



Collective Worship

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for pupils to:

- worship God
- reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian nature and on their own beliefs
- develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- respond to the worship offered.

Statutory Duty of School

All maintained schools provide daily collective worship for registered pupils (apart from those who have been **withdrawn by their parents**). This is usually provided within a daily assembly. The Headteacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Daily collective worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The precise nature will depend on the family background, ages and abilities of the pupils. However, if it is inappropriate for some or all of the pupils to take part in Christian collective worship, the Headteacher may apply to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for a determination to have this requirement lifted.

Collective worship in foundation schools with a religious character and voluntary schools will be in accordance with the school's trust deed. Where provision is not made by a trust deed, the worship should be in accordance with the beliefs of the religion or denomination specified for the school.

Implementation

Collective worship, whether in assembly or tutor time, will:

- be acceptable to the whole community, staff and pupils
- include a variety of elements at different times
- involve the pupils.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

A Policy for Collective Worship at Mark Rutherford School

Introduction

This policy 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 stated 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 an aided 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 Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the legal requirements for Collective Worship are met. (In an aided or voluntary controlled 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 has 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 Aided 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 DFEE 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 aims of Collective Worship at Mark Rutherford School

The government requires all schools to provide an act of Collective worship. At Mark Rutherford School 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 students understand some of the features of worship in a believing Christian, Muslim, Hindu and other religious communities. 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 Mark Rutherford School

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 (Religious, moral, multi-cultural)
- drama
- dance
- poetry
- music
- mime
- TV/video/radio programmes

The organisation of Collective Worship at Mark Rutherford School

there is an act of Collective worship every day following the pattern shown below:

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

The acts of worship follow themes designed by staff which support the aims of the school. The current year's themes are displayed on the staff notice board. While staffs are encouraged to follow these, allowances are made for marking festivals or other newsworthy events.

Acts of worship are occasionally held in the Parish church e.g. at Christmas, Easter and Harvest. The 'hymn practice' assembly provides an opportunity to look carefully at some of the songs we use and collective worship stems from this.

All parents are advised in the school brochure of their right to withdraw their children from the collective worship provided.

Resources for Collective Worship

These are available in the staff room. We use radio broadcasts material from the BBC, some of the assemblies from Cracking RE magazine and also on-line assemblies from the internet.

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 discussions with parents over the issues concerning withdrawal are recommended. Staff also have the right to withdraw.

Ofsted

Collective Worship must be inspected on a regular basis. This is part of the normal school inspection for Community schools.

Taking Collective Worship at Mark Rutherford School

Appendix 1 sets out the hall layout

Appendix 2 sets out advice for visitors