



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Adopted: Spring 24

Review: Spring 27

Policy Review and Monitoring

This policy is due to be reviewed at the time stated, unless circumstances determine that this policy needs to be reviewed at an earlier time.

Signed: **Chair of Governors**
Mr J. Orchard

Headteacher
Mr K. Stroud

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Introduction

Collective worship is an important part of daily school life as it gives pupils and staff the opportunity to come together as a community. We recognise that collective worship provides an important opportunity for our pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils, staff and visitors are all welcome to join in collective worship either in key-stage department or classroom-based occasions. The act of daily collective worship is often referred to in school as 'assembly' and whilst there is a clear distinction as to the requirements of collective worship, the term assembly may also be used in this policy for ease.

Aims

- To help pupils develop spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness by means of acts of collective worship, which are broadly Christian in character.
- To enable pupils to explore a variety of forms of worship, so that those with a religious faith may have their experiences broadened and so that those without faith may reflect on the experiences offered, enhancing their own personal development.
- To explore common issues, concerns and interests, discerning value and reinforcing positive attitudes.
- To develop a sense of community within the school, and of being part of a wider community.
- To celebrate achievements and special occasions in respect of individuals, the school and the wider community.
- To celebrate difference and diversity across the world.
- To heighten aesthetic awareness and enable pupils to appreciate the use of symbolism and religious language to express feeling and belief.

Objectives

- To provide a daily opportunity for prayer and/or reflection, which is included as part of the whole school planning process.
- To help pupils to recognise and appreciate the heritage of Christian worship.
- To foster in pupils an understanding of the diversity of beliefs, attitudes, cultures and traditions within the world.
- To encourage mutual tolerance and understanding between faiths.
- To develop in pupils a sense of right and wrong, and an understanding of the importance of a shared moral code, in order to ensure that our school is a caring social environment.
- To provide the opportunity to engage in acts of collective worship (singing hymns, saying prayers, undertaking reading from religious texts, etc.)
- To liaise with local churches and other similar organisations, in order to visit local chapels and churches for worship, and also to invite members of the various church communities to attend 'assemblies' in school.
- To explore the spiritual and cultural heritage of Wales, through Welsh songs and stories of Welsh religious characters

Legal Requirements for Collective Worship

- All pupils (5-18) are required to take part in an act of collective worship on each school day.
- Collective worship may be held at any time during the school day.
- Separate acts of collective worship may be arranged for different age or school groupings.
- Collective worship must take place on school premises (community schools)
- Most acts of collective worship taking place in any one term in a community school must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. That is, the worship must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any one Christian denomination.
- Collective worship must be appropriate having regard to the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the pupils.
- Where worship which is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character is inappropriate, the headteacher and governing body may apply to the local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) for permission to arrange worship for all or some of the pupils which is not wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- Parents retain the right to withdraw their children from collective worship.
- Teachers cannot be compelled to lead collective worship, but it is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that it takes place.

The right of withdrawal

At Maes yr Haul Primary School, we seek to be a fully inclusive community. However we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship. This school expects that withdrawal will only be made following a discussion between the parents and Headteacher followed by the parents' written confirmation of withdrawal.

The school has a system of suitable supervision for pupils withdrawn from acts of collective worship. However, no specific additional work will be set for this time. Activities will be selected appropriate to the age and ability of the pupil involved.

All staff, including the Headteacher, have the right of withdrawal from the act of collective worship, but the Headteacher, should he or she wish exercise this right, maintains statutory accountability for acts of collective worship.

Organisation

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires that 'all pupils in attendance at a maintained school shall on each day take part in an act of collective worship'. We do our best to keep the spirit of this legislation providing as many opportunities for daily acts of worship as is practically possible.

The guidance issued in circular 1/94 states that worship should be of a 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' and not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. At Maes yr Haul Primary School, we interpret 'broadly Christian' as meaning that: -

- Worship contains some elements that accord special status to God and Jesus, and the teachings and actions contained in the Bible, e.g. The Sermon on the Mount.
- Sharing with pupils the Christian belief that all Christians are called to continue Jesus' work of love and compassion for their fellow human beings through the exploration of key Christian concepts such as love, trust, forgiveness, mercy, humility, courage, integrity, respect for life, value of the individual, justice, co-operation, service, honesty and truthfulness.

Collective worship takes place daily and usually takes place in either of the two halls as it is not possible to gather all pupils together in one hall. On some occasions, or where the hall or staff are unavailable, the act of collective worship may take place in classrooms and be held by class teachers. Acts of collective worship take into account the pupils' ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds.

Since our halls have many functions (P.E. music lessons, singing, dining, etc.), the children are reminded that they are going into assembly as they line up in their classrooms. They are expected to enter the hall in a quiet, calm and orderly manner. Music may be played as the pupils enter and leave, which is intended to promote a sense of thoughtfulness and calm. The children are greeted in Welsh at the beginning, and Welsh is used regularly as part of collective worship, such as for prayers, hymns and instructions.

Values

Collective worship is organised around an annual programme of 'values'. These values are chosen to provide meaningful and relevant contexts through which the legal requirements for worship can be fully addressed, whilst also providing relevant themes and discussion for pupils and staff with other religious or humanist / atheist views.

Throughout the year, collective worship may also reflect the variety and diversity of faiths and cultures in Wales, and will celebrate festivals and religious events (eg. Diwali, Hanukah, Chinese New Year, Dydd Dewi Sant, Shrove Tuesday).

The organisation of collective worship will alter from time to time, in order to accommodate other timetabled events in school, such as PPA time, visitors etc. The current 'normal' arrangements are given in the appendix following this policy.

During each year, opportunities may also be provided for pupils to visit local religious venues (e.g. local church) and for visitors from local churches etc to visit the school and participate in collective worship.

Supervision

There will always be at least two members of staff present in each hall during collective worship, and usually at least one member of staff per two classes. There may also be other occasions when the presence of all staff will be required. Staff will be notified in advance if this is the case. Staff who are not required to attend will be engaged in other activities such as preparation, planning, assessment.

Planning, Recording and Evaluation

Collective worship, like other aspects of the curriculum, needs to be planned for to ensure appropriate delivery, resourcing and continuity. An overall structure for the provision of collective worship has been established but this recognizes that the content and methodology of collective worship should be varied to ensure that interest is maintained. This also provides sufficient flexibility to respond to local or national events.

Each month there is a theme for collective worship. Those leading collective worship are encouraged to relate their worship to this theme where possible, e.g. through selection of appropriate biblical and other stories and songs with moral themes.

We seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on collective worship and to be a part of the evaluation process. Members of the School Council are asked to seek the views of their classmates and reports these findings to Council meetings and the Governing Body. There is a named school governor who has responsibility for monitoring collective worship at the school.

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