

Great Whelnetham Church of England Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Approved by Governing Body:
Date of approval: 23rd June 2016
Review by: 23rd June 2019

Introduction

This policy was written by a working party including staff, governors and / or Advisory staff. 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 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 head teacher 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 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 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 booklet '**Towards Realism and Consensus**' explains the Suffolk 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 Gt Whelnetham

The government requires all schools to provide an act of Collective Worship. At Gt Whelnetham 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 features of worship in a believing Christian community. These are:

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| • 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.

5) The approach to Collective Worship at Gt Whelnetham

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 may include:

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

5) The organisation of Collective Worship at Gt Whelnetham

Collective Worship takes place every day following the pattern shown below:

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|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------------------|
| Monday | whole school | Hall | 1.10 – 1.30 |
| Tuesday | whole school | Hall | 1.10 – 1.30 - Singing Assembly |
| Wednesday | whole school | Hall | 1.10 – 1.30 - Sharing Assembly |
| Thursday | Key Stage | Hall | 1.10 – 1.30 |
| Friday | whole school | Hall | 1.10 – 1.30 - Celebratory Assembly |

There is a staff rota for taking assembly on a weekly basis.

The acts of worship follow themes designed by staff but based upon the Values for Life, which support the aims of the school. The current terms themes are displayed on the staff notice board and on the Assembly Board in the hall. While staff are encouraged to follow these, allowances are made for marking festivals or other newsworthy events.

Upper Key Stage 2 pupils use the book of prayers during assembly time.

Acts of worship are also led by the Rector each half term and the parish church used as appropriate.

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 and from the headteacher. We use a wide variety of materials and resources, some of the assemblies from the Values for Life folder.

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. Staff also have the right to withdraw. No pupils or staff currently do so.

Ofsted

Collective Worship must be inspected on a regular basis. This is part of the normal school inspection for Community schools but is arranged slightly differently for VC and VA schools where it is the responsibility of the governors to organise it. The Diocese offers assistance with this.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or more frequently where necessary.