



Collective Worship Policy

Date adopted	7 th February 2008	Version	Feb-08
Last Reviewed	13 th October 2010	Review Cycle	Three Years
Revision Ref			
Author/Owner	Curriculum Committee		

1. Aims

- 1.1 “The best preparation for being a happy and useful person is to live fully as a child”. Collective Worship at this school supports this statement. Collective Worship also supports our School Aims.
- 1.2 In this school we take two distinct meanings to worship:
 - adoration offered by believers to the Supreme Being;
 - concerns, concepts, principles, conduct worthy of celebration as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit;...and we aim to provide opportunities or both.
- 1.3 At this school acts of Collective Worship are conducted within an educational context. It therefore follows that any attempt to persuade the participants to adopt a particular religious belief is inappropriate.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Collective Worship at St Thomas Primary School is based on the following principles:
 - (a) to reflect, express, affirm or challenge commonly accepted personal and social values
 - (b) to provide experiences so that those with a commitment to a religious life may worship adequately without violating the integrity of those without a religious commitment;
 - (c) Involve active participation of pupils and other members of the school community
 - (d) employ a variety of methods of delivery and media
 - (e) include visiting speakers and groups, where appropriate (Refer to DCC’s SACRE guidance on visitors, Appendix 1)
 - (f) exploit any cross-curricular opportunities provided
 - (g) recognise the wide variety of backgrounds from which people come.

3. Legal Requirements

- 3.1 The Education Act (1988) requires schools to provide a daily act of collective worship for all registered pupils. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from such acts of collective worship, and teachers, including the Headteacher, have the same right of withdrawal. If the Headteacher exercises this right then they must ensure that the conditions of the Education Reform Act are adhered to within the school.

- 3.2 The Education Reform Act (sections 7.1 and 7.2) requires collective worship to be “wholly or mainly Christian” and “not to be distinctive of any denomination”. For this to be so it should “reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief”.

4. Collective Worship

- 4.1 Collective Worship should sensitively try to evoke senses and feelings that arise from: a sense of beauty, a sense of wonder; a feeling of pride; a sense of pity; a feeling of shared sadness; a sense of shared loss; a sense of peace; a sense of thankfulness; and a sense of stillness.
- 4.2 In providing acts of Collective Worship the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the children will be taken into account.

5. Organisation of Collective Worship

- 5.1 Acts of Collective Worship do not have to bring the whole school together on each occasion.
- 5.2 At St Thomas Primary School a variety of approaches will be used:
- (a) whole school assemblies - led by the Headteacher or their nominee, attended by all children and teaching staff, except those who have exercised their right to withdraw.
 - (b) class assemblies - led by the class teachers
 - (c) year assemblies - led by the Headteacher or their nominee.
- 5.3 A record of acts of Collective Worship as shown in (a) and (c) above, should be kept and teachers should know the topics to be covered, so that these can be developed in the classroom as appropriate, or through class assemblies (b).
- 5.4 Collective Worship is a whole-school issue. A balanced, planned programme will reflect the life and work of the school and local community, making appropriate links with the PSHE scheme of work. The programme will contain themes which during the course of the year are likely to centre around:
- religious festivals and special days
 - annual events and anniversaries
 - aspects of the school curriculum
 - developments from classroom activities
 - published assembly books and other literature.
- 5.5 In order to prevent too many restrictions the full plan should leave room for the more topical and spontaneous acts of worship (for example, exploring current affairs and responding to events in the life of the school).
- 5.6 The Governors of St Thomas Primary School support this approach to Collective Worship, and where they can will join and engage in on-going discussion with staff, parents and children.

6. Right of withdrawal

- 6.1 We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly.

- 6.2 Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.
- 6.3 The Headteacher will keep a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

7. Evaluation

- 7.1 At St Thomas Primary School we will endeavour to evaluate the provision of Collective Worship against the principles of this policy. It is acknowledged that discussion with teachers, children and other participants as appropriate will assist the co-ordinator of collective worship to plan for the future.
- 7.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years.

8. Document History

2	Reviewed, amended and approved by Curriculum Committee (7th Feb 2008)
1.1	Updated and reformatted by Clerk (23rd January 2008)
1	Previous version approved by Curriculum Committee (November 2002)