

Pocklington Community Junior School

Collective Worship Policy

Background:

Under the 1966 Education Act, all schools are required to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils except those who have been withdrawn by their parents. The Head teacher is responsible (under the schools and framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body.

Daily collective worship will be mainly of a broadly Christian character and will always be inclusive, taking into accounts the background of pupils, staff, parents, governors and the wider community.

We will always endeavour to include all pupils in a daily act of worship but acknowledge that there may be some exceptional cases where, in view of some of the background of some pupils, the head teacher feel that a broadly Christian act of worship is not suitable. In these circumstance, the Head teacher may apply to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) to have the Christian content lifted. Before doing this, the Governing body should consult the parents of pupils at the school.

The law governing Collective Worship is laid out in:

- 1944 Education Act (sections 26-28) as amended by Education Reform Act, 1988 (sections 6-12) and modified by Further and Higher Education Act, 1992 and Education Act, 1993

Regulations for Special Schools are contained in:

- Education (Special Schools) Regulations, 1994.

Information that is required to be made available to the public is specified in:

- Education (School Information) (England) Regulations, 1993.

Provisions concerning Collective Worship can also be found in:

- School Standards and Framework Act, 1998 (sections 70 and 71)
- The Designation of Schools Having a Religious Character (England) Order, 1999 SI 1999 no. 2432) – Schedule 20 to the Act
- DfEE Circular 1/94, Religious Education and Collective Worship.

Principles of Collective Worship at Pocklington Junior School:

We believe that collective worship is an integral part of our school ethos and allows us, as a school, to provide a cohesive way to:

- Reinforce the strong sense of community in our school and the wider environment
- Share our whole school values
- Contemplate ourselves and our place in the world with reference to current global events
- Contemplate our beliefs(both spiritual and moral) and explore the beliefs of others
- Share in and celebrate the wonder and diversity of the world in which we live
- Make links to our curriculum and reinforce spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Experience reflection through meditation, prayer and silence

Organisation of Collective Worship at Pocklington Junior School:

We believe that it is important for pupils to come together in different ways; as classes, lower and upper school and as a whole school in order to broaden their experiences and provide opportunities for different types of worship.

Day	Collective Worship	Led by
Monday	Whole school worship (3pm)	Senior Leadership Team
Tuesday	Year group worship (choose own time)	Year group co-ordinator
Wednesday	Class worship (choose own time)	Class Teacher
Thursday	Class worship (choose own time)	Class teacher
Friday	Whole School worship (2.50pm)	Head teacher

Methodology of Worship at Pocklington Junior School:

We believe that the manner of presentation should encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement or through listening to and joining in with the worship offered.

The following are examples of methodology that may be used to deliver collective worship:

- **To Focus:** opportunities to think and form new ideas and develop personal responses to different experiences. These experiences could include, for example, a sense of empathy, compassion, courage or issues such as world poverty, racism and other things that would constrain the human spirit. An example is 'stilling' in which pupils are encouraged to sit in a way that is comfortable and allows them to concentrate, control, their breathing and focus on their thoughts. They are then encouraged to respond to an idea in atmosphere that is reflective.
- **To Pray:** Encourage pupils to write their own prayers, perhaps as a response to curriculum work or some event happening in the wider world. These could be shared during collective worship.
- **To consider their own thoughts and beliefs:** Invite in people from other faiths to talk about their beliefs and in response pupils could reflect on their own beliefs, thoughts and feelings. This could include their thoughts on values held by themselves, the school, community and other groups
- **To Question:** In our daily lives we sometimes face events which cause us to ask the ultimate question "why?" These questions could be explored through collective worship. See the Appendices for ideas and links to websites.
- **To Participate:** Pupils could present their own ideas to the rest of the school or year group on issues that have a cultural, moral or faith stance. This can help pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures
- **To Wonder:** To create an atmosphere that allows pupils to experience wonder about the world in which they live and the mysteries of life, consider using music, art, artefacts, photographs which are enlarged so all can see them. These are only a few examples; there are many more – reading a well-chosen story, handling a small animal are others.
- **To foster curiosity:** Pose a rhetorical question and encourage children to share thoughts and questions that are sensitive and respectful of the ideas and beliefs of others.

What makes collective worship work well in Pocklington Junior School:

- **Creating the right atmosphere:** we ensure our pupils are comfortable and can see and hear everything that is taking place. We have a visual focus for the worship whether it be a candle, image or artefact which is particularly important when worship takes place in the classroom as it creates a distinct and separate atmosphere to normal classroom activities
- **Class worship:** We believe coming together as a class allows teachers to personalise themes more closely to their own pupils needs. It also allows pupils to respond more creatively by discussing and sharing opinions, creating artwork or writing prayers or poetry.
- **Lower and Upper School Worship:** We want our pupils to develop a sense of cohesion with their peers. Coming together as year groups will provide an opportunity to discuss and develop common interests and issues whilst creating unity across the year group.
- **Whole school worship:** We believe that coming together to share in the achievements of others and contemplating the qualities that contribute towards personal achievement help pupils to reflect on their own values, achievements and aspirations.
- **Church Worship:** We use opportunities throughout the school year to take part in community worship at church in Pocklington. The whole school attends together with families and visitors.
- **Prayer:** We feel that prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. Nevertheless, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. Pupils can be encouraged, but not coerced, to participate. Leaders of worship always invite participation – they never expect or assume participation. Pupils are free to respond or not, as the case may be. Invitations to participate in prayer may be presented in a number of different ways: e.g. “Now, in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well-known Christian prayer...” or “Find a quiet space within you and, if you would like to make this prayer your own, feel free to join in the “Amen” at the end.” It is not always necessary to have a prayer and the use of regular moments of silence and reflection provides opportunities for some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish.

Right of Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship if they wish. If parents request either total or partial withdrawal from Collective Worship, then the school must comply; this complies with the 1944 Education Act (which was restated in the 1988 Education Act). This includes any alternative worship provided as a result of a determination by SACRE. Requests need to be made in writing to the Head teacher, who will make arrangements for the supervision of the pupil during the period concerned. Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for requesting withdrawal of their child.

Withdrawal would normally be taken to mean not being present where the act of worship is taking place, but nothing in the law would prevent a pupil remaining physically present, though not taking part, if this were acceptable to both the school and the parent.

The Head teacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from Collective Worship.

Governors

The role of the Governing Body

Statutory functions:

Governors should be aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to Collective Worship taking into account the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, the Education Act 1996, the School Standard Framework Act 1998, the Children Act 2004 enshrines the Every Child Matters agenda. Governors of the school must be familiar with all documentation regarding Collective Worship issued by the school on their behalf and may be actively involved in the process of Collective Worship development in the school.

Governors at Pocklington Community Junior School:

- Governors ensure that Collective Worship is appropriately reviewed as part of the whole school development plan
- Attend Collective Worship regularly
- Receive an annual report on Collective Worship.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring occurs both formally through Governors' visits and meetings and also informally through staff discussion, with feedback from children, parents and visitors also being an important part of our review.

Points to consider in the monitoring of Collective Worship:

Is there:

- An effective Collective Worship policy?
- Evidence of planning and recording?
- Evidence that the quality of worship is evaluated?

How much time is set aside for monitoring:

- Do observations take place of acts of Collective Worship?
- Do discussions take place with those who lead worship?
- Do discussions take place with those who experience worship?

Is Collective Worship well resourced?

Is equal provision made for all pupils?

It is the role of the named governor for Religious Education to monitor this policy and practice of collective worship.

The Head teacher, in consultation with the governors, has overall responsibility to ensure that legal requirements are being met in a maintained school and that quality Collective Worship is taking place.

This policy was written during the Summer term 2018. It was presented to staff and governors and approved by them.

This policy is reviewed and updated regularly to meet the changing needs of the school and in light of any new initiatives.

Next review of this policy: May 2019

Reference:

Holmes. S, (RE Consultant East Riding SACRE) 'Worship Works', 2009

(051123_sholmes_re_worship_works_collected_guidance_for_schools.pdf) as sited on

<http://www.eriding.net/re/>