

STOKE PARK INFANT SCHOOL



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Collective worship should offer pupils opportunities to explore and share beliefs; consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence, consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to their own lives; think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community and appreciate the Importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them. Collective worship also offers an opportunity to reaffirm, interpret and put into practice the values of the school. It provides time to celebrate the various achievements of members of the community that are held to be of worth.

(National Curriculum Council, Spiritual and Moral Development, A discussion Paper 1993)

Philosophy

Stoke Park Infant School is a Community school. Worship is therefore an important part of the school day as it gives us the opportunity to come together as a community. It is attended by all pupils, staff and any visitors in school are very welcome to join in.

At Stoke Park Infant school we recognise that Collective Worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

Aims

It is our aim at Stoke Park Infant School that worship should: -

- contribute to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of each child.
- To give an opportunity to worship God
- To help children develop a sense of awe and wonder about them
- Give expression to, and reaffirm and practise the values of the school community
- Allow reflection and response to the fundamental questions of life and those things that are of eternal concern and value to human beings
- Celebrate and give thanks for the achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.
- Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others, a recognition of the vulnerability of self and of others

- Provide members of the school community with the opportunity to praise and reach out to God.
- Provide members of the school community with the opportunity experience stillness and quiet
- Provide members of the school community with the opportunity respond to Christian language and symbolism
- To help children to begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship
- Provide a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future.

Legal Status of Collective Worship

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 seek to do our best to keep the spirit of this legislation seeking to provide as many high quality acts of worship as is practically possible.

To provide pupils with variety in their experience of worship acts of worship may take the form of a whole school act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or school groups. Collective Worship may be held at any time during the school day.

All acts of worship are in accordance with the guidance issued in circular 1/94 which states that worship should be of a ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’ and not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. By broadly Christian in this school we mean that: -

- Worship contains some elements that accord special status to Jesus, his teachings and actions, 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 and integrity, respect for life, value of an individual, justice, co-operation and service, honesty and truthfulness.

Acts of Collective Worship at Stoke Park Infant school take into account the pupil’s ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds.

Rights of Withdrawal

At Stoke Park Infant School we seek to be an inclusive community however we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children for Collective Worship. This school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the head teacher followed by written confirmation of withdrawal.

The school has a system of suitable supervision for pupils withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship. However, no additional work is set or followed in this time.

All teachers, including the head teacher, have the right of withdrawal from the Act of Collective Worship, but the head teacher, should he or she wish exercise this right, maintains statutory accountability for Acts of Collective Worship in Stoke Park Infant school.

This right of withdrawal doesn't extend to assemblies.

Organisation

	Content	When?	Led by:
Monday	Introduction to this week's theme	9.15am	EC/JB
Tuesday	Singing assembly Awesome author and maths	2.45pm	Led by: Class teachers
Wednesday	Class assemblies/Visitors		Class teacher
Thursday	Open the Book Certificates	2.45pm	Rev Wise and OTB team
Friday	Celebration assembly	2.45pm	EC/JB

Planning, Recording and Evaluation

Collective worship will be treated like any other part of the curriculum when it comes to matters of planning, delivery, resourcing and evaluation. The content and methodology of Collective Worship should be varied and there should be evidence of this in planning.

Each week there is a theme for Collective worship/assemblies based on our assembly values. There is a value foci for each month and weekly assembly themes are based around that value. These are published at the beginning of the term. Those leading worship that week are encouraged to relate their worship to this theme. The themes chosen are broad enough to allow all those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective. This will mean that by the end of the week the pupils will have had the opportunity to reflect on the theme from a variety of viewpoints. Alternatively class teachers may develop their worship from themes and events that occur on the curriculum during the week.

This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

We seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on collective worship and to be a part of the evaluation process. The Home Rangers will seek the views of their classmates and reports these findings to the schools council.

Creating an Appropriate Setting for Worship

Our collective worship usually takes place in the school hall. The school recognises that there is a difference between Acts of Collective Worship and an assembly. On some occasions an act of worship may follow an assembly. When this happens the transition will be marked in some way, e.g. moment of silence, lighting of a candle, quiet music. In order to create an appropriate atmosphere for collective worship the school does the following:

Play music appropriate to the theme to mark the beginning and end of the session

Provide a time for thinking and reflection

Have a time of silence

A song that the children know

The use of prayer may be a known prayer or a short prayer led by a visitor or staff. The children are invited to make the prayer their own by saying 'Amen'(I agree).

The use of Visitors in Collective Worship

The headteacher or members of staff generally conduct assemblies. On a Thursday our local vicar takes assembly with the Open the Book team. Other occasional visitors representing local or national charities or organisations may also attend acts of worship and are briefed accordingly.

Agreed: Autumn 2021

Review: Autumn 2023