



## Collective Worship Policy

### Philosophy

We gather every day to celebrate being together in the school community and to worship together. From our daily acts of worship we reflect, individually and as a group, on the mystery and wonder of the known and unknown world in which we live. Collective worship indicates a group of people among whom a whole range of beliefs, both religious and non-religious, can be found. We recognise that Collective Worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our pupils Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

Collective Worship is distinct from:-

- a) Assembly which is a gathering of people within the school for any purpose.
- b) Corporate Worship which is offered by a group of people who all share the same belief.

We hold that collective worship is a celebration of all dimensions of human experience which are perceived to be of worth and understand it is a legal requirement.

### Legal Requirements

The Education Reform Act 1988 and the Education Act 2011 set out the legal framework for collective worship. DES Circular 1/94 states:

Collective worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.



## **Aims**

At Upwood Primary School we aim to teach each child to respect and value others. In collective worship we do this by:

- Having a daily act of worship for all pupils on the school roll taking into account the ages, aptitudes and family background of all pupils.
- Promoting and developing the common values which underpin the life of the school.
- Providing opportunities for pupils and staff to share, celebrate, express their beliefs and to reflect together on the wonders, pleasures and joy of life.
- Creating moments of peace which are conducive to reflection.
- Raising awareness in a sensitive way of misunderstandings and biased attitudes.
- Revealing the spiritual dimension of life.
- Learning about, and from, the different religious traditions of the world.

## **Procedures and Content**

The taking of collective worship is shared between staff on a rota basis. Visiting speakers from the community are invited to lead worship too. Songs and hymns are practiced each week and care is taken to ensure that the words do not offend any particular group.

Over the term, the worship is mainly of a broadly Christian character; although we draw upon the wealth of other religions to help us develop personally, morally, socially and spiritually.

We use stories, poetry, fable and legend, world events and accounts of people who have stood up for their ideals to engage us all in reflection and consideration of the meaning of life. Music, art and photographs often illustrate difficult concepts in ways which words cannot. Often a few minutes will be given for all to consider silently, the message of worship that day.

We want our children to develop:

- a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- a sense of transience and constant change.
- a sense of pattern, sequence, order and purpose.



- an awareness that there is often more to things than meet the eye – a sense of transcendence.
- a sense of the quality of silence, reflection, ability to listen, concentrated attention.
- a sense of self-worth.
- a sense of the worth of others.
- a sense of community – its demands, value, rituals and celebrations.
- a sense of the joy of life, achievement and play.
- an awareness of limitation, frustration, loss, the darker side of life.
- an awareness of the natural world – water, wind, earth etc.
- sense of the human capacity for choice, decision and responsibility.

As well as an ability to:

- listen;
- be still and aware;
- reflect;
- feel sympathetically for and with others;
- think and respond with imagination;
- interpret and evaluate experience;
- cope with paradox and contradiction.

### **Inclusion and Racial Equality**

At Upwood Primary School we aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and the community to provide a safe, secure and happy learning environment for all. In collective worship we do this by ensuring that:

- all children participate through class assemblies.
- we, as adults, are the role models for the children in how we conduct ourselves during worship.
- in a multi-faith society we have a clear duty to inform, explore and seek to avoid gratuitous offence of anyone or anyone's beliefs.
- in a multi-faith society we promote racial equality (see School Policy).



## **Resources**

There is a wide range of resources for collective worship – please see the RE co-ordinator. There are also assembly books for staff to use – please see the Head Teacher.

Staff must be aware of the significance of artefacts and that they must be handled in a reverent way. The RE co-ordinator will advise on any particular actions that must be observed.

Our children themselves have a wealth of experience to share.

## **Complaints Procedure**

If a parent/carer has a complaint about collective worship then a meeting is held with the Head Teacher. If the matter cannot be resolved then it is sent to the Governing Body. Where agreement is still not reached, then the parent/carer can take the matter to the Secretary of State for Education.

## **Withdrawal**

When parents/carers do not wish their children to participate in collective worship they are asked to arrange a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss the matter. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship but the school is still responsible for those pupils.

Teachers are required to attend assemblies as part of their conditions of service. However, they are not obliged to attend or participate in acts of worship. Any teacher wishing to withdraw from collective worship must discuss the matter with the Head Teacher.