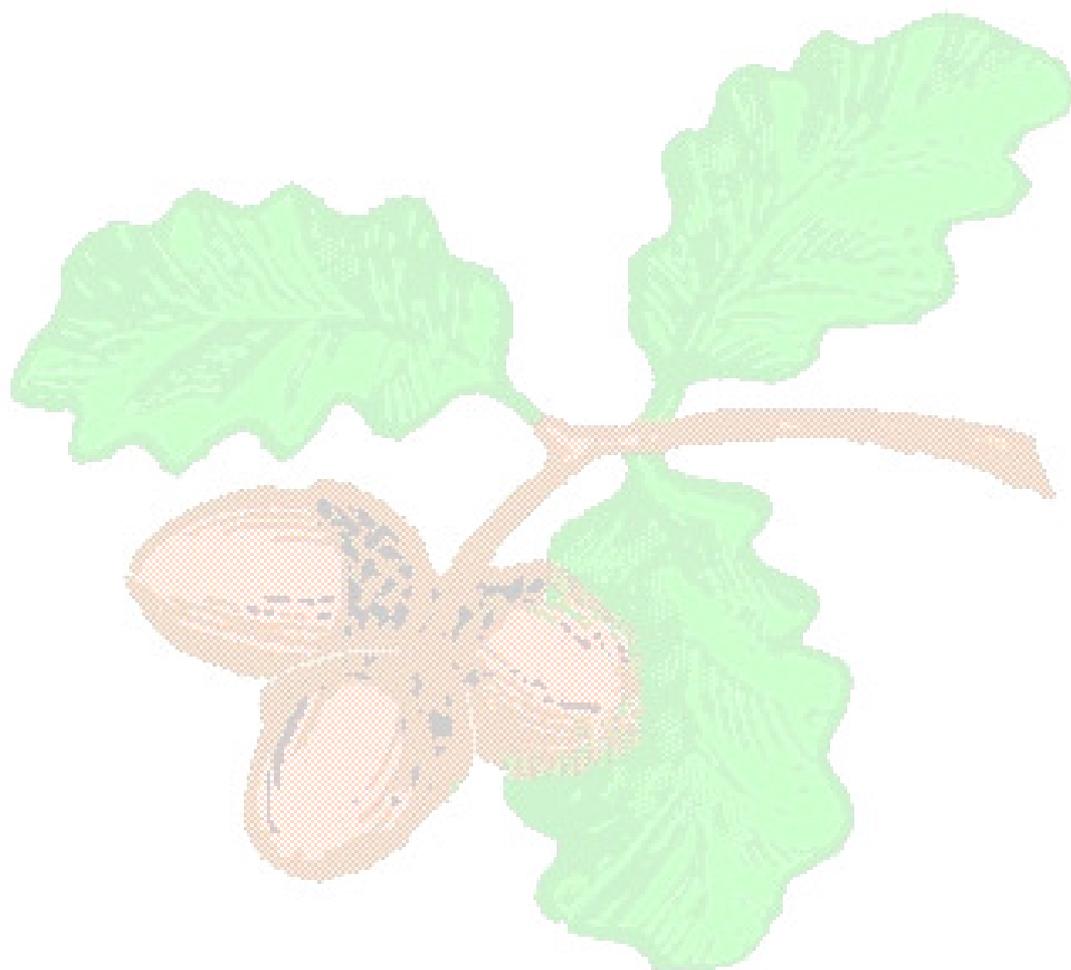


**Churchfields Infants' School,  
Nursery Unit  
& Language Facility**



**Collective Worship  
Policy**

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

## Rationale

The 1988 Education Reform Act required all registered pupils in maintained schools to take part in a daily act of collective worship which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, unless the pupils are wholly or partly withdrawn by their parents. The act of worship should be appropriate, having regard to pupils’ ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds.

## Purposes

Collective worship occupies an important and unique place in the life of Churchfields Infants’ school. It provides an opportunity for members of the school community to pause from activity, to gather together, and to remind themselves of and reflect upon the beliefs and values which bind the school community together. It also allows those with a religious commitment the possibility of entering into worship and those with no religious commitment to sense what worship is and to reflect deeply.

In particular, collective worship:

- provides an opportunity for all members of the school community to stop activity, to pause and to reflect on important issues;
- builds up a sense of group identity;
- gives pupils the experience of being still or silent;
- provides an opportunity to celebrate times of success and joy;
- provides an opportunity to meet at times of sadness or sorrow;
- provides an opportunity to highlight and reflect on core school values, such as striving to be honest and truthful, trying hard in all things, respecting ourselves as well as other people, and striving to be fair and just;
- provides an opportunity to mark significant points in the year, such as festivals and school events

We believe that collective worship makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of individual pupils, and to the school as a whole.

## School context

Churchfields Infants’ School is culturally diverse community with approximately 48% of our pupils coming from ethnic minority groups. We have children from a number of faith communities, including Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. Our programme of collective worship, while being mainly Christian, includes stories from a range of times, places and cultures. We believe that this is important if we are to prepare children for life in our multicultural and multi-faith world.

## Pattern for collective worship

Collective worship follows a weekly theme. The assembly co-ordinator prepares a list of themes at the beginning of each term, and this is displayed in the staffroom. Staff can then follow up themes from assembly in their planning for R.E. A number of staff are involved in leading assembly, as we believe that children benefit from the range of approaches taken by different teachers.

The weekly pattern of collective worship is as follows.

Day	Grouping	Venue	Time	Leadership	Style/approach
Monday	KS1	Hall	10:10	Deputy Head	Story linked to theme of week
Tuesday	KS1	Hall	10:10	Headteacher	Story linked to theme of week
Wednesday	KS1	Hall	10:10	Subject Leader	Singing Assembly
Thursday	KS1	Hall	10.10	SLT	Story linked to theme of week
Friday	KS1	Hall	10.10	Headteacher	Birthday Assembly/Brief reflection on theme

Assembly theme sheets are implemented each term. They help to ensure continuity and allow for future planning.

## Legal Requirements

We aim to ensure that the collective worship at Churchfields Infants' fulfils the legal requirements and is relevant to our pupils. The majority of acts of worship:

- encourage a positive and responsible attitude to the environment
- encourage a quest for honesty, integrity, justice and truth
- encourage children to look beyond the obvious, the immediate and the material
- encourage a love and respect for self and for the other person
- encourage a service to others and to the community
- build faith festivals into the yearly programme

To ensure that collective worship is appropriate for the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils at the school we seek to make it as "inclusive" as possible by

- recognising that there are many forms of commitment – religious and non-religious
- recognising that religious commitment is expressed in different ways
- carefully selecting songs used in collective worship
- regarding variety – in culture, religion and belief- as something to be acknowledged and explored rather than avoided and denied
- building festivals from a variety of cultural and religious traditions into the yearly programme

## Links with the school curriculum

Although the time given to collective worship does not form part of the teaching day it is closely linked to the life of the school.

Collective worship draws on the curriculum by providing an opportunity to reflect on and highlight class work for example showing things made in class to celebrate creativity, displays of dance or drama to encourage cultural development, Celebrating achievement through sharing good work.

Collective worship feeds back into the curriculum by providing ideas and suggestions that can be followed up in the classroom for example discussing the “hidden meaning” of a story told in assembly.

There is clearly a close relationship between collective worship and religious education. While themes and ideas from assembly may be followed in class, the daily act of worship does not replace the need for religious education in the classroom which reflects the school scheme of work.

## **Right of withdrawal from collective worship**

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from collective worship. If a parent requests that their child is withdrawn they will be asked to discuss their concerns with the Headteacher. Any parent still wishing to withdraw their child must put their request in writing and arrangements will be made to ensure that the child is supervised.

Attending assemblies is part of a teacher’s contractual duty, but teachers have the right to withdraw from collective worship. Any teacher wishing to withdraw should discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

## **Other issues**

### Thinking time and prayer

There is a quiet moment during each act of collective worship when children are encouraged to reflect on the issues raised. This may be followed by a prayer which children can join in with if they wish, or an invitation to listen to the words of a prayer or sacred text. Some children may prefer to reflect in their own way at this time and staff need to be sensitive to this.

### Visitors

The school welcomes visitors to contribute to or lead collective worship. It is important that visitors are chosen who:

- understand the nature and purpose of collective worship and who will not use the opportunity to preach or evangelise
- can communicate well with children

In arranging for a visitor to collective worship, it is important that teachers:

- liaise with the school assembly co-ordinator
- consider the format of the occasion (e.g. a talk by the visitor, interviewing the visitor)
- provide the visitor with all necessary information ( the school statement about the purpose of collective worship, the size and age range of the group, timings, equipment available)
- write to thank the visitor after the visit