

# Collective Worship Policy

**Reviewed October 2020**

**Next Review November 2023**

## Introduction

Collective worship is a daily gathering of the school community which reflects something special and focuses on matters beyond ordinary school activities to enhance pupil's spiritual, moral and cultural awareness. Collective worship is classed as a distinct activity from Religious Education and assemblies and is usually delivered as part of daily assemblies.

At the Raleigh School we believe that collective worship makes an important contribution to the life of the whole school community. 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.

## 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, developing mutual respect.
- 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.

(See Appendix 1 for a useful checklist for ensuring assemblies contain collective worship.)

## **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 fundamental 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 termly 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. 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 15 minutes. (see Appendix 2 for Covid amendments to assembly organisation).

Across the week there will be the following assemblies:

- 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.
- Collective worship takes place in key stage groups led by a member of the leadership team. The focus is on school values and fundamental British values. In Key Stage 1 individual children's birthdays are celebrated and in Key Stage 2 current and significant events are explored.
- Singing Assembly is held in key stage groups, led by the music leader or member of the leadership team. This includes a moment of reflection such as reflecting on the words of a song.
- The whole school meets together to celebrate pupil's efforts and achievements through 'Certificate Assembly'. This is usually conducted by the head teacher.
- 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.

## **Spiritual, Moral, Social and cultural 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**

Visiting speakers are supervised at all times. If they bring a memory stick, it is safety checked by The School's eSafety consultant. 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, in accordance with the school's eSafety policy.

## **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, films, 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 is 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, teachings from other faiths, celebrations and festivals 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**

During Covid restrictions, assemblies have been adapted to be held in classrooms and in year group bubbles. These have been led by class teachers, teaching assistants and members of the senior leadership team. Each class has had access to a carefully selected wide range of online assembly resources including Picture News, Pause for Thought (Assemblies.org) and Oak Academy.