



## Collective Worship Policy

Date of review: Autumn 2014	Date of next review: Autumn 2017
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All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship. This must reflect the traditions of this country which are, in the main, broadly Christian. Acts of worship that are broadly in the tradition of another religion, and acts of worship which contain elements drawn from a number of different faiths will also take place but within each school term, the majority of acts of worship will be mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Collective Worship at Furzeham School is planned to take into account the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes.

Collective Worship provides an opportunity for our school to come together to worship God, to develop community spirit, to promote a common ethos and shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes. It provides an opportunity for pupils' to consider spiritual, cultural and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered. It helps to promote among pupils a clear set of personal values and beliefs and help them to respect and understand those with different beliefs and religious practices from their own. Also to help them to understand that this country has a long tradition of religious freedom, this should be preserved.

Acts of Worship at Furzeham School are planned to reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities.

Sometimes Collective Worship may take place as a single act of worship for all pupils or as separate acts for pupils in different key stages, classes or groups.

Although Collective worship and assembly are distinct activities they may take place as part of the same gathering and on these occasions both can be related to the day to day life, aspirations and concerns of the school.

### **Our School Aims**

Furzeham School aims to provide the best possible education for children. Our Collective Worship policy links to these specific whole school aims;

- to celebrate all kinds of achievement at our school, trying our best to recognise and reward the unique qualities of every child and adult in it
- to constantly learn from each other, to promote an understanding of the beliefs and values of others
- to develop, spiritually, morally and culturally, celebrating the diversity of our backgrounds and what we have to offer each other

We value all children as equal members of our school community and enable them all to contribute as best they can to the life of the school.

At Furzeham Primary School, we believe that Collective Worship plays an important role in the life of our school because it;

- promotes a sense of 'awe and wonder'
- provides an opportunity to worship God
- helps children experience and understand the nature and language of worship
- encourages the adults and children in our school, to respect themselves and to respect others, their cultures, their differences and their opinions.
- encourages them to reflect, think deeply and consider and express the emotions and ideas that relate to their own beliefs and those of others
- celebrates all aspects of school life, sharing the gifts and talents of our children
- supports our whole school curriculum especially Personal and Social Education and helps children to make connections between Collective Worship/Re and other lessons
- develops in our children a sense of care and tolerance and the courage to take responsibility for their own actions
- provides an opportunity for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day

The policy was developed in consultation with the whole school community. It links with all school policies but especially R.E, PSHE, Community Cohesion and Behaviour/Pastoral policy.

**The purpose of this policy is to:**

- establish a clear structure for Collective Worship so that the whole school community understands its purpose and their role in it
- ensure that the legal requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act are fulfilled, with daily acts of worship of a broadly Christian nature taking place

**Content**

We have developed a range of themes and topics through which collective worship takes place. SEAL materials (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) are used as whole school themes and pull together the aspects mentioned above. We believe these themes are clearly Christian in nature but are universal in their application. Visitors from multi-faith backgrounds are invited to contribute to our assemblies and are planned in as part of the timetable, as well as the celebration of the major Christian festivals. Relationships between these and those of other faiths are often referred to in order to make connections and comparisons between these and the Christian faith. A timetable is developed for each half term, incorporating a wide variety of themes and visitors designed to fulfil our aims and statutory obligations (Please see specific timetable at the start of each half term)

## **Equal Opportunities :- (including gender and ethnic grouping)**

We recognise that in our school we have children from a variety of faith backgrounds and that many children have no religious background at all. Great care is taken during Collective Worship to ensure that all children feel valued and special and that their integrity as human beings is consistently upheld. Collective Worship is an inclusive activity, addressing many issues relating to different cultures and races, gender issues and family beliefs. Parents do have the right of withdrawal from assembly (see below) and parents who have any concerns about the provision and practice of our Collective Worship are strongly encouraged to contact Mr Adams, the Headteacher.

### **Withdrawal from Assembly**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from assembly. This may be for a number of reasons, but is usually because the religious content conflicts with their religious beliefs. In the event of a parent expressing concern about the content of the assembly or if staff become aware that a parent is likely to withdraw a child on religious grounds, a copy of the proposed assembly timetable will be provided along with discussion about the religious content of the assembly. Alternative arrangements will be made for the withdrawn child, which ensure that they are provided with an appropriate space, supervision and activities for the duration of the assembly. Every effort will be made to ensure that the parent, child and teaching staff are happy with these arrangements. (Please see attendance policy for additional arrangements for religious observance)

**Monitoring of this policy** The Curriculum Standards and Monitoring Committee of the governing body monitor this policy as part of their strategic role

## **MONDAY ASSEMBLIES (Mainly SEAL) 9.10- 9.25 (whole school usually Head or Deputy Headteacher**

These are very important as they set the tone and theme for the week.

We believe that it is important that we help children to develop a connection between Collective Worship/RE, School aims and other lessons. It is important to be able to reflect, think deeply and consider emotions and ideas that relate to the beliefs of oneself or others.

- A symbolic light will be lit at the start of assembly and this will act as a reminder to the children to demonstrate reflective behaviour.
- Calming music will be played as the children enter to help inspire a reflective state and reference to the musician/composer should be made at some point during the assembly.
- Children will be invited to join in with a 'thought' relating to the theme (prayer) and may say 'Amen' at the end if they agree with what has been said. It should be made clear that all children are expected to show respectful behaviour at this time.
- Hymns and other songs of a spiritual nature will usually be sung at the start of the Monday assembly.

Please refer throughout the assembly to the type of behaviour that we would like to see during the week related to the theme and the awards which will be given on Friday.

## **TUESDAY**

Phase or 'SHARING' ASSEMBLIES ON A CLASS ROTA BASIS

Sharing Assemblies will take place in classrooms and parents are invited along. The remainder of the children will enjoy assembly in their phase group.

These are an opportunity for our friends and family to join us in a celebration of class work or a class theme. In the event that there isn't a class assembly a phase assembly will take place. Rotas determined by phase leads.

## **WEDNESDAY ASSEMBLY WITH PARTNER CLASS**

These should relate to the Monday theme and should have a broadly Christian theme. They are organised into phases so that children can explore the theme at a level appropriate and most beneficial to them.

The assembly light and music could be used.

See SEAL and assembly materials for ideas and resources. Staff should feel free to choose different materials if they wish but the theme/sentiment should remain broadly unchanged.

## **THURSDAY PHASE ASSEMBLY or singing Assembly**

- Music as the children come in.
  - Theme pertinent to the age of the children
- Songs of a religious and spiritual nature will be sung as well as other whole school songs

## **FRIDAY ACHIEVEMENT ASSEMBLIES 9.10-9.25 All staff for key stage celebrating**

This assembly is a celebration of the good things that have happened over the week, but particularly for those children who have demonstrated the behaviour emphasised in our weekly theme.

## **VISITORS**

The utmost respect should be shown to all visitors coming into our school. This is done in the following ways:-

- **Children should be on their best behaviour at all times and there should be a sufficient ratio of staff to children on the days when visitors are leading assembly**
- **A member of staff should introduce and thank the visitor if Mr Adams or Mrs Thompson are unable to meet them that day.**

At Furzeham school we celebrate diversity and respect the spiritual and cultural differences that may exist amongst our staff, whilst we all undertake to fulfil our statutory obligation to offer collective worship of a broadly Christian nature, we accept that there may be differences in the style and presentation of the assemblies.

## **ESTABLISHING APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR**

All staff take collective responsibility for the behaviour of children during assemblies. A quiet atmosphere will be established on leaving the classroom. The person leading the assembly will give audible instructions to the children, whilst other teaching staff will use considerably lowered voices in order to prevent confusion as to what is happening overall. It is preferred if the teaching staff deal with individuals who aren't behaving in a discreet manner rather than the person leading the assembly as this spoils the enjoyment and flow.

Strategies for maintaining good behaviour in assembly

- Notice and reward positive behaviour
- Arrange for children to be seated where it best suits them
- Be pre-emptive in the first instance and discuss possible strategies with class teacher, TA or SENCO beforehand. Let all staff know the strategy agreed
- Non-verbal gesture to be quiet, sit still etc.
- Signal for the child to be moved near to a staff member
- Orderly dress to be established as the children come in, no hands in pockets
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Please follow up with appropriate discussion and sanctions if needed at some point after the assembly.

For some children attendance in assembly may not be appropriate, especially if they're not sufficiently mature enough to cope with the experience. The attendance of Foundation Stage children will take place when the relevant staff feel that the child is ready to cope. Children will be prepared, by becoming gradually exposed to the hall and the expectations for assembly through the school's transition policy.