

Baston CE Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Agreed – September 2009
To be reviewed – September 2011

Baston is a Voluntary Controlled school. The daily act of collective worship is therefore an integral and important part of school life...it is at the heart of all that is done at our school.

It is a time where we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements together. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school but also recognising the festivals within other religions. The contributions of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors are valued highly. It is attended by all students, staff and any visitors in school are very welcome to join in. (Please see annexe 1)

We recognise that Collective Worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our students Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

Collective Worship is integral to our Christian identity and sense of belonging to the world

Aims

It is our aim that worship should:-

- 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 respond to Christian language and symbolism
- provide members of the school community with the opportunity experience stillness and quiet
- provide members of the school community with the opportunity to experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation. These might include praise, seeking forgiveness, asking on behalf of self and others or quiet reflection.
- to help students to begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship
- provide a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future.
- contribute to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of each child.
- allow reflection and response to the fundamental questions of life and those things that are of eternal concern and value to human beings
- foster and enable a concern for the needs of others, a recognition of the vulnerability of self and of others
- celebrate and give thanks for the achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.
- Promote community cohesion
- give expression to, and reaffirm and practise the values of the school community
- Support the social and emotional aspects of pupils learning (SEAL)

Legal Requirements

Legal Status of Collective Worship

All acts of worship are in accordance with the school's Trust Deed and reflect the Anglican status of the school. In addition to daily school worship, special celebrations take place in Church.

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'. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from the act of worship either partially or wholly. We would hope this would only happen after discussion with the Headteacher. Any parents wishing to do so should contact the Head teacher.

Teachers also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Organisation

We aim to provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. Our current schedule is as follows:

Monday

Whole school worship led by the Headteacher,

Tuesday

Whole school worship. This is an opportunity for spiritual reflection through Music where pupils learn new songs and learn the spiritual significance behind them. This will be led by a member of staff

Wednesday

Whole School Worship led by the Vicar or member of staff

Thursday

Whole school worship led by the Assistant Head/KS Leader

Friday

Celebration of achievements-personally, socially and academically, led by the Headteacher. We also give house points.

Each class leads a Class Worship once during the school year when parents, relatives and friends are invited to join us.

In addition the School Council will lead Worship once every half term.

The assembly/worship should last approximately 15-20 minutes.

Planning, Content and Detail

The RE leader is responsible for organising the themes for the Terms Collective worship. The themes chosen are also broad enough for staff to be able to approach the theme from their own perspective. Through whole staff discussion this involves a much broader approach and encompasses other faiths. We also incorporate flexibility as on occasions it is recognised that worship leaders may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

Our worship begins with the children entering the hall accompanied by a piece of music for the week. The title of this piece of music is displayed for the children to see throughout the week and could come from a variety of cultures. Sometimes music is chosen and played by children on their own instruments. The candles on the altar table are lit with the involvement of the children. The children are involved in the worship throughout and this finishes with a prayer. The candles are then blown out before any messages are given. This allows for us to make a clear distinction between worship and assembly. The children then lead out as the music is played.

Prayer and Reflection

Collective worship always includes a time of prayer and/or reflection, A range of prayers is used including the Lord's Prayer, prayers written by the children and others. At the beginning of all worship a time of reflection and quiet is encouraged by the lighting of candles. A cross is also displayed on the altar table.

At the beginning of the lunch hour, grace is said by either an adult or child in each class. Staff also say a prayer with their class at the end of the school day.

Other Faiths

Although our worship reflects our Christian beliefs and values, we are committed to respecting each other's faith stance and culture, showing knowledge and understanding regardless of pupils' beliefs. The class-led acts of worship may portray other cultures and beliefs as they reflect the RE studied as part of the curriculum requirements.

Record Keeping, Evaluation and Monitoring

A file is kept, recording details of each act of worship. Any evaluation will be recorded here. This will form our Record of worship. An open book is also placed in the school entrance for anyone to comment on the acts of worship they have seen.

Visits and visitors

As part of the curriculum, Baston CE School ensures that appropriate visits are made available for the children in order for them to have first-hand experiences and gain a greater understanding of various places of worship. Visitors to the school are welcomed and enabled to share their experiences

and knowledge. St Church is our most valuable and frequently used resource, with the school attending and contributing towards annual Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Leavers' Services.

The R.E. coordinator and link governor liaise to discuss various aspects of R.E. and this ensures an effective line of communication between the coordinator and the governing body.

Equal Opportunities and special needs issues

All pupils, regardless of academic ability, age, gender and ethnic origin will have access to a wide range of appropriate activities to support their understanding of R.E. At each Key Stage, the teacher will draw from other religions as appropriate to acknowledge and celebrate the religious beliefs of the children within the class.

Resources

Resources for worship are kept in the whole school resources. The RE Leader is also provided with a budget each year to develop these resources.

Annexe 1

Statement for Collective Worship

We are required by law to hold a daily act of collective worship. This policy defines the purpose and organisation of daily collective acts of worship. It is meant to ensure that worship is at the heart of daily life in Baston C.E. School.

Aims and Objectives

1) To ensure the school meets the requirements of 1988 Education Reform Act which laid down the legal requirements for collective worship in schools.

- That an act of collective worship must be held daily for all pupils.
- It can be held any time in the school day:
- It can be in whatever grouping the school wishes i.e. teaching groups used at other times, but not specific religious groups.
- It must take place on school premises (Any other act of worship held off the premises is in addition to the statutory act of collective worship.);
- That as a controlled school our collective worship conforms to the requirements of the trust deed.
- The majority of acts each term are “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian theme.”
- Regard must be taken of the pupil’s ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds.

2) To ensure collective worship is approached in a planned and professional way so that it can be a meaningful and worthwhile aspect of school life.

What is meant by Collective Worship?

Collective worship is best understood by contrasting it with corporate worship.

Collective worship is a legal requirement (except for teachers and children whose parents exercise their right to withdraw) It is open to both staff and pupils – Christians and members of other faiths, agnostics, atheists who are not collectively committed to a particular creed, liturgy or form of faith.

(Corporate worship is both voluntary and practiced by members of a particular worshipping community and distinctive of a specific religious community.)

Collective Worship is part of the educational provision of the school and should be the **heartbeat of all aspects of school life.**

It provides a space in time:

- To allow reflection to be still - explore, encounter and experience their relationship with God.
- To provide a rhythm and constancy in their school life
- To encourage the sense of oneness /community (school, church, village)
- To teach pupils how to be members of large gatherings and perform and respond to music, silence, dance, drama and prayer.

A model for Collective Worship

An act of worship which is to be worthwhile and meaningful needs to be planned within a coherent framework each year. Staff, pupils, governors and visitors should be part of this framework.

Our worship now heavily embraces the Seal themes using resources from the Twelve Baskets (www.twelvebaskets.co.uk)

Furthermore, following feedback from the children collective worship now embraces much more of what they would like to see i.e. more children's participation in leading the worship.

Lots more opportunity for visitors from the local community too is to be encouraged.

Visual stimulus with the chair display for themes too will be trialled in the autumn terms.

In September 2009, some children will embark on training to lead worship (under the guidance of vicar and R.E co-ordinator using "Lighting the Candle" resource pack where they can achieve bronze, silver and possibly gold certificates for completing stages in their training).

A sense of themes is used to ensure continuity and relevance.

The themes should:

- Suit the ages and aptitudes of the pupils
- Refreshing – life giving/ energetic/thought provoking
- Ensure continuity and provide coherence
- Satisfy the legal requirements.

Visitors who are invited to lead an act of worship should be approved by the SMT and well briefed on the theme and organisation, including:

- The age of children
- The numbers participating
- The setting for worship
- Other expected elements of the service.

Care should be taken to provide an atmosphere which is conducive to worship.

Ideas from staff included:

Lighting – one focal candle, but on occasions a row of lights (occasionally scented ones)

Sounds – composer of the week for entering the hall. Children given opportunity to play us in or out.

Altar – to remain in focal position in front of interactive board all day.

Content – notices/ results given out at appropriate times – conducive to atmosphere?

Layout

Is the seating varied? Mixture of buddy system seems to work well.

A range of presentations should be considered according to the assembly group.

These may include celebrations, dance, music, pupil's work, drama, story telling and being "bold" in celebrating faith and challenging children to engage their ideas and questions in worship.

The opportunity to worship

Collective acts of worship should provide opportunities to reflect, respond and revere.