

Collective Worship Policy

Forncett C.E.V.A. Primary School

Introduction

This policy was written by a working party including staff and governors and follows advice from the Diocese. It explains the policy for collective worship at this school and how we interpret the legislation set out by the government.

The legal requirements for Collective Worship

The 1988 Education Act states that:

- all pupils must take part in a collective act of worship every day
- the act of collective worship may be as a whole school or in different age groupings
- it may happen at any time of the school day
- it has to take place on school premises (In a Voluntary Aided (VA) school the Governors can make arrangements for worship elsewhere on special occasions e.g. the local church. In a controlled school acts of worship may take place off school premises but these should be in addition to the statutory acts of collective worship on the premises).
- the head teacher is responsible for ensuring the legal requirements for Collective Worship are met. (In a VA or VC school the responsibility for securing daily acts of worship lies with the governing body after consultation with the headteacher).
- the character and content of collective worship in these schools continues to be determined by governing bodies in accordance with their Trust Deeds.
- all staff, including the headteacher have the legal right to withdraw from the Act of Collective worship. The headteacher remains responsible for finding someone suitable to organise and lead the acts of worship. (The right to withdrawal does not extend to staff in VA schools.)
- all parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship, wholly or partially. The school's responsibility for the child's health and safety is still paramount.

The DFE circular 1/94 adds to the legal requirements of the Education Act although these are not an authoritative legal interpretation; this would be a matter for the courts. The booklet 'Towards Realism and Consensus' explains the Norfolk view on Collective worship and seeks to put the legal requirements into perspective and enable all schools to fulfil the law in a way that is suitable for all pupils and in a way that adds to their overall development.

The aims of Collective Worship at Forncett

The government requires all schools to provide an act of Collective worship. At Forncett, we acknowledge that our school community is not a 'worshipping community' in the same sense as a local church. We provide daily acts of Collective Worship, however, which we believe help children understand

some of the features of worship in a believing Christian community. These are:

- praise
- reflection
- celebration
- thanks
- saying sorry
- sharing

We have chosen these elements because we believe they are also important features of our everyday life in school and are therefore appropriate responses for all pupils and staff in our community.

The law also requires us to provide pupils with an opportunity to worship God as part of our Collective Worship. We therefore try to provide an opportunity to respond in the form of a time of quiet reflection at some point in each act of collective worship. This time may involve spoken prayers but more often a time for each pupil and adult present to be quiet and think about what they have heard; this will provide opportunity for each to worship God if they should wish to do so.

The approach to Collective Worship at Forncett

The acts of collective worship are planned to give pupils a variety of experiences to enable them to reflect on, and respond to, things which we, as a school community, believe are important. These experiences will include:

- the telling of appropriate stories (Biblical, moral, multi-cultural)
- drama
- dance
- poetry
- music
- mime
- multi-media programmes/presentations

The organisation of Collective Worship at Forncett

Collective acts of worship follow a half-termly rolling programme of Christian themes based on the school's chosen 12 values, supported by the 'Values for Life' scheme of work. Staff supplement this scheme with their own or other published materials which uphold the theme and support the aims of the school. Allowances are made for marking festivals like Saints Days, Harvest, etc. or for covering other newsworthy events. The theme for the half term is displayed in the hall on our Collective Worship board. It has pictures for reflection and discussion, an explanation of the theme, some helpful thoughts, hymns and songs that will be used and a list of listening music for use during Collective Worship. The 'singing' assembly provides an opportunity to look carefully at some of the songs we use and consider their meaning. These songs compliment the theme for the half-term and the collective worship for that day stems from this. The current theme is also explained in our school

newsletter to parents and carers and we send a 'home-school values sheet to each family explaining the value and offering activities and stories around it.

An Act of Worship led by the parish Priest-in-Charge and/or Curate is held at least termly in the school hall. The church is also used at other key times e.g. at Christmas, Easter and Harvest. The children are encouraged to lead and actively participate in Collective Worship wherever possible. Children are regularly asked to evaluate Collective Acts of Worship and their responses are recorded in the collective worship evaluation book. Class teachers or teaching assistants also collect any responses and evidence to put in the folder that stem from Collective Worship in Class Assembly time in order to build up evidence of the impact Collective Worship has on our children and to aid monitoring.

Resources for Collective Worship

These are available in the resources room, the hall trolley and from the headteacher who co-ordinates Collective Worship. We use a wide range of material including the internet, photographs, programme extracts and interactive whiteboards.

Withdrawal

Parents may ask for their child to be totally or partially withdrawn from Collective worship in accordance with the Education Act. They are advised of this right in the School brochure and asked to contact the Headteacher to make arrangements. No reasons have to be given but discussion with parents over the issues concerning withdrawal are recommended in Circular 1/94.

SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools)

In VA schools like Forncett, Collective Worship will be inspected on a regular basis through a Section 48 inspection. It is the responsibility of the governors to organise this in liaison with the Headteacher. The Diocese offers assistance and support with the arrangements.

Reviewed – November 2017

Next Review due – December 2018

Signed : Date :