Bernards Heath Infant and Nursery School

Collective Worship Policy

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Committee:	LFL
Reviewed by:	Vicky Penn and Hannah Rimmer

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT BERNARDS HEATH INFANT SCHOOL

SACRE guidance and Herts Model Policy have been used to create this policy.

BACKGROUND TO DAILY COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT OUR SCHOOL

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character" for the majority of the time. They must also be "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils".

Most families at our school are of no faith. The most dominant religion in school after that is Christianity. (Families also follow religions other than Christianity and have non-religious beliefs (eg atheism) these are also respected and valued. The faith background of both the staff and families is respected at all times, is it not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children to any particular faith/religion.

The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Parents/carers of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent/carer asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent /carer who wishes to exercise this right should consult the head teacher. Teachers may also withdraw from collective worship.

Collective worship

Worship from within a faith tradition has a very specific definition. A school community is not a worshipping community and the law recognises this by requiring "collective" not "corporate" worship. Worship in school is more appropriately referred to as worth-ship. This might encompass what is offered in a spirit of admiration, celebration and respect to God and/or people of excellence, worthy of honour and by extension to concepts, principles and conduct which are worthy of celebration as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit. Worship defined in this way draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection for pupils and staff whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. In this way collective worship is inclusive not exclusive. Collective worship caters for the diversity of beliefs and points of view, allowing individuals to respond as individuals.

Worship of a broadly Christian character

The majority of acts of worship must be of a "broadly Christian character", and those that are must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being denominational.

If we are to be inclusive in our worship in this school, taking the family backgrounds of the children into consideration, then, when talking about Christianity, all pupils, whatever their beliefs, need to be respected. It is therefore appropriate in this school to tell Christian stories, but inappropriate for all children to be required to address Jesus Christ/God in prayer.

Many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all the faiths. It is important to concentrate on these as well as those specific to Christianity. When discussing beliefs, adults are sensitive to all beliefs (religious or non-religious) and are inclusive and respectful, by using such phrases below:
"Some Christians/Muslims believe that…"
"I am Muslim so this festival is important to me…"
"At Christmas Christians believe Jesus was born, I am a Christian so I believe that too."

We encourage adults in school to share their religious choices with children, so children understand diversity is needed to make communities thrive.

VALUES AND AIMS

We believe at this school that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our kind, respectful, safe ethos and the value which we place on the Growing up at Bernards Heath Curriculum is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supporting environment for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of other people in everyday situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- Respond to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not

Worship both reflects and nurtures the ethos of the whole school. It encompasses all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that every member of staff and every pupil may feel involved. In particular school worship here develops the feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

OBJECTIVES

We see school worship as an educational opportunity with clear objectives. We use this time to encourage pupils to:

- Show interest in, and a concern for, members of the school community
- Celebrate special occasions together
- Show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and the wider world
- Share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by groups within the school
- Explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards, manifested in religions and society
- Reflect upon dimensions of human life – the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, sorrowful, solemn
- Reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.

PLANNING

In this school we may combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. In this school we have renamed Collective Worship '**Reflection Time'** as we feel this is more child friendly. Children will also engage in reflection time across the curriculum. For example thinking about different views on the same subject or debating a subject.

In Key Stage 1 different staff lead assembly in the hall and teachers plan **Reflection Time** at different times of the week. When Reflection Time is 'in class' the teachers lead a short 10 minute session linked to mindfulness. Teachers will have their own way of starting their mindfulness/reflection time sessions. These sessions may start with:

- a quiet bell ring,
- triangle chime
- "1, 2, 3, breathe in and out…"
- Music (see appendix 3 for list)

Children may be invited to close their eyes as part of this session for deeper reflection.

Assembly Plan

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
EYFS	Assembly Mon PM	In class	In class	In class	Class Assembly/Whole school assembly – current affairs Rota of adults
KS1	Music assembly HF	Assembly Time **Growing up at Bernards Heath** HR	Assembly Time (Religious Story) IP	Assembly Time **Growing up at Bernards Heath** LW	

We believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. Therefore, the time is not over-dominated by school administration or moralising. We plan the time so that there is a variety in content and methods, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection/worship. On Fridays spread throughout the year each class has a class assembly where they share some learning that has taken place over the term. One parent/carer is invited to attend this assembly. When there is not a class assembly on a Friday there is a whole school assembly, based on the Growing Up at Bernard's Heath Curriculum or relevant current affairs. These assemblies cover the topics found in Appendix 2 and useful website can be found in Appendix 3.

In reflection time at the end of assemblies we invite children to share in our school poem.

During 'reflection time' we choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/reflection/stillness/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors (eg visually impaired community members, Jewish families from our school community, theory dogs)

SUCCESS CRITERIA

At this school we evaluate our acts of worship against some of the following:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The culture of respect and tolerance within the school community
- Positive response to shared experience
- An atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well being
- A sense of occasion
- Staff affirmation
- A sense of challenge
- A place in the overall plan of the school
- Enrichment of pupil's experience

Songs

Every Monday there is a singing assembly. Song are a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and group singing can unify and uplift the school community. We have a bank of songs from which to draw, taken from a variety of cultures and types. We are selective with our songs and have changed the words of some to make them more inclusive.

Genre of the Month

Each month we focus on a different music genre and we use the internet/books to show and share a diverse selection of the genre of music. We listen to and comment on the music types in class and in assembly time. The music lead helps prepare resources for each theme.

September	**Contacted HF to help complete**
October	
November	gospel
December	musicals
January	film
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	

Reflection time may be spent considering carefully the words of a song and making this into a worshipful experience by reflecting on and responding to that song.

Our School Poem

We have a school poem that is shared daily with children. We feel that poetry is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. We have renamed our school prayer our 'school poem' as we feel 'prayer' lends itself to religious connotations and the large majority of our school make-up is non-religious. Our school poem allows for quiet reflection and is not religious. We say this each Reflection Time as a class/school.

Our School Poem:

We are friends, together we share.
Look after our world, show kindness, take care.
Learning, playing, having fun,
Our school day has now begun/is nearly done.

Visitors

We enjoy the fresh approach which visitors can bring to our school worship, but we require them to adhere to our values. Through careful conversations about pace and appropriateness this is able to happen.

Appendix 1

Growing up at Bernards Heath

Assembly themes

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Appendix 2

Taken from the SACRE guidance

Some Suggestions For Music For Reflection

Beethoven	"Pastoral" Symphony No.6	2nd Movement
	"Moonlight" Sonata in G Minor	
	9th Symphony	Last Movement
Mozart	Piano Concerto No.21 in C Major	2nd Movement
Dvorjak	New World Symphony No.9	2nd Movement
Bruch	Violin Concerto No.1 in G Minor	2nd Movement
Elgar	Enigma Variations	Nimrod
Holst	Planet Suite	
Mahler	Symphony No.5 in C sharp minor	4th Movement

Useful websites taken from the SACRE guidance

Useful websites for collective worship

http://www.schoolassemblies.btinternet.co.uk/calendar.htm - a useful month-by-month calendar of festivals from many different faiths with links to other useful information.

http://www.assemblies.org.uk - a great source of ideas for themes and activities for primary and secondary assemblies.

http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/assemblies - you can search for assemblies by theme, school type or year group.

http://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk - themed assemblies with Christian content.

http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/more/assemblies/contents.htm - suggestions from teachers on how to deliver creative and imaginative assemblies.

http://www.natsoc.org.uk/index_fsn.html - a regularly updated resource with assemblies on a Christian theme from the Culham Institute.

http://www.reep.org/cw/index.php - a website containing collective worship resources promoting the links between religion and environment.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/collectiveworship - homepage of the collective worship resources from BBC radio.

http://www.primaryideas.co.uk/index_files/assemblies.html - scripts for individual year and whole school assemblies.

http://www.teachingpets.co.uk/Assemblies/Contents.htm - teaching ideas for primary assemblies.

http://www.humanism.org.uk/site/cms/contentViewArticle.asp?article=1341 - ideas for inclusive assemblies from the British Humanist Association