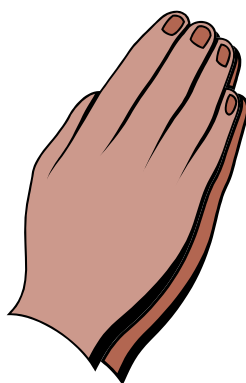




Humshaugh Church of England Voluntary Aided First School

Collective Worship Policy



November 2014

Humshaugh C of E Voluntary Aided First School

Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

Collective Worship at Humshaugh First School will preserve and develop a religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church of England at parish and diocesan level. The school aims to serve its community by providing the highest quality of education, in which all children are offered the widest possible range of experiences, in an environment which encourages learning and an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, promoting Christian values through the experiences it offers to all pupils.

The Education Reform Act 1988 states:

“The educational curriculum should promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the pupils and of society”

A daily act of collective worship is an important means of developing the spiritual moral, social and cultural aspects of school life. The daily act of worship at Humshaugh First School will, generally, be Christian in nature, aiming to provide pupils with an opportunity to worship Christ, to consider and explore spiritual and moral, social and cultural issues and to explore their own beliefs. Collective Worship should promote a common ethos and shared values as well as reinforce positive attitudes. The Education Reform Act 1988 requires that every maintained school includes provision for a daily act of worship. As Humshaugh First School is a Voluntary Aided school, the arrangements for a daily act of worship are the responsibility of the Governing Body in consultation with the Head Teacher.

The right of parents and carers to withdraw their children from the act of Collective Worship is enshrined in the Education Act (1988). Any parent or carer wishing to exercise this right should let the school know of their decision.

Any child who is withdrawn from Collective Worship will be supervised appropriately.

A Definition of Collective Worship

Collective Worship should reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power. School worship is different in character to worship amongst groups with beliefs in common, hence the use of the word “collective” rather than “corporate”.

Ideally, the act of worship should encompass all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that all who take part may feel involved. It both reflects and nurtures the ethos of the school. In particular, Collective Worship

should help to develop a feeling of belonging to a community which we consider to be essential to personal development.

Aims

Through the daily act of collective worship we aim to:

- reflect the school's Church of England foundation in a tangible way;
- provide opportunities for thought, prayer, reflection and celebration in a caring atmosphere. Through this, children learn about and are nurtured in the Christian faith, thus gaining a lifelong understanding of Christian values;
- provide opportunities for the development of children's spiritual and moral growth through worship, prayer and reflection that is meaningful to their everyday life in school and at home;
- create a sense of school identity and of belonging to a school community which shares common experiences;
- encompass all aspects of school life, all curriculum areas and reflect the school's Christian ethos;
- show children that we are members of a wider community, both local and global;
- encourage care and concern for others in society and for the natural world;
- help children think about a wide variety of ideas including the spiritual, ritual, wonderful, joyful, tragic, sorrowful, solemn and humorous!

In the light of these aims, Collective Worship should:

- be pupil centred - related to their own experiences;
- acknowledge diversity and affirm those present, whatever their faith or non-faith background – it should respect the integrity of pupils and teachers;
- involve those present as active participants;
- foster a sense of community – a sense of shared values, identity, outlook, ethos and purpose;
- provide a breathing space in the busy whirl of school activity, a time to gather, be still and reflect, a time to refresh the spirit;

- provide opportunities for pupils to consider questions about God and responses to belief in God;
- provide opportunities for pupils to experience the awe and wonder of God;
- provide an atmosphere conducive to allow worship to take place – music, a visual focus, an appropriate setting all helping to create this special atmosphere, a sense of occasion;
- provide pupils with opportunities for reflection on the significance of the spiritual dimension of their own and other people's lives – through, for example, listening to music, hearing from others, listening to words from the sacred writings of different traditions, prayer and meditation;
- be open enough for pupils to respond to the spiritual dimension, while accepting that some pupils will make no personal response;
- recognise key dates and seasons in the Christian calendar;
- make use of readings, responses and prayers that reflect the Anglican tradition.

Planning

Collective Worship is a learning experience of real quality, properly planned, prepared, executed, recorded and evaluated.

Planning for Collective worship needs to

- Offer a variety of experiences
- Celebrate the successes and share the disappointments of the school community
- Be open – broadening and deepening knowledge and understanding of the issues being focused upon.

Planning for collective worship is the responsibility of the CW co-ordinator, the parish priest and a linked governor. The weekly themes for Collective Worship are linked to the Church's calendar and events in the children's daily lives. Plans are evaluated and adapted by the CW co-ordinator. Collective Worship is properly resourced in terms of time, resources and budget.

Organisation

Whole school Collective Worship is offered every day in school. The school also worships in the parish church of St. Peter's to celebrate major church festivals. Visits for special occasion worship are made to Hexham Abbey and Newcastle Cathedral (leaver's services). Once each term, worship is led for the whole school by a different class.

The parish priest regularly leads Collective Worship on a planned basis, and the local Methodist minister also leads worship time. All teaching staff take part in leading Collective Worship. Evaluations are recorded by those who lead Collective Worship.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of this policy is the joint responsibility of the CW Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher with advice and guidance from the parish priest and the linked governor for CW. The monitoring and evaluation of acts of Collective Worship can be undertaken by:

- discussing with staff and children as to the relevance and impact of acts of worship on their spiritual development;
- observing, monitoring, evaluating and recording acts of worship in order to assess children's involvement, the appropriateness of content and presentation in helping to develop children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding;
- identifying any relevant training needs amongst those who lead collective worship;
- monitoring and developing resources;
- checking that appropriate opportunities are taken which raise multicultural, equal opportunities and gender issues;
- ensuring that the legal requirements for collective worship are being met.

Resources

- Class prayers which are said at the end of each day;
- table, cross, seasonal 'altar' cloth, candles to create a focus for Collective Worship;
- a wide range of books offering stories and themes;
- 'Big Books' covering major world faiths;
- artefact boxes covering major world faiths;
- hymn books and music CDs;
- display space around the worship area of the hall linked to CW and RE, showing children's work;
- Reflection Area where children can be still, quiet and be engaged in prayer.

Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs

Collective Worship will be all-inclusive, accessible to all children regardless of faith, ability, gender or educational needs.

Withdrawal

The main aim of Collective Worship is for it to be meaningful for all pupils, whether from a faith background or not. It is therefore hoped that parents will not feel the need to withdraw their children, as is their right, from Collective Worship. This right is outlined in the school prospectus.

Conclusion

“Christian Worship is an honouring of God. It acknowledges His central transcendence and Holiness (His ‘worth’ and ‘value’). It is a loving response to His nature as revealed in Jesus Christ. Worship stems from personal experience; it is a central characteristic of faith communities which are in relationship with God. We can never make anyone worship because it is an attitude of the heart focused on God; in the school situation ‘all we can do is lead people to the threshold of worship by providing a setting where they may worship God if they so wish’.”

Diocese of Ely: Guidelines for Collective Worship

Reviewing the Collective Worship Policy

The responsibility for reviewing this policy resides with the Governing Body and the policy will be reviewed approximately every two years.

November 2014

Next Review: Autumn term 2016