

Rectory Farm Primary School

Policy Title **Collective Worship Policy**

Adopted: September 2022

For Review: September 2024

1. Introduction

At Rectory Farm Primary School, we understand the importance of collective worship in terms of its educational, inclusive and spiritual nature and how this has the potential to play an important part in the lives of our young children. Our Collective Worship aims to explicitly recognise the spiritual element of a holistic child's development, along with social and moral well-being, cultural development and physical and mental health. The Equality Act 2010, places a duty on us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations. Our collective worship challenges but does not seek to convert or indoctrinate. It affirms diversity and the needs to respect integrity of pupils and teachers whatever their faith or non-backgrounds.

We seek to lead pupils to the point where they can appreciate and if they wish, develop faith.

UNICEF Article 14: You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

At the heart of our Collective Worship is a sense of community. Collective Worship at Rectory Farm is a special time when each child is encouraged to reflect and develop as an individual through an understanding and appreciation of the school's values as well as a time to celebrate together as a school community.



2. Aims of the Policy

- To make clear the ethos and expectations for Collective Worship at Rectory Farm Primary School.
- To set out the value held by the school on Collective Worship as part of children's spiritual and cultural development.

3. Collective Worship Principles

At Rectory Farm Primary School we call our daily Collective Worship time 'an assembly'. The following clarifies what we mean by these terms and what our expectations are. Every day we hold an assembly and each assembly is considered as Collective Worship. An act of worship should occur during each assembly as defined below.

Assemblies (Collective Worship) at Rectory Farm should provide:

- the experience of being a part of a caring community
- starting points for class discussions and learning about spiritual, emotional, moral and health education
- the opportunity for celebration, thanksgiving and sharing emotional experiences and time to share successes and failures in personal, school and community life
- positive examples and illustrations of the school's vision, values and rules
- an act of worship

The act of worship at Rectory Farm should:

- allow a time of reflection on the fundamental questions of life, and focus attention away from the concerns of the moment to those things which are of eternal concern to human beings
- enable pupils to experience 'spirituality' by enabling them to develop a worshipful attitude as demonstrated by feelings such as awe and wonder, appreciation, gratitude, respect, reverence and trepidation and of being uplifted
- promote each child to reflect on their potential as individual to make a positive difference to themselves and others.

4. Expectations of the School Community:

Headteacher and SLT

- Set an exemplary standard of good practice when delivering worship.
- To ensure that the long term map and aims of this policy are implemented effectively and impacts on children's SEMH, spiritual and wider development.
- To be mindful that other adults present are abiding by the policy.
- To monitor and evaluate the policy and practices for Collective Worship.

Staff and Governors

- To be a role model for children in terms of respectful behaviour and participation.
- Utilise opportunities to discuss worship themes at other times of the school day.
- Positively encourage and support children to engage in worship.
- Be mindful of children who, for whatever reason, find worship themes or activities challenging or difficult.



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Pupils

- To behave in a way that demonstrates respect for others.
- To listen and respond appropriately.
- To actively participate when appropriate.
- To join in when celebrating the successes of others and show consideration for those who may be upset.

Parents and Visitors

- To join in celebration of individuals, groups or school achievements.
- To listen respectfully during worship.
- To support the school by removing younger children to a separate space if they are causing significant disruption to the worship, should the need arise.
- To abide by the school's policy of not permitting footage or photographs of worships or performances to be uploaded to social media.

5. Organisation of Collective Worship at Rectory Farm Primary School

Content

Long term planning – Our worship themes are organised in the year's worship overview which maps the school's values, British Values, religious festivals and celebrations termly. (Appendix 5)

Medium term planning – A timetable is created annually to show who will lead worship and shared on the All Staff OneNote. Each class has a special class assembly each year to which parents are invited.

Short-term Planning – The Headteacher, senior leadership team and teachers lead our worships. Each worship is planned based upon the school value designated for each term as set out in the long term map (Appendix 5). If children are leading, the teacher helps in the coordination of this.

(See Appendix 1 for how responsibility for worship is allocated)

We strive to use a variety of presentation methods to engage the students and evoke a response. Ideas we try to include are:

- **the spoken word:** through story, current news items, poetry, personal experiences and anecdotes, interviews, discussion, readings from religious and non-religious texts, thoughts for today quotations, prayers, visualisation etc
- **music:** hymns, pop songs, folk songs, classical music etc
- **silence/lighting a candle:** stilling, time for reflection, contemplation, meditation, prayer
- **visual features:** art, posters, photographs, artefacts both religious and non-religious, toys, use of digital presentations, video recordings, slides etc
- **performance:** dance, drama, improvisation, stunts, puppets etc
- **visitors:** focussing their talks on developing children's understanding of the wider world through either religion, ways to keep safe or inspirational people who share their work, dreams and goals.

(See Appendix 2)



6. Legal Requirement for Collective Worship

Right to Withdraw

At Rectory Farm Primary School we expect all children to attend worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with current legislation. The Headteacher keeps a record of any children who are withdrawn from Collective Worship.

(See Appendix 4)

7. Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

It is the role of the AIB governing body to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship through observation and discussion. As part of SLT monitoring, children are asked about their thoughts and their views are evaluated within this process. They are asked whether the acts of worship are varied, engaging and inclusive to them.

The structure of 'gathering – engaging – responding – sending' is a useful tool to help us think about this at Rectory Farm and strive to improve it as it evolves. This is then shared with the governing body.

- The School Improvement Plan
- (See Appendix 3)



Appendix 1 Responsibility for Collective Worship

	Collective Worship in the Hall	Who is responsible for the content?	Collective Worship in Classroom	Who is responsible for delivering assembly?
Monday	Whole School Assembly	Headteacher		
Tuesday	In Class Reflection Topical Theme including British Values	Headteacher will send out Picture News topic	✓	Class Teachers
Wednesday	Singing Assembly	Music Lead		
Thursday	In Class Reflection based on Protective Behaviours	Class Teachers / PSHE lead	✓	Class Teachers
Friday	Celebration Assembly	Headteacher		

Appendix 2

Elements we include in our Collective Worship at Rectory Farm Primary School

- We cultivate an atmosphere that is conducive to a quiet time of reflection.
 - A picture, an object and/or music as a stimulus as the children come in.
 - A question on the screen to think about at some part of the worship.
 - A welcome and introduction.
 - Hymns/songs that maybe Christian or are linked directly to our school values. We use traditional and modern hymns in our worship.
 - Our School Values are constantly referred to in our worship.
 - A time for reflection and stillness where all have a time to be still – response.
- Sometimes it is an image, poem or music selected to encourage you to think.
- A prayer that is invitational in its approach may be used.
 - Something to take away or think about in our classroom or Refection area (a thought, activity or a prayer) – sending out.
 - Children to be involved where at all possible, whether it is the children leading the worship, in responses to prayers, answers to questions or in other ways of worship.
- *These features do not have to be in this order but we feel they are important elements and can help make it inclusive, inspiring and invitational for all.*

Appendix 3

Checklist for Collective Worship and Spiritual Development

Here are some questions about Collective Worship and spiritual development that could form the basis of a discussion amongst governors, the Headteacher and any other members of staff involved in organising Collective Worship.

- Do we keep any records of acts of Collective Worship?
- How is the Collective Worship organised? (Where, when, who, what?)
- Are most acts of Collective Worship 'broadly Christian'?
- How do we distinguish between Collective Worship and assembly?
- Do we know what we mean by *collective* as opposed to *corporate* worship?
- Do we have policies on Collective Worship and spiritual development? How do they reflect the aims, ethos and (religious) character of the school?
- Do we know what we mean by spiritual development?
- How does the act of Collective Worship contribute to pupils' *spiritual* (as well as their moral, social and cultural) development?
- Is parents' right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship included in the school prospectus?
- Why do parents have such a right and what is the school's response to parental requests to withdraw children from Collective Worship?
- How are pupils and parents involved in the Collective Worship programme?
- Are there pupils in the school who belong to religious communities for whom an alternative to 'broadly Christian' Collective Worship should be made available?



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- How do we know if our provision of Collective Worship is successful?
- How can we improve Collective Worship further?

Appendix 4

The Legal Requirement for Collective Worship

1. All maintained schools and Academies, whether or not they have a religious character, are required to have daily acts of Collective Worship and to teach religious education as part of their curriculum. Schools with a religious character provide denominational Collective Worship in line with their foundation and are not subject to the requirement to provide 'wholly or mainly broadly Christian' acts of Collective Worship.
2. All registered school pupils (5 - 18) are required to take part in an act of Collective Worship on each school day (unless withdrawn – see below). Pupils in special schools should take part in an act of Collective Worship as far as it is practicable.
3. Collective worship may be held at any time during the school day.
4. Separate acts of Collective Worship may be arranged for different age or school groupings.
5. Collective worship must take place on school premises, but governors of aided and religious foundation schools may, on special occasions, arrange Collective Worship elsewhere.
6. In any one term in a community or a non-religious foundation school or academy, acts of worship, should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. That is, most (or all) of the acts of worship must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any one Christian denomination.
7. Collective worship must be appropriate having regard to the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the pupils.
8. Where worship which is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character is inappropriate, the Headteacher and governors may apply to the local SACRE (and in the case of Academies will need to refer to the terms of their funding agreement), for permission to arrange worship for all or some of the pupils which is not wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
9. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship (see below).

Every school under Local Authority control must have a policy for Collective Worship that is drawn up in accordance with the law, and reflects as far as possible the consensus of views of the various stakeholders i.e. staff, governors and the community.

All Academies, in accordance with their funding agreements, must have an act of daily worship and will be inspected under Ofsted criteria, which look to make judgements about SMSC, and so Collective Worship may play a part of their decisions.

Within the legal framework, the responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests with the Governing Body in consultation with the Headteacher.