

Assembly and Collective Worship Policy

Date of policy:	September 2015
Date last review adopted by governing body:	7 November 2017
Frequency of review:	3 yearly

1. Background

Assembly is a time when pupils gather together for a variety of purposes. It may be linked to RE but it may also be linked to any other subject or to any aspect of school life.

Collective worship is an activity that, in the view of the DfE and OFSTED, provides pupils with the daily opportunity to worship God. It 'must in some sense reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities'. Collective worship usually comprises a distinct and identifiable element within the context of assembly.

2. Aims

- To provide a regular opportunity for assembly and collective worship in school
- To give pupils experience of a variety of forms of worship
- To reflect on the ethos of the school and our core values/British values
- To give pupils opportunities to learn about a range of religions
- To give pupils opportunities to learn about the beliefs and thoughts of others in the world they live in
- To give opportunities for pupils to reflect on and evaluate their own beliefs and experiences

3. Organisation and management

A school assembly, which includes collective worship, is usually held in the school hall every morning for Year 1 and 2 children. The children are led quietly into the hall by their teachers. Music, which is selected on a weekly basis, is played to encourage the children to listen. A candle may be lit to symbolise the beginning of this special time in the school day or to lead reflection. On occasions, when another event or activity prevents assemblies in the hall, the teachers lead their own assemblies in the classroom. Children in our Foundation Stage classes have their own daily discussion time in their classrooms. However, on special occasions / when we have special visitors the children are invited to join the rest of the school. During the summer term the foundation stage classes begin to attend main school assemblies as part of their induction into the Key Stage 1 curriculum experience. EYFS children attend the celebration assembly on Friday in the spring term.

Themes for assembly are planned in a 2 year cycle.

- Festivals or celebrations and other local and national events which enable the children to learn about their world
- Individual or group activities – including class assemblies and theme week assemblies
- Issues which highlight the values, ethos and sense of community the school tries to promote / the achievements of individuals or particular groups

- Our school values
- Various aspects of school life including the induction and welcome of new children to the school, expectations of behaviour, special events
- Other items which link with the curriculum the school follows / promotes
- Friday assembly is a celebration with shooting stars, Fab Four lunchtime rewards and a chance for children to share successes out of school

Note: we may also have an assembly to respond to a particular event in the world or a festival such as Remembrance Day.

4. Teaching and learning strategies and styles

A variety of individuals take turns to lead our daily assembly and collective worship. These include: the Headteacher and class teachers, classes or groups of children, invited visitors e.g. the vicar of Writtle, people representing charities, representatives of different religions and other organisations the school is working with or for.

Due to this variety the presentation is also diverse which adds to the richness of experience the children can participate in. For example, there are opportunities to: listen to stories (religious and non-religious), watch a dance, music or drama performance, listen to accounts from staff/ visiting speakers of their personal experiences.

Collective worship also takes different forms. For example, the children may join in with, or lead, a prayer. They may have a chance to reflect quietly on the words of a prayer or to sit still and think of one of their own. The singing of hymns is also a regular feature.

5. Links across the curriculum

As some of our assemblies are planned around the school's curriculum, they often form a natural and complementary link to the work being covered in some other subjects, e.g. in RE, Science, Geography, History and PSHE.

6. Equal opportunities

All children, regardless of colour, gender, race or religious background have equal access to assembly and collective worship. However, we do respect the rights of those teachers and parents of children who wish to withdraw from collective worship.

7. Continuity and progression

The RE coordinator produces a termly assembly programme which is distributed to all staff to follow. There is a theme for each week with suggestions given for resources, music and songs. Therefore, over a year there is a breadth of topics which coincide with local/ national festivals and celebrations as well themes appropriate to school needs.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

The Headteacher is responsible for the arrangements of assemblies and collective worship. The Headteacher ensures the policy content/ delivery is maintained and updates this in accordance with changes in local / national guidelines. Governors are invited to attend any assemblies they wish to.

9. Equality statement

The governors and staff are committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils regardless of gender, disability, and ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.