



CRABTREE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy

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REVIEW RECORD

Name of Policy	
Collective Worship Policy	
Staff Responsible for Review (e.g. Headteacher, Subject Leader)	Date Reviewed by Subject Leader/ discussed at Staff Meeting
RE Subject Leader	3 rd March 2016
Committee/Governor Responsible for Review	Date of Review
Curriculum	March 2016
Date of Review in Committee Minutes	Date of Next Review
	April 2019

COPY OF POLICY KEPT IN POLICIES FOLDER IN HEADTEACHER'S OFFICE

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS	
Page/Clause Amended	Brief Details of Main Changes since last review

STATEMENT OF ADOPTION OF MODEL PROCEDURE

The governors of Crabtree Junior School have chosen to adopt Hertfordshire County Council's Model Collective Worship Policy (Publication CSF0064, issued September 2012).

ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Success Criteria

At Crabtree Junior School we evaluate our acts of worship against some of the following:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The growth 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
- Good order
- Staff affirmation
- A sense of challenge
- A place in the overall plan of the school
- Enrichment of pupils' experience
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This policy will be reviewed annually in accordance with the Governing Body Year Planner. The Headteacher shall inform the governing body of any changes to the Model Policy.

Next scheduled date for review:

BACKGROUND TO COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AT CRABTREE JUNIOR 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”.

Families who send their children to Crabtree Junior School are in the main ‘nominally’ Christian, but we do have some children from practising Christian families. In addition there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that, in asking our children to worship, we have to consider the backgrounds that our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child’s family are respected at all times.

The Headteacher is responsible (under the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent 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 who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from collective worship.

DEFINITIONS

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. Broadly, 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.

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. Paragraphs 60-63 of the *DFE Circular 1/94* asks schools to define this as ‘according a special status to Jesus Christ’.

If we are to be inclusive in our worship in this school, taking the family backgrounds of the children into consideration, then, when according a special status to Jesus Christ, all pupils, whatever their beliefs, need to be respected. It is therefore appropriate in this school to tell stories of the life of Jesus, but inappropriate for all children to be required to address Him 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.

VALUES AND AIMS (POLICY)

At Crabtree Junior School, we believe that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child – spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually – is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the

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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 the other people in every day 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 freely 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, 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, etc.
- Reflect on the way in which humankind expresses the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.
- To promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To prepare pupils' for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life as young citizens living in a multicultural and multi faith society.

PLANNING

At Crabtree Junior School we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. When the whole school meets together, this is generally immediately before morning break Monday – Friday. Year group assemblies (where parents attend) take place in the autumn and spring terms. Every week we have a singing practice led by the Music Subject Leader. During this, we take time to consider carefully the words of one of the songs and make this into a worshipful experience by reflecting on and responding to that song.

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The Headteacher usually leads the whole school worship, with a rota of other staff leading worship on other days. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in both planning and leadership, with the Head Boy and Girl playing an active part.

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The school year has been divided into weekly themes which encompass religious festivals, known national or international events, and aspects taken from the school calendar. Staff leading worship can then plan around the themes and a development of ideas can build up.

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.

We choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/reflection/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

Staff attend the daily assembly on a rota basis, however the majority of staff attend the weekly celebration assembly.

Song/Music

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. We have a bank of music and songs from which to draw, taken from a variety of cultures and types. Likewise with the songs we sing. We are careful with our songs to recognise that there might be some words which some of our children would find offensive to sing. We have changed the words of some songs to make them more inclusive. We select our songs/music carefully to match the theme.

Prayer

The use of prayer has led to a great deal of debate. 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. We have developed various forms of introductions to our prayers which give children the opportunity to participate if they so desire; e.g., 'And now close your eyes, listen to the words of a well-known Christian/Hindu/Muslim prayer/poem/reading...' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions.

It is not always necessary to have a prayer and the use of regular moments of silence provides opportunities for some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish.

Visitors

We enjoy the fresh approach which visitors can bring to our school worship, but we require them to adhere to our values. We have made links with some people who visit us to lead worship.