

POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP



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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy was written by a working party including staff and governors with reference to Norfolk Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) guidance. It explains the policy for collective worship at this school and how we interpret the legislation set out by the government.

2. THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

2.1 The 1988 Education Reform Act that in a community school:

- 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
- the head teacher is responsible for ensuring the legal requirements for Collective Worship are met
- 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
- 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.

2.2 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.

3. THE AIMS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT AVENUE JUNIOR SCHOOL

3.1 The government requires all schools to provide an act of collective worship. At Avenue Junior School, we aim to:

- encourage children to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs
- develop a community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

3.2 The majority of acts of worship over a term are wholly or mainly of a Christian character (character not content), reflecting the broad tradition of Christian belief and not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. It is not necessary for every act of worship to be wholly or broadly Christian. During a term we may have acts of worship which include elements that are broadly Christian, those that are broadly in the tradition of another faith, for instance when celebrating a festival such as Eid or Divali, and some where elements are drawn from a number of different faiths.

3.3 Our Collective Worship helps children understand some of the features of worship in a believing Christian community. These include:

- praise
- reflection
- celebration
- thanks
- saying sorry
- sharing
- helping others.

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.

3.4 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.

4. THE APPROACH TO COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT AVENUE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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 will include:

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

5. THE ORGANISATION OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT AVENUE JUNIOR SCHOOL

5.1 There is an act of Collective Worship every day following the pattern shown below:

Monday	Whole School	Headteacher	Hall	9 -9.30
During the week	Each year group has an assembly led by Year Leaders			
Wednesday/Thursday	Upper/lower school	Assistant	Hall	9-9.30

		headteachers		
Friday	Class assembly	Headteacher	Hall	9-9.30

On days when year groups do not participate in assemblies, time is made by individual class teachers for reflection.

5.2 The acts of worship follow themes designed by staff which support the aims of the school. The current year's themes are displayed on the staff noticeboard. While staff are encouraged to follow these, allowances are made for marking festivals or other newsworthy events.

5.3 Acts of worship are occasionally held in the Parish church e.g. at Christmas. The 'hymn practice' assembly provides an opportunity to look carefully at some of the songs we use and collective worship stems from this.

5.4 All parents are advised in the school prospectus of their right to withdraw their children from the collective worship provided.

6. RESOURCES FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

We use a variety of resources drawn from sources such as books and the Internet.

7. 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 prospectus and asked to contact the headteacher to make arrangements. No reasons have to be given but discussion with parents over the issues concerning withdrawal is recommended in Circular 1/94. Staff also have the right to withdraw.

8. OFSTED

Collective Worship must be inspected on a regular basis. This is part of the normal school inspection for Community schools.

9. REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed in three years unless new government guidance is issued which requires changes.