

Rockcliffe First School Collective Worship Policy

Our Definition of Collective Worship

The word worship comes from the Anglo Saxon word 'weorthscipe' and can be defined as either 'the adoration of God or a Supreme Being' or 'to honour, value and praise someone or something of worth'. In the context of worship in school, the aim is to provide experiences which deepen the inner senses and engender feelings of self worth and the uniqueness of the individual. It can give pupils a purpose and meaning to life, awe and wonder of the natural world, reverence and respect and a sense of belonging to the community.

Our aim is to create an atmosphere in which genuine worship may take place and where pupils' own beliefs are valued, with each one having the opportunity to respond in his or her own way.

Our pupils are encouraged to reflect on the ways in which worship affects their own values, attitudes and spiritual dimensions, and also those of our learning community and society. It is a celebration and a time for reflecting on things that have worth and meaning to our community.

The role of Collective Worship in the life of our school

Collective Worship makes a valuable contribution to the life of Rockcliffe First School. It provides an opportunity for members of the school community to pause from activity, to gather; to remind themselves of and to reflect upon the beliefs and values which bind the school community together. It also allows those with a religious commitment the possibility of entering into worship and those with no religious commitment to sense what worship is and to reflect deeply. In this way we aim both to affirm and to protect the integrity of all members of the school community.

In particular, Collective Worship in our school

- provides an opportunity for members of the school community to stop activity, to pause and to reflect on important issues;
- builds up the sense of group identity;
- gives pupils the experience of being still or silent;
- provides an opportunity for celebrating times of success or joy;
- provides an opportunity for meeting at times of sadness or sorrow;
- provides an opportunity for highlighting and reflecting upon core school values – such as striving to be honest and truthful, trying hard in all things, respecting oneself as well as other people, striving to be fair and just; and offers the opportunity to mark significant points in the year, such as festivals and school events.

Our School and the Law on Collective Worship

At Rockcliffe First School we acknowledge that the Education Reform Act of 1988 sets out the law regarding Collective Worship and we ensure that the 'broadly Christian character' requirement is achieved in the majority of our acts of collective worship over the course of a school term. We do this in a number of ways, for example, by

- making reference to God or Jesus, when appropriate (but being sensitive to the nature of the school community and guarding against the assumption that simply to use such words somehow creates 'worship' or 'legality');
- encouraging a positive and responsible attitude to the environment;
- encouraging a quest for honesty, integrity, justice and truth;
- encouraging children to look beyond the obvious, the immediate and the material;
- encouraging love and respect for self and for the other person;
- encouraging service to others and to the community; and
- building Christian festivals into the yearly programme (which does not, of course preclude focusing on festivals from other faith traditions as well).

At Rockcliffe First School we seek to make Collective Worship as inclusive as possible. Therefore we;

- recognise that there are many forms of commitment, religious and non-religious;
- regard variety – in religion, culture and belief – as something to be acknowledged and explored rather than avoided and denied;
- build festivals from a variety of cultural and religious traditions into our yearly programme.

Collective Worship and the School Curriculum

At Rockcliffe First School we recognise that Collective Worship is in 'dialogue' with the curriculum i.e.

- Collective Worship draws from the curriculum – by providing an opportunity to reflect on and highlight classroom work, for example; and
- Collective Worship feeds back into the curriculum – by providing ideas and suggestions which can be followed up in the classroom, for example.

The organisation of collective worship in our school

Collective worship takes place on a daily basis for all year groups, usually in a gathering of the whole school but sometimes within a key stage, year group, or class.

Acts of Collective Worship will usually last fifteen minutes, although it is recognised that the time may be extended or reduced, as appropriate.

Record Keeping

We recognise the importance and value of record keeping. Collective Worship leaders are encouraged to keep a clear and simple record by using a simple grid.

Assembly/Collective Worship Record Theme.....
Week beginning

Date	Led by	Content	Method/ means	Focal point Time for reflection	Hymn/song/reading

- Records are kept in the staff room where staff can both complete details of acts of collective worship for which they have been responsible and glance at the structure and content of those led by others. Records may be used to provide material to show to and discuss with OFSTED inspectors.

Evaluation

An open book is kept in the staff room for staff to write comments on the act of worship they have seen.

A Collective Worship and Assemblies Committee meets once a term, led by the collective worship co-ordinator. These meetings are an opportunity to review and evaluate the last term's Acts of Collective Worship and to plan themes for the next term. A link governor for collective worship has a monitoring role.

The right of parents to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship

At Rockcliffe First School we seek to be an inclusive community. However we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. This school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the headteacher/Collective Worship Co-ordinator followed by written confirmation of withdrawal. Our 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.

The right of members of staff to withdraw from acts of collective worship

All teachers, including the headteacher, have the right of withdrawal from the Act of Collective Worship, but the headteacher, should she wish exercise this right, maintains statutory accountability for Acts of Collective Worship in our school. This right of withdrawal does not extend to assemblies.

The role of Governors

The Governing Body will review this policy, formally, every two years from the date of its adoption.

Informal Review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required. This Policy has been formally adopted by the Governing Body of Rockcliffe First School. It will be reviewed by the Governors and the headteacher/Collective Worship Co-ordinator in conjunction with all staff every two years / as required.

Appendix A: Themes for Collective Worship

Themes

Achievement	Explorers	Leaders	Secrets
Advent	Failure	Lent	Selflessness
Age	Faith	Light	Sharing
Aims	Families	Listening	Sins
Ambition	Famous People	Loneliness	Slavery
Anger	Fantasy	Loving	Sorry
Animals	Fear	Loyalty	Spirituality
Art	Feelings	Memories	Strength and
Authority	Festivals	Miracles	Weakness
Autumn/Harvest	Followers	Mistakes	Sukkot
Awareness	Food and Fasting	Music	Surprises
Awe and Wonder	Forgiveness	Natural World	Symbols
Barriers	Freedom	Naughtiness	Team work
Beginnings	Friendship	Neighbourhood	Temptations
Beliefs	Future	New life	Ten
Birth	Gifts and Talents	New Year	Commandments
Blindness and Sight	Giving and	Old and New	Thanks
Books	Receiving	One World	The Gurus
Bridges	God	Opportunities	The Mool Mantra
Bullying	Good and Evil	Ourselves	The Past
Candlemas	Good News	Outsiders	The Unknown
Candles	Greed	Parables	The Word
Caring	Green Living	Parents	Thoughtfulness
Celebration	Handicap	Patience	Time
Challenges	Happiness	Patriarchs	Tolerance
Change	Harvest	Patterns	Trials
Charity	Hearing	Peace	Trust
Children	Heroes and	People	Truth
Choices	Heroines	Pilgrimages	Turning Points
Christmas	Hobbies	Poetry	Ultimate Questions
Co operation	Holidays	Possessions	Understanding
Commitment	Holocaust	Poverty	United Nations
Communication	Homelessness	Praise	Us and Them
Community	Honesty	Prayer	Values
Conflict	Hope	Prejudice	Victims
Courage	Humility	Promises	Victories
Creation	Ideals	Prophets	Virtues
Customs	Imagination	Proverbs	War
Darkness	Influences	Quiet	Water
Day and Night	Injustices	Ramadan	Ways of Seeing
Death	Inspiration	Reflection	Wealth
Diaries	Inspirational	Refugees	Why are we here?
Disasters	Writings	Relationships	Wisdom
Disciples	Jealousy	Remembrance	Wonder
Discovery	Jesus	Respect	Words
Divali	Journeys	Rewards	Work
Easter	Justice	Risks	Worship
Education	Key People	Roots	Xenophobia
Endings	Kindness	Rules	You and Me
Environment	Language	School	Youth and Old Age
Expectations	Laws	Seasons	Zero Tolerance

Appendix B: Collective Worship planning sheet

Focus
People to involve
Activities to include
Experiences to share
Values to reflect on
Stories to use
Music to play
Ideas to explore
Issues to raise
Words to use
Things to tell
Opportunities to reflect
Sayings to repeat
Any other ideas: