, drama is performed, presentations are shared and music is used to engage and illicit a response from pupils. Visitors from religious groups, charities and other local organisations also make valuable contributions to collective worship.

Collective worship takes place mainly in the hall in an atmosphere which promotes attitudes of respect, awe and wonder, enquiry and self-understanding. It usually takes place first thing in the morning or before break time and lasts for approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

On Mondays the whole school meets together and collective worship is conducted by the head teacher, senior member of staff or an invited visitor to the school.

On Tuesdays collective worship takes place in key stage groups led by a class teacher. In key Stage 2 the focus is on school values, British values and significant events. In Key Stage 1 individual children's birthdays are celebrated.

On Wednesdays 'Singing Assembly' takes place in key stage groups led by the music co-ordinator or class teacher. This includes a moment of reflection such as reflecting on the words of a song.

On Thursdays the whole school meets together to celebrate pupil's efforts and achievements through 'Certificate Assembly'. Collective worship is usually conducted by the head teacher.

On Fridays collective worship is led by a class teacher or by a class of pupils. Parents are invited to attend class assemblies.

Reception children join the whole school for class assemblies and special events, but mainly hold times of reflection and celebration within their year group setting.

See Appendix 1 for a useful checklist to consider to see if the assembly meets the criteria for Collective Worship.

Personal, Spiritual, Moral and Social Development

Collective worship gives pupils the opportunity to explore and nurture their spiritual,

moral, social and cultural development. These are embedded in the aims of collective worship and are an integral part of acts of collective worship.

Equal Opportunity

Our aim is that collective worship is accessible to all our pupils, taking into account their ages and aptitudes whilst showing sensitivity to family backgrounds, including those with a faith, or none. All children and adults in the school are valued members of the school community, whatever their faith or beliefs, with no assumption of a shared religious commitment. We believe our collective worship is inclusive and beneficial for all pupils. However, parents have the right to withdraw their children according to their conscience. Please contact the Head Teacher to discuss any concerns.

Risk Assessment

All visiting speakers are DBS checked and supervised at all times. They receive a copy of the school policy on collective worship before their visit and meet with key members of staff before leading an act of worship, to establish school protocols. Resources such as candles are used with a high regard for safety and under close adult supervision. Food products are checked to ensure they do not contain any nuts. Children used as AV support are trained in the safe handling of the equipment. Visitors may not take photographs or video of children other than their own, unless direct parental consent has been given at the time. Photographs or film of other children may not be forwarded electronically to third parties or downloaded onto any social media platform.

Resources

A wide range of resources are used to make collective worship interesting and relevant. These include examples of children's work, Bible stories, poems, stories from other faiths, news articles and other factual reports, music (played live and CD's), internet images, PowerPoint presentations, props, food, artefacts and visiting speakers. There are a wealth of resources found in assembly books and online.

Appendix 1

A useful checklist for ensuring assemblies contain collective worship:

- Does it contribute to personal development?
- Does it foster a whole school identity?
- Does it enrich emotional responses by giving a sense of a 'special' occasion and focusing on matters beyond the 'everyday' to enhance spiritual growth?
- Is there a balance of music, speech and silence?
- Is the content a balance of Christian teachings, celebration and festival, teachings from other faiths and issues relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, matching the ethos of the school?
- Is there a programme of values as inspiration for collective worship, many of which will have strong links to 'broadly Christian' beliefs?

Appendix 2

A prayer to consider.

“Close your eyes, put your hands in your lap to make it easier to listen, reflect or pray.

Dear God,

Be with us today

Fill our hearts with joy

Fill our minds with learning

Fill our classrooms with peace

Fill our lessons with fun

Fill our friendships with kindness

Fill our school with love

Amen”

Or ask children to reflect on these words and begin with 'Let's fill our hearts with joy.....' instead of 'Dear God....' And instead of 'Amen' just take a pause and then ask them to open their eyes.