

# New City Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy

November 2016

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### School Aims and Implementation

New City Primary aims to provide children the opportunity to develop towards their full potential; academically, emotionally and socially:

- Providing the highest standard of education to enable children to acquire the skills, knowledge and concepts relevant to their future.
- Promoting an ethos of care, mutual respect and support, where effort is valued and success celebrated.
- Enabling children to become active, responsible and caring members of the school and wider community.

The school works towards these aims by:

- Promoting high quality learning and attainment.
- Providing a high quality learning entitlement and environment.
- Valuing each other and ourselves.
- Working in partnership with parents and the community.

### Collective Worship - Legal requirements (Local Authority Guidance)

1. The Law (Education Reform Act 1988, 1993, 1996) states that all pupils at a maintained school take part in an act of collective worship every day, and that this shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. It also states that parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or part of collective worship.
2. The definition for "Worship" is drawn from the DFE circular 1/94; "Worship must in some sense reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power....worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common."
3. Schools should provide opportunities for worship to happen and enable pupils to respond reflectively. The primary function of the daily act of collective worship is an educational one; that is to promote spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development.
4. Therefore, collective worship should be active rather than passive and directed towards something personal (e.g. thinking about someone, or a value, or a time for reflection and response to God).

### Collective Worship Policy - Introduction

- At New City Primary School, Collective Worship is often set within the context of 'Assemblies' - which may include other features besides those required of collective worship.
- The act of Collective Worship must be seen as a distinct aspect of an assembly;
  - Collective Worship is a special time for pupils to reflect upon life experiences and ultimate questions and if appropriate focus on God. It should allow the pupils to be able to make a spiritual response.
  - An assembly is a gathering of part or all of the children and staff at the school. It is concerned with administrative matters and other announcements about school life.
- Worship has a wide range of meanings and forms of expression. For some people this might be devotion to a divine being, power or personal God; for others it might mean reflection on and understanding of those elements of life which are of value and worth.
- Collective Worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly three times a week. These assemblies may involve all of the pupils in the school in whole school

assemblies, separate phase group assemblies or class based acts of collective worship; with their times varying accordingly.

## **Aims**

### **General**

Assemblies and Collective Worship at New City Primary School are to be both spiritual and educational and are recognised as having a major contribution to the spiritual and moral development of all pupils.

### **School Staff**

Through Collective Worship we aim to:

- Provide an all-inclusive opportunity to build and reinforce community values;
- Reflect on and understand elements of life which are of value and worth;
- Provide a variety of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development;
- Provide opportunities for expressing shared experiences and interests and for celebrating special occasions together;
- Provide opportunities in which pupils interact with other year groups, staff and on occasions the wider community;
- Fulfil statutory requirements of a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

### **Children**

Through collective worship we aim to encourage and promote the opportunity for children to:

- Learn about life, each other, the community and the world they live in;
- Learn about and promote greater understanding, tolerance and respect for each other's cultures and beliefs;
- Help develop empathy, caring and sensitivity and a positive self image;
- Celebrate in each other's successes and achievements through sharing work and ideas, thereby developing a sense of belonging to the school community;
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of the importance of religious stories and ideas found in Christianity and other major religions;
- Reflect upon the purpose and meaning of things;
- Appreciate and celebrate festivals within the school community;
- Encourage appropriate behaviour within specific social settings and gatherings and reflect on matters of right and wrong.

### **Collective Worship will not:**

- Be insensitive to the cultural diversity of the school community;
- Expect children to behave in a way that undermines their personal and/or religious beliefs;
- Seek to preach or convert.

### **Parents and Carers**

- To be understanding and supportive of our aims regarding assemblies and Collective Worship;
- To support the children with any task that they may be preparing for an assembly or act of Collective Worship in School;
- To encourage and praise their child's efforts when the child is participating in an assembly or act of Collective Worship;

### **Governors**

- To appoint a designated link governor who will:
  - a) meet with the Collective Worship Subject Leader at least once a year to find out about:
    - ❖ the school's systems for planning Collective Worship, supporting staff and monitoring provision and responses;
    - ❖ the allocation, use and adequacy of resources.
  - b) visit School and talk to pupils about their experiences of Collective Worship;
  - c) promote and support the positive involvement of parents with regards to Collective Worship;

- d) attend training and other events relating to the provision of Collective Worship;
- e) report jointly with the Subject Leader
  - ❖ for the School Prospectus;
  - ❖ to the governing body with recommendations, if appropriate, once a year.
- To be understanding and supportive of our aims in learning and teaching through Collective Worship and review the Collective Worship Policy bi-annually.

## **Implementation of the Collective Worship Policy**

### **1. Underlying principles**

- We are proud of the diversity of the school community and as such assemblies and acts of Collective Worship at New City reflect and celebrate the traditions of the major world religions, particularly those that are represented in the school and the wider community.
- Assemblies and acts of Collective Worship are therefore non-denominational and conducted in a manner which is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school community.
- Assemblies also reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage children to participate by holding achievement assemblies and class assemblies; during which children can show their work and successes to others, and can raise issues that they have discussed in their classes. These assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school and celebrate them together. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school - that all children and their achievements are valued.
- Assemblies are regarded as a special time in the day of calm reflection and are conducted accordingly. Children are expected to behave respectfully and thoughtfully throughout any assembly or act of collective worship and are asked to come in and leave assemblies quietly.

### **2. Planning and Organization**

- Whole school assembly is held once a week and is led by the Head teacher. Phase based assemblies are held every Monday for about 15 minutes in both key stages. Good work assembly is held every Wednesday in Key stage 1 and 2 to celebrate children's achievements.

### **3. Staffing**

- Assemblies are normally conducted by a member of School staff e.g. the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher for whole school assemblies, phase leader or phase teachers for phase group assemblies or class teacher for class based acts of collective worship.
- Sometimes any of these assemblies might have contributions from or be led by visitors to the school. When we invite visitors to participate in assemblies or acts of collective worship they are expected to work within our themes and guidelines.

### **3. Assembly and Collective Worship Themes**

Where possible weekly themes will be chosen to link with specific dates within the calendar of the major world religions; notably those of the Christian and other community faiths and/or other events occurring in the wider or school community.

- Themes are very broad to allow for flexibility and variety of delivery.
- The development of the theme will be structured across the week within whole school or phase based assemblies to reflect the aims and objectives identified within this document in order to develop a broad approach and to link with a number of curriculum areas.
- On occasions staff may divert from our planned theme in order to respond to a significant news item or an important and unexpected event shared by members of the School community.

### **Acts of Collective Worship: Good Practice**

- We will always seek to make the worship appropriate to age, ability and family background of the pupils. Wherever possible we will seek to include pupils in planning and leading of acts of worship.
- Children must be engaged in a whole school, phase or class based assembly; which includes an act of Collective Worship on a daily basis.

- QCA (1999 analysis of SACRE reports) highlighted a number of characteristics of best practice in Collective Worship. New City School seeks to incorporate these into all acts of Collective Worship at the School. These include:
  - a) Thorough planning; which includes the appropriateness of the acts of Collective Worship for the children concerned (i.e. age, aptitude, background);
  - b) The use of themes;
  - c) Children actively participating and involved in the act of worship;
  - d) A built in time for the children's own reflection and if appropriate for them, to think about God. This may be a prayer, poem or guided reflection. (This part must take place for it to be Collective Worship.) Silence can allow time for individual thought and reflection, or prayer as appropriate;
  - e) Clear links being identified between Collective Worship and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils
  - f) The use of outside speakers;
  - g) Affirming and expressing the school's ethos;
  - h) Use of stimulus e.g. music, picture, quotation, candle, flowers. There is a need to give the children time to prepare. A well chosen piece of music can help create an atmosphere for worship and reflection.
  - i) Engaging the children e.g. the use of visual aids and artefacts will usually enable children to focus on a particular story, article, drama or message.
  - j) Evaluation of Collective Worship

#### **Assessment, Record Keeping and Reporting**

- Assemblies and acts of Collective Worship are evaluated by the teacher leading the assembly in line with the criteria outlined below. Teachers need to make a judgement about the children's level of engagement and response (verbal and non-verbal) not a judgement about the delivery of the assembly content.

Outstanding	All children are fully engaged and make pertinent and thoughtful responses.
Good	All children are engaged and the majority are able to make pertinent and thoughtful responses.
Satisfactory	Most children are engaged and are able to make pertinent and thoughtful responses.
Inadequate	Few children are engaged or able to make pertinent and thoughtful responses. Any assembly held without a time for reflection will be deemed as inadequate by Ofsted.

#### **Inclusion**

- Inclusion is about every child having educational needs that are special and the School meeting these diverse needs in order to ensure the active participation and progress of all children in their learning.
- Successful inclusive provision at New City is seen as the responsibility of the whole school community, permeating all aspects of school life and applicable to all our pupils. It is in this way that we will turn the rhetoric into reality.
- Inclusive practice should enable all children to participate in and develop through the provision of assemblies and Collective Worship; whatever their ability, gender, ethnic, social or cultural background, home language or any other aspect that could affect their participation in, or development.
- We attempt to be inclusive in our acts of worship and respect individual beliefs and values and maintain the integrity of all participants.

#### **Right of Withdrawal from Collective Worship**

- Every effort is made to show sensitivity towards personal faiths and to include all pupils and staff in collective worship.

- However parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from acts of collective worship after consultation with the Head teacher. Alternative accommodation and supervision will be provided for the child during this period.
- Staff have the right to withdraw from acts of collective worship after consultation with the Head teacher; this needs to be agreed both verbally and in written form. Staff who withdraw from acts of collective worship will be expected to attend the remainder of any assembly when invited and to fulfil their standard duties of supervision and care of children entering and exiting any assembly.

#### **Monitoring and Review**

- During the year, the Religious Education and Collective Worship subject leader has specially-allocated time for carrying out the vital task of monitoring Collective Worship; both in whole school and phase assemblies.
- The Governing Body have a legal duty to monitor and review the provision of Collective Worship at the School and this Policy. They seek to do this through annually reviewing the Policy, meeting with the Religious Education and Collective Worship Subject Leader, the Head teacher and other senior leaders and through attending assemblies.