



# Collective Worship Policy

Phoenix Community Primary School

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## Definition of Collective Worship

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## Aims of Collective Worship

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

- To provide pupils/students with a range of opportunities to worship God (however defined or understood);
- To give pupils/students 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/students to join in with and respond to a variety of forms of collective worship in order for them to reflect on the significance of their own and others' beliefs;
- 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.

## Collective Worship and The Law:

We comply with legal requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship for all pupils/students on the school roll, unless they have been withdrawn by their parent(s) on 'grounds of conscience'.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 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.

## Collective Worship and Parents

When a class or year group is involved in leading collective worship, parents are invited to attend. We are grateful to those parents who also take part in leading acts of collective worship.

We emphasise the importance of our collective worship programme in developing our schools ethos and values and in providing a range of opportunities for children/young people to consider important issues for life and living. 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 of the hall/room and are reintegrated for any notices or presentations.

## Collective Worship and Staff

Teachers (and sometimes teaching assistants/supervisors) attend collective worship with their class. Each class prepares and leads an act of collective worship (either for the whole school or for a Key Stage) once every other term. Class teachers lead and are encouraged to involve pupils in the weekly class assemblies. Resources are provided to help with this. These expectations are explained to all prospective staff at interview. However, if an

individual teacher feels their own beliefs might be compromised by our programme of collective worship they can discuss this with the headteacher (and collective worship co-ordinator), since they do have the legal right not to attend collective worship 'on grounds of conscience'. Currently there are none of our teaching staff that withdraw.

## Planning

The PSHE coordinator liaises with both the local vicar and any other participant at the beginning of each season to plan themes and dates for the forthcoming 12 weeks. The PSHE coordinator also liaises with the music co-ordinator regarding suitable songs of praise ready to be learnt/sung by both key stages at the weekly Key Stage singing assemblies. At Christmas and Easter the service, which is held in the church, is planned by the vicar and music and PSHE co-ordinator.

## Collective Worship Organisation

We hold acts of collective worship every day. Three times a week these are within whole school assemblies; once a week within Key Stage Assemblies. Once a week class-based acts of collective worship are held. We organise the programme around six themes (one for each term) and are linked to the themes suggested by the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme. Materials/suggestions are provided 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.

The PSHE leader needs to ensure that over time the following opportunities are provided:

- Use of the Bible and other sacred texts as a source for stories and teachings, emphasising common themes and ensuring the inclusiveness of the school community is reinforced. Moral tales/teachings and contemporary situations may also be drawn on where appropriate;
- Marking of appropriate festivals and other significant days;
- Opportunity for Christian children to pray periodically and that others listen to it respectfully.

Whole school/key stage acts of collective worship:

- We aim to create an atmosphere of stillness and calm. To aid this, appropriate music is played for entry and exit from the hall. Hymns are played which are drawn up by the school's Music subject leader and PHSE leader). If someone leading collective worship wants a particular piece of music then that can usually be arranged through the Music subject leader;
- The usual format consists of an input from the leader, an appropriate hymn or song, 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;
- Visitors may be invited from time to time to lead one of our whole school acts of collective worship;
- The assembly, including the act of collective worship, usually takes fifteen minutes altogether.

Class-based acts of collective worship:

- We aim to give our children/young people some 'space' to be quiet and to think reflectively during collective worship in their classroom;

- These acts of collective worship may be led by the class teacher or by one or more of the pupils/students;
- This usually takes fifteen minutes.

## Use of Visitors

The PSHE co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with any 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. The local vicar or a representative from the church leads two whole school assemblies per term and is available for special occasions. Feedback is also taken from staff regarding assemblies led by visitors.

## Health, Safety and Well-Being

In collective worship we follow the school's health, safety and well-being policy. For example, appropriate care must be taken when using lighted candles and electrical equipment. In line with our 'e-safety' policy any internet resources used must be checked by the leader prior to their use in an act of collective worship. In the event of fire all pupils must be 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/young people.

## Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

Collective worship will challenge stereotypes, misinformation and misconceptions about race, ethnicity, religion and gender. During collective worship, religions will be presented fairly and accurately and diversity and equality will be affirmed.

## Resources

A range of resources, including age-appropriate DVD material and PowerPoint, is available to support teachers and pupils with collective worship and is available from the PSHE co-ordinator.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

As part of the school's quality assurance programmes it is the role of the PSHE subject leader to monitor individual acts of collective worship. Governors who visit collective worship are invited to provide informal feedback to the subject leader. As part of our pupil/student voice policy a random selection of pupils/students will be asked to comment on their experience of and response to collective worship at least once a year.

## Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or at any other time if changes are required to comply with changes in legislation, regulation or National or KCC advice;

Any amendments require the approval of the Full Governing Body.