



Bruce Grove Primary Collective Worship Policy

What is Collective Worship?

Collective worship occurs where pupils of different beliefs and attitudes assemble as a body, (be that as a school, year group, or class) to share common values and experiences.

The Role of Collective Worship

Whilst there are no legal requirements for schools to hold “assemblies”, the law states clearly that all pupils (see Right of Withdrawal for exceptions) are required to participate in a daily act of collective worship. The legal requirements allow for a certain degree of flexibility with regard to the nature of “worship” and this document will define Bruce Grove Primary’s interpretation of those requirements.

Collective worship occupies an important place in the life of Bruce Grove Primary School. It provides an opportunity for members of the school community to pause from activity, to gather together, to remind themselves of and reflect upon the beliefs and values which bind the school community together.

Collective Worship at Bruce Grove Primary

We have chosen to interpret the concept of “worship” as providing an invaluable opportunity for the school community to focus on and reaffirm those values that are considered to be of supreme worth and importance. Values that are regularly re-visited as themes for collective worship include: care, co-operation, courage, positivity, honesty, forgiveness, friendship, respect, responsibility, resilience and sacrifice.

We believe that our times of collective worship can play an important role in deepening the spiritual awareness of our pupils. Collective worship, at its best, provides pupils with an opportunity to reflect upon the value, purpose and meaning of things. Pupils are led into an experience of quietness to counterbalance the busy activity which generally marks the rest of the school day. Such quiet times will often lend themselves to the nurturing of a sense of awe and wonder, especially with regard to the natural world. We are also able

to sensitively explore issues of loss and suffering, limitation and frustration. Collective worship at Bruce Grove Primary gives pupils the opportunity to hear stories and words from religious and other literature that suggest that there is more to life than meets the eye. Through collective worship, we encourage the children to recognise the widely-held belief in the existence of a deity. We will often consider values that are shared by different faiths and reflecting our school population we will sometimes consider the writings and leaders of other faiths. We encourage the children to reflect on the character and achievements of Jesus and Christian leaders as recorded in the Christian bible.

In addition to the above, special times of collective worship are planned in the school year to acknowledge the significance of key religious festivals from the main religions represented in the school. In line with legislation that collective worship should be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, we place particular emphasis on the Christian festivals of Harvest, Christmas and Easter. Whatever festival we deal with, Christian or otherwise, our concern is to explore the reason for celebration. Pupils are not themselves required to “celebrate” religious beliefs which neither they nor their family adhere to.

At Bruce Grove Primary School we believe that collective worship makes a vital contribution to the development of pupils in the following areas:

1. Collective worship contributes to the **spiritual** development of pupils by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Reflect on matters relating to their own experience and beliefs (religious or otherwise) that inform their perspective on life
- Experience moments of stillness, awe and wonder in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- Sustain their self-esteem and foster an emotional life

2. Collective worship contributes to the **moral** development of pupils by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Reflect on matters concerning right and wrong;
- Hear about incidents in which, and people in whom, goodness and right are exemplified;
- Learn about religious and other teachings concerning right and wrong.

3. Collective worship contributes to the **social** development of pupils by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Gather with others for a common purpose;
- Share times of joy and sadness with others;
- Learn how to behave appropriately within a specific social setting;
- Increase self-confidence in public speaking/ dramatic performance

4. Collective worship contributes to the **cultural** development of pupils by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Hear and respond to music from a range of times, places and cultures;
- Reflect upon ideas concerning the concept of beauty;
- Appreciate the range of talents and gifts found within the school community and beyond.

5. Collective worship contributes to the **intellectual** development of pupils by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Learn and engage with their minds;
- Have ideas concerning values confirmed or challenged;
- Reflect on the importance of learning in the context of our school community;
- Consider the power of words.

Principles and Practices

1. Good timing is essential. The entire assembly (unless it's a special event) should not exceed 15 minutes. This will include the reflective moment and the notices. The assembly time is usually 10.40 – 10.55am. The class teachers should lead their class into the hall as quietly and calmly as possible.

2. The focal point of the assembly can take the form of a focused silence, a reading, a piece of music, a picture or anything that informs further on the topic.

3. There should be no attempt at eliciting acts of assent or corporate public response. e.g. Amen. Responses are private, conditional and may be reflective in nature. It is important not to put pressure on the children to pray especially in a manner that would go against their own belief system.

- There should be a time for general reflection and silent thought on the theme of the worship. When this occurs, in order to fulfil the law, it might be useful to say, "If it is your custom, you might like to offer a silent prayer to God about...." An invitation to "Bow your head" is often used.
- A prayer or thought is read out finishing without any reference to a specific faith.

4. High expectations of behaviour are expected throughout the assembly. This is made easier when class teachers bring their class into the hall promptly and in an orderly fashion, having walked down the corridor quietly and calmly. It is the school's expectation that children will sit quietly and wait for the assembly to begin, listening to the music being played. This moment of quiet is important to set the tone for collective worship.

Record Keeping

To provide evidence of daily collective worship and a means of review, simple record sheets outlining the theme are completed. These sheets can be located in a yellow folder outside the Headteacher's Office. A record of whole school assembly is also on the school's MLE.

Visitors

Visitors are welcome to contribute to collective worship at Bruce Grove Primary School. However, it will be made clear to them the ages of the children and the guidelines for how they treat prayer. If possible, a copy of the collective worship policy will be sent out to them in advance.

Right of Withdrawal

Parents/guardians have the legal right to withdraw their child from collective worship, provided they give written notification to the school. Teachers can also exercise their right to withdraw from leading or attending acts of collective worship, but attending "assemblies" is part of a teacher's contractual duty.

At Bruce Grove Primary we believe that our approach to collective worship is educationally sound and crucial to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development of our pupils. We take pleasure in the fact that all children attend and that it is a time when we can share important lessons as a whole school community.

This policy will be reviewed by the school annually.

Signed.....

Dated.....