

# COLVILLE COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

### **Purpose:**

- To inform staff, parents and governors about Collective Worship at Colville.
- To support staff when planning and carrying out acts of collective worship.
- To enable the school to meet statutory requirements.

### **Introduction:**

The collective worship in our school will be based upon the terms of the 1988 Education Act which states that:-

- An act of Collective Worship should take place every day
  - Collective worship and assembly are two distinct activities although they may be part of the same gathering – as they are at Colville
  - It may draw on traditions and elements from other faiths, but the emphasis must be particularly on the Christian religious traditions, though not of any particular denomination
  - It should be appropriate to the family background age and ability of the pupils
- Collective worship is something in which we can all share.

### **Legal Requirements:**

- Collective worship and assembly are two distinct activities
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the former but not the latter
- Teachers have the right to withdraw from the former but not the latter.
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### **Aims:**

- to provide the opportunities for individuals:-
- to worship God (if they want to);
- to consider spiritual and moral issues
- to explore their own beliefs
- to participate and respond, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship, or through listening to and joining in the worship offered;
- to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes

### **Implementation:**

At Colville we intend for our assemblies to help us to

- foster a sense of community
- make us more sensitive to the needs and values of others
- help us celebrate and share those things which are important to us
- become aware of the contribution we can make to the local and wider community
- encourage a reflective approach to life and the wonderful world around us
- begin to come to terms with life's mysteries and ultimate questions and the feelings they can arouse, particularly destructive ones, e.g. hate, anger, frustration
- develop an understanding of why people want to worship by considering things which inspire awe, wonder, mystery, celebration, reverence, fellowship, awareness etc.
- Express our response to such feelings in a variety of ways, e.g. through music, dance, drama, movement, art, craft, poetry, prose
- Look at some of the things that are part of religious worship and their importance e.g. artefacts, symbols, language, prayers, hymns and songs.
- Become aware that some people believe their lives are influenced by something outside themselves – the spiritual realm.
- To try and create an atmosphere in which all these things can happen

### **Approaches and Methods:**

#### **Assemblies should:-**

- have a clear, focused and achievable aim
- be a learning experience
- not be too long (15 minutes)
- involve a variety of forms of worship – music, songs, reading, silence, reflection
- evoke feelings and senses associated with worship
- allow children to be active not passive – to respond mentally if not always verbally or physically
- not make children join in with activities they don't understand or that compromise their beliefs or lack of them
- have a clear structure – a starting point (to get the children's attention), an exploration of the theme and a conclusion – including time for reflection and celebration.

#### **We might make use of:-**

**Readings drawn from many sources** – poems, quotations, Holy books, religious writings, thought for the day, prayers, use of stories, fact and fiction

- many children's stories have all sorts of concepts to think about and come to terms with
- when using religious stories we need to consider the following points
  1. does the story contribute to the aim of the assembly
  2. does it avoid misunderstandings about religion
  3. does it involve concepts beyond the children's understanding
  4. does the story present good actions as being the prerogative of only one faith
  5. do I understand the meaning of the context of the story.

**Presentations by the children** – might involve drawing on all the different curriculum areas in order to share information about visits, individual or group activities, concerns, achievements

**Visitors:-** including parents, people from inside the school or immediate vicinity, people from further afield. When welcoming visitors we need to be:-

- clear about what we want from them, or them from us
- aware that they may not be used to speaking to large groups of children
- aware that they may make assumptions about children's understanding, religious knowledge or beliefs
- sure they will not seek to promote their own beliefs or none above others.

**Art and visual stimuli** – produced by the children and others

**Music** – to listen to or participate in

The pattern of assemblies is as follows:-

All children attend all assemblies in the hall.

Monday: HT assembly – theme

Tuesday: alternate singing practice or visitor (vicar or curate from St Andrew's/Baptist church)

Wednesday: in class assemblies – special person

Thursday: rota of class sharing assemblies – parents invited (staff rota when no sharing assembly)

Friday: HT/DH – whole school sharing and celebration assembly

This pattern may change in special weeks, e.g. Book Week, Maths Week or at other times in response to particular events.

At the end of every term there will be a special assembly.

## APPENDIX

WORKSHIP is a basic human activity in which everyone can share in their own way. Identifying, affirming and celebrating certain ideals and values.

Worship literally means “worthship” – things worth thinking about. Everyone can experience and share feelings of wonder, awe, mystery, celebration, reverence, fellowship and awareness, whatever their faith or none faith. Everyone can value things like life, friends, our families, our school community, our world; and we can share a lovely day, birthdays, a new baby in the family, a wedding etc.

PRAYER is reflection and response, plus communication for those who want to participate.

REFLECTION – Using expressions like “Close your eyes and think about the words I’m going to say.” “Look at these beautiful flowers.” “Listen to this song and think about what the words are telling us.” “Imagine what it must be like to be .....

RESPONSE involves thoughts, feelings and emotions expressed through words, music, movement, drama, painting, modelling, silence etc.

“Through assemblies children should be able to feel gratitude; bewilderment and anger in the face of injustice and suffering: awe and wonder at the beautiful and mysterious in life: grief and compassion in times of tragedy and hardship.

Responses of this kind are common to all faiths or none.”

[An extract from ‘Assembly’ – compiled by Rachel Gregory. Bedfordshire R.E. Service]

COMMUNICATION – Children can be introduced to the knowledge that people of faith use prayer to link up with God, Allah etc. As well as other people.

That they use formal prayers e.g. The Lord’s Prayer use by Christians, as well as informal prayers.

That there are certain beliefs and actions involved in praying e.g. Moslem prayer rituals.

That they should respect these beliefs and actions.

The children can be introduced to traditional prayers from Christian, and other faiths by saying “Think about the words I’m going to say.” “This is a prayer that Jewish children use,” or “Listen to the words that call the Moslems to prayer.

HYMNS AND SONGS – We should avoid those which make particularly strong faith statements or contain difficult language and ideas, but choose those that the children enjoy singing, have a good tune, enrich and theme, have a poetic use of language, produce a response to what is mysterious and unfathomable in life, are about human qualities, and relationships with each other and the natural world. We could introduce them by saying. “This is a hymn the Christians sing.” “This is a Jewish song.” “This is a song about what it feels like to be homeless.”