

New Ash Green Primary School
Collective Worship Policy

Collective Worship is a celebration of all dimensions of human experience which are perceived to be of worth.

The Education Reform Act 1988 and the Education Act 1993 set out the legal framework for collective worship. DES Circular 1/94 states:

Collective worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual 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; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

The daily act of collective worship at New Ash Green Primary School plays a central role in our life and work. It provides us with valuable opportunities to reaffirm our values and ethos. It offers important opportunities to strengthen our sense of community, belonging and inclusiveness and to reinforce the respect and care we have for each other. Through collective worship we make a significant contribution to the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of those present. We want all our children to 'enjoy and achieve' and collective worship provides a valuable vehicle for this.

Aims:

- to give pupils opportunities to reflect on the significance of Christian (and other faith) traditions, stories, events and festivals and how these might affect their lives.
- to offer experiences and opportunities for pupils to join in with and respond to a variety of forms of collective worship in order to reflect on the significance of their own and others' beliefs.
- to teach and uphold the British Values throughout our school, to help prepare our children for the next stages of their lives into the wider world.
- to promote our shared values and contribute to our common life together by celebrating individual achievement, school achievement and wider community achievement within the context of collective worship.
- to reflect on and explore the school's core values.

We want our children to develop:

- A sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- A sense of transience and constant change.
- A sense of pattern, sequence, order and purpose.
- An awareness that there is often more to things than meet the eye- a sense of transcendence.
- A sense of the quality of silence, reflection, ability to listen, concentrated attention.
- A sense of self-worth
- A sense of the worth of others
- A sense of community- its demands, values, rituals and celebrations
- A sense of the joy of life, achievement and play

- An awareness of limitation, frustration and loss
- An awareness of the natural world and the eco based challenges that the world faces.
- A sense of the human capacity for choice, decision and responsibility.

These aims mean that our collective worship programme is such that we can include all our school community.

Collective worship and the law:

We comply with legal requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship for all pupils on the school roll unless they have been withdrawn by their parent(s) 'on grounds of conscience'. Teachers also have the right not to attend or lead an act of collective worship 'on grounds of conscience'. The majority of our acts of collective worship are 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' whilst recognising the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural insights provided by other principal religions and life-stances represented in Kent and in Great Britain. Parents do however have the right to withdraw their child(ren) from the daily act of collective worship. This is made clear through the information contained in our prospectus. Parents who wish to consider withdrawing their child(ren) are asked to make an appointment with the Headteacher. If a child is withdrawn from collective worship, they are supervised by an adult outside the hall/room and are reintegrated for any notices or presentations.

Assemblies and collective worship organisation

At New Ash Green Primary School, assemblies and collective worship take place daily as follows:

We hold acts of collective worship every day. On Tuesday, Thursday and Friday these are whole school and on Wednesdays in Key Stages. On a Monday class-based acts of collective worship is held under the banner of SMSC, which allows children to learn and discuss more about the wider world through teacher-led input.

Materials/suggestions are provided by the Worship lead to support staff and pupils/students as they lead collective worship. It is the responsibility of staff leading the act of collective worship to ensure that the content and form of delivery is accessible for all those present. Each term, individual classes have the opportunity to lead an assembly.

Whole school/key stage acts of collective worship:

We aim to create an atmosphere of togetherness, thoughtfulness and community. To aid this, appropriate music is played for entry and exit from the hall.

The usual format consists of an appropriate hymn or song, input from the leader, followed by a time of prayer and/or quiet reflection. Leaders are encouraged to actively engage pupils/students through for example questioning and drama.

The act of collective worship is kept separate from any notices or other items which may be included in this assembly time.

The assembly, including the act of collective worship, usually takes 20 minutes altogether.

Use of visitors

We welcome visitors who come into school to lead collective worship. Practical arrangements such as timing, age range of audience and appropriate content are agreed through discussion. By drawing on people from the local community to lead acts of collective worship we enhance community cohesion.

Health, safety and well-being

In collective worship we follow the school's health, safety and well-being policy. For example, appropriate care is taken when using lighted candles and electrical equipment. In line with our 'online-safety' policy any internet resources used are checked by the leader prior to their use in any act of collective worship. In the event of fire all pupils are familiar with exit routes from the halls and other areas of the school where collective worship takes place. Visitors are not left unaccompanied with children.

Equal opportunities and inclusion

Collective worship challenges stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality and gender. During collective worship, all beliefs are presented fairly and accurately, and diversity and equality are affirmed.

Monitoring and evaluation

As part of the school's quality assurance programme, it is important to monitor individual acts of collective worship and feed back to the leader. Governors who visit collective worship are invited to provide informal feedback to the leader. As part of our pupil voice policy a random selection of pupils are asked to comment on their experience of and response to collective worship at least once a year.