

Collective Worship Policy

<i>Approval Date</i>	Oct 2023
<i>Prepared</i>	Oct 2020
<i>Reviewed</i>	
<i>Author</i>	Sarah Anderson
<i>Review period</i>	3 years
<i>Next Review</i>	Oct 2026

Overview

The law requires all schools to provide a daily, collective act of worship that is on most occasions wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature. Every pupil in a special school should attend collective worship (unless withdrawn by parents or carers) so far as it is practicable. A school can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in its community, as long as the majority of provision is broadly Christian. It need not be held at the same time each day. Where parents request it, their children will be withdrawn from the collective worship and alternative arrangements will be made for them.

Aims

- For all pupils to have a daily opportunity to participate in a focused time together as an act of collective worship
- To contribute to pupils' experience of awe and wonder and have opportunities to share these as a group
- To contribute to community cohesion and promote learners' spiritual, cultural, social and moral education
- To contribute to developing pupils' understanding of different faiths and belief systems within a context of shared values
- To enable pupils to come together for a time of stillness, quiet which will allow moments of contemplation
- To celebrate in and share each other's achievements and happiness

Collective Worship at Pictor

In order to engage in collective worship pupils need to be able to be together, to share attention, to concentrate for increasing lengths of time, to listen, to respond and to be still. Due to the nature of their special educational needs, many of our pupils find some or all of these requirements difficult. As they develop in these areas, pupils engage in collective worship within larger groups and for longer periods of time.

At Pictor the whole school meets together for a singing assembly each week. Classes also have the opportunity to come together in a sensory assembly and/or a mentions assembly according to the ability of their pupils. At other times classes meet as a class group in their classrooms at times suitable to them. Weekly or fortnightly themes reflect the time of year, current and relevant festivals, and objects of interest and are evident through all opportunities for collective worship within the school. These are produced termly. Examples include Rain, Autumn, Divali, Ice and snow, It's cold outside

Special assemblies are held throughout the year to which parents are invited. These may include outside speakers from the local community eg the local church leader for a harvest assembly.

Singing Assembly

Pupils enter/leave the hall as quietly as possible whilst music plays, with adults using whispered voices, signs or symbols to direct pupils. A video, slide show to music based on the current theme or an action song may be used to maintain interest whilst classes join/leave. Pupils learn new songs as well as having the opportunity to join in with more familiar ones. Songs are signed where possible. The school song, 'Pictor School is a Special Place' is often included. There is always a time of quiet and stillness and the Pictor Prayer is sung and signed. Gentle taps on the Chinese gong indicate this special moment and lights are dimmed.

Sensory Assembly

This is set up 'in the round' with a large circle of chairs. A focal point is set up using a table decorated with themed fabric, featuring battery operated candles, our special boxes and any other themed items. Key assembly resources are kept in the hall cupboard under the screen, with candles on a shelf within this cupboard. Lights are kept low and pupils enter calmly and quietly, supported by silent adults, to calming music. The laser projector, mirror ball or candles are used to set the atmosphere and show pupils where to focus their attention.

Key objectives:

- To create an atmosphere of stillness and quietness and so allow moments of contemplation.
- To share in each other's achievements and happiness.
- To share moments of awe and wonder as a group.

Strategies

- Adult's model behaviour, listening to music silently or joining in with actions.
- Leader fades music slowly and starts assembly. Leader is main director, (so children only need to focus on one voice)
- Singing or actions/ sign-a-long are used when possible to indicate what is happening and language is kept to the minimum.
- Contemplation/ prayer time – the gong/special music and candle are used to still pupils; longer pauses and a quiet, slow voice are used to build up the 'silence' and contemplation atmosphere.
- Music is gently faded back in and pupils leave room the silently as indicated eg by singing 'Goodbye class (number) Goodbye Class (number) Time for you to go – this means that some of the atmosphere and feeling can be brought out of the room back into the school with us.

- Tidying up is left until all pupils have left so that the atmosphere is maintained.
- Members of class teaching teams take turns to be the leader so that it becomes a truly group experience.

Suggested Format:

Greeting song: "Let's say hello to Class (number) Hello! (x3) You're welcome here today." (or something similar)

Focus Theme: Special box(es) – explore object then pass around circle for all to share as the sharing song is sung "Feel the ... and pass it on (x3) Thank you for the ...". The significant objects may be touched, tasted, smelt so change the verb as appropriate.

Optional song related to theme

Birthdays: Sing to all pupils/staff who've had a birthday that week

Mentions: Pupil is welcomed into circle– their achievement (ie 'mention) is celebrated with minimal language Pupil walks around circle showing work/certificate as the rest of the group sing accordingly to the tune of 'for he's a jolly good fellow' – [name] has [what they did] (x3) Let's all give him/her a clap etc

Prayer/Contemplation moment: Candle is turned on, lights are turned down if not already and soft background music is played. The Pictor Prayer or a bespoke prayer is used.

Closing song: "Goodbye class (number) (x3) It's time for you to go...Bye!"

Mentions Assembly

This is based on a more formal format with chairs in rows and a bench at the front for those who receive a mention to sit on. Pupils enter/leave the hall as quietly as possible whilst music plays, with adults using whispered voices, signs or symbols to direct pupils. A video or slide show to music based on the current theme may be used to maintain interest whilst classes join. A time of quiet and stillness is included and the Pictor Prayer is sung and signed. Gentle taps on the Chinese gong indicate this special moment and lights are dimmed.

Key objectives:

- To create an atmosphere of stillness and quietness and so allow moments of contemplation.
- To share in each other's achievements and happiness.

Strategies

- Adult's model behaviour, listening to music silently or joining in with actions.
- Leader fades music slowly and starts assembly. Leader is main director, (so children only need to focus on one voice)
- Singing or actions/ sign-a-long are used when possible to indicate what is happening and language is kept to the minimum.
- Contemplation/ prayer time – the gong/special music and candle are used to still pupils; longer pauses and a quiet, slow voice are used to build up the 'silence' and contemplation atmosphere.
- Music is gently faded back in, or a song is played that pupils can join in with as they leave and pupils leave room as indicated by the leader – this means that some of the atmosphere and feeling can be brought out of the room back into the school with us.
- Tidying up is left until all pupils have left so that the atmosphere is maintained.
- Members of class teaching teams take turns to be the leader so that it becomes a truly group experience. Some pupils are able to join the leader and take on part of this role at the front.

Suggested Format:

Greeting: Leader greets the group

Optional song related to theme. Leader may share what pupils from their class have learnt around the theme that week if relevant.

Mentions: Pupil is welcomed up to the front* – their achievement (ie 'mention') is celebrated and they are encouraged to share a bit more information when they can. Pupil sits on the bench. Once all mentions have been received [usually one per class] the pupils are counted (everyone is asked to help) and the following song sung: "These are our stars, celebrate our stars, singing with an open and a joyful heart, These are our stars, celebrate our stars.."

Birthdays: Sing to all pupils/staff who've had a birthday that week

Prayer/Contemplation moment: Candle is turned on, lights are turned down if not already and soft background music is played. The Pictor Prayer or a bespoke prayer is used.

To close: Music is gently faded back in, or a song is played that pupils can join in with as they leave and pupils leave room as indicated by the leader

Class Assemblies

The format for class assemblies will vary according to the individual needs of the pupils but they all have the shared focus of 'together time' of up to fifteen minutes a day (where pupils are not attending a larger group assembly as detailed above) and follow

the theme of the week/fortnight as detailed for all assemblies. Some pupils will be learning skills, through time in smaller groups, that will ultimately enable them to join assemblies with more people.

Pupils should be encouraged to participate in as much as possible.

Example Format:

Beginning: Clear indicator that 'Together Time' is starting. This may be through the use of a Smart Notebook file and/or a special object/music.

A collective song or activity: eg We all clap together

Focus on theme: eg through significant objects related to the theme and explored. Song: "What's in the box, what's in the box, can you tell me, what's in the box?"

A time of stillness: eg listening to a piece of music from Baby Mozart

Some classes may include focused times of mindfulness or yoga breathing within the session, a time of celebrating success and achievement with 'mini mentions' or class mentions, a time of gratitude and thankfulness and/or a time for pupils to share things in front of others.

Outcomes

Pupils will experience a variety of opportunities which will allow them to enjoy and participate in different kinds of acts of worship. They will experience an ethos conducive to spiritual development through prayer and reflect. They will develop positive attitudes to worship and worshipping communities and experience awe and wonder.