

Collective Worship



February 2024

Approved by TLP Committee
Review date February 2025

The collective worship policy at Foxes Piece School pays due regard to statutory requirements and has taken account of the guidance offered by the local authority through its SACRE. Collective worship is a valued and valuable part of school life and is taken seriously, because it shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Aims of collective worship

Collective worship in Foxes Piece School aims to provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to:

- experience a variety of styles of worship
- celebrate together eg festivals, school values, individual achievements
- build a sense of community and foster corporate identity;
- develop a reflective approach to living which sometimes encourages understanding of and invitation to prayer;
- look beyond the physical, material and measurable
- worship God or reflect on human values;
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed in doing any of the above

Statutory requirements

By law, Collective Worship must:

- take place for every child not withdrawn by their parents (post 16 students can withdraw themselves) every day
- be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils

This means that collective worship should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. Not every act of collective worship needs to comply with this, provided that, taking any school term as a whole, most such acts which take place in the school do comply.

The Collective Worship Policy of Foxes Piece School is consistent with the philosophy and aims of the school as expressed in the school prospectus.

The Contribution of Collective Worship to aspects of the Curriculum

Collective worship time is distinct from curriculum time given to any subject including religious education. However, in Foxes Piece School, we aim to enable collective worship and aspects of children's classroom learning to be mutually supportive. Collective worship provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in line with school policy. To achieve this it addresses a wide variety of themes and topics, uses diverse stimuli and resources and provides pupils with opportunities to 'respond' at their own level.

The Management of Collective Worship

The Headteacher is responsible for the provision of collective worship, supported by and after consultation with the governing body. Every member of the school staff, pupils and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year.

The Organisation of Collective Worship Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings in the school hall or the classroom.

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

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

The content of all acts of collective worship is considered carefully to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils.

Termly planning sheets list themes, special occasions and events, but there is flexibility to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. Weekly planning and recording sheets, enable the monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship.

Visitors are welcome to lead collective worship from time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy.

Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

The Act of Collective Worship

We use a variety of styles, active and interactive methods and a range of resources in our acts of collective worship. Leaders make decisions about these elements according to what is most appropriate to the content, the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils.

Where prayer is included in our acts of worship it is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to 'God' rather than Jesus as this is inclusive of the beliefs of our non-Christian religious pupils. We hope that pupils who prefer not to pray will use these moments to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Collective worship should not be confused with assembly. We often take the opportunity of pupils gathered together to share announcements and notices. Using a variety of strategies eg music, silence etc we indicate clearly to all present when worship begins and ends.

Withdrawal

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship and staff are also free to withdraw from involvement in this aspect of school life. We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the Headteacher in writing so that school records are accurate. We also appreciate opportunities to speak with parents and staff who have concerns about collective worship, always keen to develop our understanding of sensitivities and to overcome difficulties where possible. Those pupils who are withdrawn from worship are cared for by a member of the school's staff.