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# Statement on Collective Worship Thakeham Primary School

Date approved by the Full Governing Body: 28.09.20

Review Date: December 2023

Signed

Headteacher:

*S. Norton*

Chair of Governors:

*Judith James*

## Legal Requirements

The DfE Circular 1/94 contains the current requirement for a daily act of collective worship, for all registered pupils of compulsory school age or above, the majority of which should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character that is "reflecting" the "broad traditions of Christian belief" without being denominationally biased (Education Reform Act 1988). However, Headteachers must take into account the pupils' ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds.

The act of collective worship can take place at any time during the school day and with any grouping of pupils the school wishes to use (though not faith groupings). Parents in all schools have a legal right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from collective worship. Any such request must be complied with.

Teachers, including Headteachers, have a contractual duty to attend assembly but they have the right to withdraw from collective worship and cannot be discriminated against for doing so. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher, in consultation with the governors, to see that these arrangements are carried out.

## What is Collective Worship?

Whilst there is a legal requirement for schools to conduct a 'daily act of collective worship' (1988 Education Act and subsequent Acts), none of this legislation actually defines what is meant by the term Collective Worship. The term "collective" when used in relation to worship in schools refers to the gathering together of a school group or groups for worship; it does not in any way suggest an act of worship which involves a group meeting to subscribe to any particular faith or denomination of a faith. Collective worship does not pre-suppose shared beliefs, and should not seek uniform responses from pupils. Collective Worship caters for a diversity of beliefs and points of view, allowing individuals to respond as individuals.

## Aims and Approach

At Thakeham Primary School, Collective Worship recognises that the school community is a collection of people. Thus, acts of Collective Worship are sensitive to the collective character of our school and are closely linked to our school vision and values, many of which are British/Christian. Key values embedded in our vision include:

- Recognition and understanding (respect) of everyone as individuals with their own strengths, talents and beliefs
- Responsibility to themselves and others
- Co-operation and care
- Resilience and rising to challenges positively
- Encouragement to ask questions and be curious

The school community may include people from a variety of cultural and faith, and non-faith backgrounds and as part of our Curriculum Drivers work ('**Our Place in the World**'), there are links with local and global communities and different faiths to form part of our calendar of assemblies ensuring a broad perspective to help foster tolerance and understanding of those with beliefs and cultures other than their own. However in line with statutory guidance, the majority of acts of collective worship must be of a 'broadly Christian character', and those that are must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being denominationally biased. Our overall aims for collective worship are:

- to promote a common ethos with shared value to reinforce positive attitudes
- to enable children to understand and engage in the worship of God

- to consider spiritual and moral issues
- to encourage participation and response
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs
- to develop a sense of community spirit

In line with our Curriculum Driver '**Learning for Life**', the act of collective worship should encourage the children to see worship as relevant to everyday life and should help them to prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences they will encounter in later life. We encourage children to value themselves and others, care for the environment and celebrate the diversity of society through understanding similarities and differences. Children's success with learning and their broader achievements are celebrated each week as part of our 'Celebrations Assembly'. Our PSHE 'Jigsaw' programme will also be reflected through our assemblies. Jigsaw is a unique, spiral, progressive and effective scheme of work, aiming to prepare children/young people for life, helping them really know and value who they are and understand how they relate to other people in this ever-changing world.

The approach to collective worship will vary, but it often consists of a teacher led stimulus, sometimes with a visual focus, and sometimes providing a variety of activities in which children can participate. Appropriate music will be used during collective worship. There will be opportunities for thought and reflection. The children will join together in singing and in prayer in all assemblies, except 'Celebration Assembly' where there is no song/hymn.

## Organisation

The programme of collective worship will take account of the main features of the religious calendar, school and British values including the dispositions of our Super Learning Hero Characters as well as school events. Collective worship will generally be led by the staff of the school and sometimes by a local minister or charity e.g. SPLASH. On alternate Fridays, classes choose a photograph/image as part of our work on 'Curious, Questioning Quinn' to encourage children to ask questions and discuss topical, spiritual, moral and social events or news. Every other Friday, children and teachers share their love of literature in a variety of ways. Each assembly should last 15 minutes.

Monday	8.55am	Celebration Assembly (Headteacher: Mrs Norton)
Tuesday	10.30am	Whole School Assembly (Class teacher led)
Wednesday	10.30am	Whole School Assembly (Class teacher led)
Thursday	10.30am	Whole School Singing Assembly (Music coordinator led)
Friday	10.30am	Photo of the Fortnight/Celebration of Reading (English Leader/ class teacher)

## Right of Withdrawal

Our school is based on an inclusive ethos; we expect all children to attend collective worship assemblies. However we respect the right of any parent/guardian to request permission for their child to be excused. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education reform Act. Withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the Head teacher followed by written confirmation of withdrawal. The school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of those children granted withdrawal from assemblies. The Headteacher keeps a record of all those children withdrawn from Collective Worship.

## **Addendum: Covid 19 Autumn 2020 onwards**

From Autumn 2020, assemblies will continue to be led by school staff. All assemblies have been planned in line with our Covid-19 risk assessment and protocols. Assemblies consist of class assemblies and some Key Stage assemblies to reflect bubble arrangements. Key Stage assemblies are held on alternate days to ensure cleaning of the hall between bubbles.

The assembly rota continues to reflect the normal content planned, though there is no singing assembly and no singing in any assembly where there are more than 15 pupils in line with DfE advice and our Covid-19 protocols/risk assessment. Local charity 'SPLASH' will lead virtual 'zoom' assemblies and this approach will be encouraged with other visitors leading an assembly wherever possible. Where visitors attend on a face to face basis such as Clergy from St Mary's Church, Thakeham and Holy Trinity Church, Storrington we will ensure that our Covid 19 protocols/risk assessment procedures for visitors are fully adhered to.

### **Monday:**

KS1 Celebration Assembly / KS2 Individual Class Assembly

### **Tuesday:**

KS2 Celebration Assembly / KS1 Individual Class Assembly

### **Wednesday:**

KS1 Assembly in hall / KS2 Individual Class Assembly

### **Thursday:**

KS2 Assembly in hall / KS2 Individual Class Assembly

### **Friday:**

KS2 Assembly in hall / KS2 Individual Class Assembly