

## **Hazel Slade Primary School Collective Worship Policy**

Updated November 2013

The Collective Worship Policy Hazel Slade Primary School pays due regard to statutory requirements, and has taken account of the guidance offered by the LA through its SACRE.

### **Definition of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### **Aims of Collective Worship**

#### **For the School:**

Collective Worship contributes significantly to the ethos of Hazel Slade Primary school and it is our aim that it is a time when the school community can:

- share common aims and values
- celebrate achievement and special times
- explore together the world in which we live
- develop a community spirit

#### **For the Pupils:**

We also intend that Collective Worship contributes to the development of the pupil as a 'whole' person by providing opportunities to:

- worship that which is considered worthy
- consider spiritual and moral issues
- explore their own beliefs
- develop their own spirituality
- reinforce positive attitudes
- participate and respond
- reflect on what it means to be human

### **The Contribution of Collective Worship to aspects of the Curriculum**

Collective Worship time is distinct from curriculum time. However, in Hazel Slade Primary School, Collective Worship will at times feature aspects of the curriculum, which will enhance the experiences of pupils by reflecting on the

work done in classes. At times, Collective Worship will enrich classwork through its consideration of subject matter from different perspectives.

The provision of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is in line with school policy which informs our practice. To ensure Collective Worship provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development it should address a wide variety of themes and topics, use diverse stimuli and resources and provide pupils with the opportunity to 'respond' on their own level.

### **The Management of Collective Worship**

The R.E. subject leader will plan, monitor and evaluate acts of Collective Worship. The assistant head teacher will manage the termly assembly rota of adults leading the assemblies.

### **The Organisation of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship will usually take place in the school hall.

Acts of worship will usually last for approximately 15 minutes, although it is recognized that this time will be shortened or lengthened when it is appropriate.

### **Leadership**

Every member of the school teaching staff and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year. An assembly timetable will be available each term.

### **Planning Acts of Collective Worship**

The content of all acts of Collective Worship will be considered carefully, to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils.

Termly planning sheets (*Included in the appendix*) list themes, special occasions and events, but will be flexible to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. Together with weekly planning and recording sheets (*Included in the appendix*), these will ensure that there is continuity and progression, and enable the monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship to take place.

Visitors will be welcome to lead Collective Worship from time to time. Leaders from Faiths within the area may increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these Faiths.

### **The Act of Collective Worship**

A variety of teaching and learning styles and active and interactive methods are appropriate in acts of Collective Worship. Any and all of the methods employed in the classroom can be used effectively in acts of Collective

Worship. A variety of resources will also be used. Leaders will choose the style/method and resources which are appropriate to the content, the age, aptitude and the background of the pupils.

The content and process must be sufficiently stimulating in order to evoke a response in the individual. This may not be visual, but opportunity must be given to express this response through reflection and prayer.

An opportunity for personal reflection will be provided.

### **Withdrawal**

Any parent who objects to their child attending an act or acts of Collective Worship may request that their child is withdrawn. Parents are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher. Any pupil who is withdrawn from an act or acts of Collective Worship will be supervised during that time by a member of the school staff.

Appendices . ( Based on Guidelines from Hertfordshire SACRE).

### **Appendix 1. Good Practice**

Our act of collective worship is combined with an assembly helping to ensure that the act of collective worship takes place within a broad educational framework.

The following are features of good practice:

- Clear objectives

- Suitable timings at appropriate points in the schools day
  - A variety of groupings over the course of the week
  - Wide staff and pupil involvement no matter what their personal beliefs
  - Use of visitors
  - Substantial forward planning in terms of themes, leaders, curriculum connections etc.
  - Appropriate resources
  - Generating the right atmosphere
  - A time of quiet for personal reflection/ worship
  - Having guidance for visiting speakers
  - A contribution to the whole school ethos
  - A variety of methods
- Acts of collective worship should:
- Not be over-dominated by school administration
  - Not be over-moralising

## **Appendix 2 Content of assemblies**

We have to respond positively to our school's particular needs but all schools should see assembly as an educational opportunity with clear objectives:

- To show interest in and concern for members of the school community
- To celebrate special occasions together
- To show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and wider world
- To share appreciation of worthwhile activities undertaken by groups within the school
- To explore and review the variety of values, attitudes and standards manifested in society
- To reflect upon dimensions of human life, the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, ugly, sorrowful, solemn...
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Teachers may want to choose from a range of methods including:

- Pupils' contributions
- Stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/meditation
- Songs/hymns/music
- Sacred/secular readings
- Artefacts/natural materials

- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence

### **Appendix 3 Success Criteria**

We evaluate our collective worship against stated criteria.

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention and reaction of pupils
- Respect and tolerance
- Positive response to shared experience
- A sense of challenge
- An atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well-being
- A sense of occasion
- Good order
- A place in the overall plan of the school
- Staff affirmation
- Enrichment of pupils' experience

### **Appendix 4 Making Collective Worship Special**

At Hazel Slade Primary collective worship takes place within the context of a school assembly and pupils need to be clear about when the act of collective worship begins and ends. Some helpful strategies include:

- Use of a symbol to introduce and conclude the act of collective worship, e.g. lighting a candle, showing a special object, revealing or setting up a focal point etc
- A period of silence prior to and/or following the act of collective worship
- A short piece of music to separate the act of collective worship from other school business

#### **Prayer/Reflection**

The use of prayer leads to a great deal of debate. Whether to use prayer and the appropriateness of any prayers which are used requires the greatest care and sensitivity. Many feel that what is generally understood as a prayer is a good way of focusing thoughts, feelings and wishes. Nevertheless, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers which they do not believe.

In order to be sensitive when using prayers from faith traditions, some schools have developed various forms of introductions as alternatives to the traditional "let us pray" which for the most part is unsuitable for school collective worship. The Redbridge handbook on school worship gives some useful ideas such as:

"And now, in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well-known prayer..."

Or, if the leader has a faith commitment,

"And now, in a moment of quietness, I want you to listen whilst I say a prayer which, as a Christian (Muslim, Sikh, Jew...) is very special to me. Those of you who know the prayer and want to, might like to say the words with me..."

Or, again,

"I am going to read you the words of a Christian (Hindu, Buddhist...) prayer that was written 400 years ago. I want you to think about the words carefully. Some of you might want to make the words your own."

In ways like these pupils are given an introduction to the notion of prayer traditions whilst not being required to respond in a hypocritical fashion. It is not always necessary to have a prayer and the use of regular moments of silence also provides opportunities for some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish.

### Song/Music

Song, as a means of creating atmosphere which unifies and uplifts, is well recognised.

There are a large number of hymns and songs to choose from but some are more appropriate to faith worship than school collective worship. For instance some people feel that hymns such as "O Jesus I have promised" are inappropriate for all except those who believe in Jesus as the Lord. Many retain the music to such hymns, rewriting the words to make them more appropriate to school collective worship.

At Hazel Slade Primary we have a weekly 'singing practice', takes the place of that day's act of collective worship. Practice is important if singing is to be whole-hearted and sympathetic to the theme chosen. The words of the hymn/song could form the focus and be reflected upon before or after singing, thereby making the time more clearly reflective.

Music, generally, is an ideal way of setting an atmosphere and supporting the theme of the worship. In addition it can assist pupils' personal reflection. By using both recorded and live contributions, the whole experience is enriched

## **Appendix 5 Assembly Themes**

When planning school worship headteachers should consider grouping some of the times together under a theme. This gives opportunities for teachers to plan well ahead and provides a coherent framework for the year. By setting themes in advance genuine links can be made with religious festivals, school events, national and international occasions, social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and the whole curriculum. Knowing themes in advance gives staff and pupils alike the opportunity to participate more fully in both planning and presentation.

The following list, originally published in 'School Worship Perspectives, Principles and Practice' by Bill Gent, can be used when undertaking planning over a year or a term.

Achievement and talent	Good and Evil
Age	Guilt and Suffering
Aggression and Hate	
The Arts	Harvest and Thankfulness
Autumn and Harvest	Health
	Heroes and Heroines
Barriers	Humour
Beginnings	
Blindness and Sight	I believe...
Bridges	In the news
Care and caring	Jesus
A celebration of talent	Journeys
Change and decay	Joy and sorrow
Choice and Decision	
Christmas stories	Key People
Courage	
	Leaders and Leadership
Day and Night	Lenten thoughts
Desert Island Disc	Life and Death
Discovery	Light and darkness
Dreams	Love and Hate
The Easter Experience	The Message
Education and learning	Mysteries and Puzzles
Exploring the Future	
Exploring the Past	The Natural World
	A New School Year
Fashion and Trends	New Years Resolutions
Finding Your Way	
Food for Thought	One World
Forgiveness	Old and New
Freedom and Responsibility	Opportunities
The Global Village	Parents and Children
God and Gods	Prayer and Meditation

Proverbs and Sayings  
Peace and tranquillity  
A Person who has influenced me  
Pride and Prejudice

Rebirth  
Red Letter Days  
Rewards and Punishments  
Risk  
Roots

School and Community  
School and Tradition  
School Life  
The Sciences  
Seeing the Light  
Special Books  
Stepping Stones and Stumbling Blocks  
Strengths and Weaknesses  
Success and Failure  
Summing Up

Taking Risks  
Time and Tide  
Turning Points  
The Unexpected

Us and Them  
Victory and defeat  
Voices  
Voices from the past

War and peace  
Ways of Seeing  
Wealth and Riches  
What's it worth?  
Why are we here?  
Wonder and Awe  
The Word  
Winter and Spring  
Work and Play  
The World About Us  
The Writing on the Wall

Youth and Old Age

A plan of themes will be developed for each year.



## Useful websites for collective worship

<http://www.schoolassemblies.btinternet.co.uk/calendar.htm> - a useful month-by-month calendar of festivals from many different faiths with links to other useful information.

<http://www.assemblies.org.uk> - a great source of ideas for themes and activities for primary and secondary assemblies.

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/assemblies> - you can search for assemblies by theme, school type or year group.

<http://www.barnabasinschools.org.uk> - themed assemblies with Christian content.

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/more/assemblies/contents.htm> - suggestions from teachers on how to deliver creative and imaginative assemblies.

[http://www.natsoc.org.uk/index\\_fsn.html](http://www.natsoc.org.uk/index_fsn.html) - a regularly updated resource with assemblies on a Christian theme from the Culham Institute.

<http://www.reep.org/cw/index.php> - a website containing collective worship resources promoting the links between religion and environment.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schoolradio/collectiveworship> - homepage of the collective worship resources from BBC radio.

[http://www.primaryideas.co.uk/index\\_files/assemblies.html](http://www.primaryideas.co.uk/index_files/assemblies.html) - scripts for individual year and whole school assemblies.

<http://www.teachingpets.co.uk/Assemblies/Contents.htm> - teaching ideas for primary assemblies.

<http://www.humanism.org.uk/site/cms/contentViewArticle.asp?article=1341> - ideas for inclusive assemblies from the British Humanist Association

