

A Policy for Collective Worship at Northbourne Church of England Primary School

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1. Introduction

For generations schools have recognised the value of gathering pupils together each day. The elements of a caring, sharing community are often best celebrated together within the context of the discussion, music, singing, story telling, worship and reflection; we call "Collective Worship".

Within our school family we explore the beliefs, values, codes and ethos of the school and seek to know more of our relationship with a loving and just God. Our Collective Worship Policy is closely linked with the RE, PSHE and Citizenship

policies and may also reflect aspects of curriculum policies as appropriate, e.g. for Book Week, Maths Week or whole school celebrations. While Personal Behaviour and Curricular policies seek to guide the individual to be a maturing, independent, self-knowing adult, the Collective Worship aspect of school life supports the growth of the human spirit.

In order to allow this to happen, we need to offer opportunities:

- To explore, share and accept beliefs and ideas and consider their relevance,
- To consider the importance of prayer, praise, meditation and silence and listening to God, allowing participants to experience and engage in these aspects of worship on a daily basis.
- To think about the needs of others and develop a sense of Community,
- To celebrate achievement, and endeavour in all aspects of life and to reinforce positive attitudes,
- To come to terms with aspects of right and wrong, good and bad, and to acquire the strategies by which to judge the difference.
- To understand and develop personal standards and values.

As indicated above, many of these opportunities may also be provided during 'circle time' and as part of Citizenship and PSHE lessons. It must be stressed however that collective worship at Northbourne Church of England Primary School is not the main vehicle for delivering Citizenship and PSHE. Collective worship is an important means of promoting the spiritual development of the pupils at Northbourne Church of England Primary School and every effort is made to ensure that this special time for the family of the school is protected and enhanced. While other areas of the curriculum and school life may also provide the opportunities listed above, collective worship is distinguished by WORSHIP.

2. Legal Basis

- a) The Education Reform Act (ERA) 1988 requires all pupils to attend a daily act of corporate worship, unless withdrawn by his / her parent. Children should not be removed from collective worship on a regular basis. If a regular activity (e.g. swimming) occurs at collective worship time an alternative act of worship must be in place at another time.

- b) Teachers in voluntary controlled schools such as Northbourne also have the right to withdraw from corporate worship.
- c) The requirements of Northbourne CE Primary School as a voluntary controlled school are that the worship is of a Christian nature consistent with Anglican belief and practice. It is the responsibility of the governing body of the school, in consultation with the head teacher, to make arrangements for the collective act of worship in accordance with the trust deed of the school. The trust deed is the original conveyance of land for the purpose of establishing a school to provide education in accordance with Church of England teaching, reflecting Anglican traditions.
- d) Legislation requires all collective worship at Northbourne CofE Primary School to be consistent with Christian beliefs and practices. This does not mean that multi-cultural material cannot be used. Christianity is a world religion and children should become familiar with music, prayers, stories and artefacts from around the world. Material, such as stories, from other religions can also be used to explore common beliefs and values. However, collective worship is not a suitable vehicle for teaching children about other faiths: that belongs in RE as part of a coherent curriculum.
- e) The act of collective worship must be clearly identifiable and be separate from curriculum time.

3. The Aims of Worship at Northbourne Church of England Primary School

The school aims to provide an environment and programme which will encourage children's natural sense of wonder and curiosity about the wonder of God's world. Using this as a base for an act of worship, related to personal experience, together with the school's Christian foundation, will underpin and promote the values, motivation and actions of adults and children forming this school family community.

The daily act of worship is an opportunity to create and participate in shared experiences of praise and thanksgiving to God.

a) Providing opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development

- To identify contemporary issues of social, moral and spiritual significance and to explore Christian responses to them.
- To understand the difference between right and wrong.
- To develop attitudes of empathy and skills of cooperation.

- To develop positive caring relationships based on respect for others and a sense of self-worth.

b) Celebrating the Christian values on which the life of our school is based

- To experience the spiritual and moral foundations of the Christian faith.
- To provide the opportunity for exploring basic beliefs and value such as love and forgiveness, faith and hope.
- Priority must be given to the festivals and seasons of the Church year with the exploration of the basis, history and lessons to be found therein.

c) Helping pupils to learn the skills of worship

- To appreciate opportunities to listen to stories of the Bible, the experiences of others and appreciate times of stillness and reflection.
- To share experiences of praise and thanksgiving.
- To develop a sense of wonder, awe and mystery.

d) Experiencing some of the traditional forms of Christian worship.

- To develop familiarity with the words and stories from the Bible.
- To take part in readings, hymns, songs and prayers.

4. Organisation

The following guidelines show timings, grouping and places over each week at Northbourne. Collective worship will take place in the hall for most children on most days.

Classroom or outdoor opportunities should be set within the same atmosphere, which will be:

- ❖ relaxed
- ❖ free from distraction
- ❖ comfortable
- ❖ attractive

5. Planning and Coordination

a) The Role of the Coordinator:

- To organise the focus for each week within the school year. The Collective Worship curriculum ensures that Christian festivals are celebrated, and that children experience stories from the Bible, recognise events from around the world, embrace our core Christian values and school curriculum values. The foci can be based on our four year curriculum cycle or can include themes from "Putting Worship at the Heart of Assembly," or other materials from the Diocese as appropriate.
- To liaise with outside speakers especially parish clergy, lay ministers and other church representatives.
- To liaise with staff and governors. To review and order resources.
- To manage the budget. (*When applicable*)
- To write and review the policy.
- To monitor the implementation of the policy.

All plans for collective worship must acknowledge that it is important for content and themes to be accessible and intelligible to the pupils, recognising their social, racial, cultural, religious and non-religious backgrounds as well as their ages and aptitudes.

As a school we also have six core values; love, faith, compassion, forgiveness, kindness and respect. These are underpinned by key stories from The Bible.

These themes can also be used to enhance the Collective Worship topics and PSHE/RE curriculum.

A collective worship planning sheet is used and stored by the co-ordinator.

6. Delivery and Content.

- a) At Northbourne Church of England Primary School collective worship is organised according to the ages and background of all children. A whole school assembly on Monday outlines the theme for the week, which is then followed up daily in key stage, year or class groups.
- b) Northbourne School Christian foundation underpins the values, motivations and actions of the adults and children within our school family community and is reflected in our policy for collective worship. This policy is also relevant to PSHE, Citizenship, Special needs, Early Years and RE.
- c) The content of each time of collective worship will vary in style and experiences offered. All Children have opportunity to take part in singing, listening, reflection and prayer.
- d) The theme of the week or particular day will be reflected in songs, activities and prayers and will stimulate further discussion. The way in which we receive and respond to collective worship will be seen as a starting point for future independent thinking.
- e) The staff and other speakers at Northbourne Church of England Primary School follow the themes and are encouraged to develop their own style of presentation and use of resources.
- f) The pupils at Northbourne Church of England Primary School are encouraged to participate in collective worship by sharing their achievements, reading poems and prayers, writing prayers or taking part in presentations.

7. Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation.

The arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the collective worship are agreed by the co-ordinator, staff and the appointed Governor (Appendix three).

8. Resources and Budget

- a) A wide variety of resources are available to both key stages. Some RE resources can be found in the main resource area. The main CW file is kept in the school office.
- b) It is the responsibility of the co-ordinator to ensure that the appropriate resources are available, ordering them when necessary. Budgetary provision is made available annually, through the School Improvement Plan, or on an ad-hoc basis if specific resources are required which were not part of the original plan.

9. Church and Parish Links



- a) The role of the incumbent includes welcoming the school to church based worship, participating and leading Collective Worship on a regular basis in school and sharing with the Parish of St Augustine.
- b) Northbourne Church of England Primary School maintains links with the local church by using it as a centre for Easter, Harvest and Christmas worship. We worship at other times of the year in our parish church with the local community. Curriculum activities such as RE, local studies and maths use the local churches as a resource.
- c) Northbourne Church of England Primary School is a Cathedral linked school.

This policy is to be reviewed regularly.

**Reviewed and updated by C. Karunaratna
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