

Settrington All Saints' Church of England School

Policy for Collective Worship

Enter School Visions here

Love † Serve

At Settrington All Saints' Church of England Primary School we believe that our purpose, within a mindful Christian environment, is to open up horizons of aspiration for every child and adult; enabling them to learn well, be healthy and safe in spirit, mind and body, and to discover 'Life in all its fullness.' We inspire a joy in learning; empowering every individual to have the courage to make mistakes and try new things, leading to resilience in learning and life. We value each other and we value our community; in giving and appreciating each other we build better relationships and are able to flourish together. We encourage a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation; showing respect for every individual; being peace makers. We nurture a global view; celebrating difference and developing hope in our shared life on a fragile planet.

Settrington All Saints' is a Church of England School. We recognise that Collective Worship is at the heart of our school life in allowing children and staff time to reflect, drawing on those opportunities as described by the DfE (circular 1/94); worship God, consider spiritual and moral issues, explore their own beliefs, encourage participation and response, promote community/shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes. These aspects of Collective Worship are driven by our school vision and values. (As above)

Since 1944 Collective Worship has been a legal requirement in maintained schools. The law requires that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character" for the majority of the time. They must also be "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils". In inviting the school community to worship, we have to be mindful of the varied backgrounds that the school community come from and it is therefore never the practice of our schools to preach to or seek to convert. The faith background of all is to be respected at all times.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children however as our main purpose in Collective Worship is for it to be meaningful and relevant for all our pupils, it is hoped that few parents will find the need for withdrawal. At present there are no parents who exercise this right. If in future children were withdrawn, adequate supervision arrangements will be put in place. Teachers also have the right to withdraw from Collective Acts of Worship.

Collective worship is not the same as an assembly, though can take place in the same gathering. A school may hold any number of assemblies each week, but must have a daily act of collective worship. Collective worship could additionally be held in class or tutor groups for a shorter period of time.

Aims

Through our Acts of Collective Worship we aim to: -

- ☒ give opportunities to reflect on the Christian Faith ☒ consider the importance and variety of prayer, reflection, including silence
- ☒ develop a respect for each other's beliefs and opinions
- ☒ encourage a sense of unity and personal identity
- ☒ build a concept of individual self-worth and 'special-ness'
- ☒ realise our commitment to each other, staff and pupils alike
- ☒ encourage Christian personal, social and moral values
- ☒ think about the needs of others
- ☒ provide a richness and variety of experiences
- ☒ including occasional reference to other major faiths

Our Practice and Purpose

At its best collective worship in our schools will offer opportunities for the whole school community to:

- celebrate together and share common values
- develop a reflective approach to living and thinking deeply
- foster a corporate identity and build community
- affirm the individual and the community
- deepen every individual's capacity for emotional responses
- awaken empathetic responses
- look beyond the material and the physical
- share experiences and possibilities of the transcendent
- challenge and question their own thinking and the views of others.

It may include:

- Pupil's contributions (or be led entirely by pupils)
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/reflection/meditation/songs/hymns/music

- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Film/video
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

A note about Prayer

- Words introducing any prayer-like activity are given as an invitation rather than an instruction.
- Any invitation to pray is made for the benefit of those pupils for whom it is appropriate.
- The use of silence gives space for prayer or reflection or both.
- The words need to be owned by the speaker and/or grounded in a religious tradition
- Everyone can be included in a personal reflection on the theme or story or words of a prayer
- There is an expectation that everyone will be still and listen to the words a prayer, without expectation of participation.

Planning and organisation

When planning our collective worship we try to ensure that there is;

- thorough planning to meet the needs of our particular school, its learners and community
- educational use of religious and other material, ensuring variety in its form and presentation
- an open approach that gives pupils opportunities to respond without compromising them in any way
- every opportunity to interest and inspire pupils
- encouragement for all members of the school community to share in the planning and leading of collective worship
- an appropriate structure to indicate the beginning and end of collective worship.
- Opportunity for all teachers and pupils take an active role in leading worship. (We currently have no clergy)
- The school values run through all aspects of our planning

Responsibilities

Foundation Governors – Rev S Walker monitors the quality of collective worship. Ensuring collective worship is consistent with the trust deed Head Teacher (CW & RE lead) – has the delegated responsibility for day to day acts of collective worship. As well as identifying and recording themes and resources; providing support for colleagues on delivery of collective worship; identify training needs; monitoring acts of worship and evaluating impact; ensuring all staff recognise the need to develop themes and content beyond collective worship.

Equal Opportunities

Special arrangements are made for children with special educational needs which may include for these alternative seating or support for those who find the large group experience of assembly disturbing.

Visitors

We encourage guest providers throughout the year. Some of these maybe related to a specific project e.g. NSPCC, speakers from other faiths, Barnados etc.

Monitoring

This is done through recording planning and discussing with children (these are collected in a scrap book in Class 3), as well as questionnaires that are more formal.

Conclusion

Collective Worship unites the whole school and develops a sense of community. It is a time to celebrate the worth and value of every single person in the school community.