



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Collective worship is the gathering together of the school community on a regular basis to think about, respond to, reflect on and consider issues that are important to them as individuals and as a community. It provides the opportunity for those who wish to do so to worship God (however defined or understood). (Gathering Together - Kent SACRE Guidance for Collective Worship)

Statement

The regular act of collective worship at Garlinge Primary School and Nursery plays a central role in our life and work. It provides us with valuable opportunities to reaffirm our values and ethos. It offers important opportunities to strengthen our sense of community, belonging and inclusiveness and to reinforce the respect and care we have for each other. Through collective worship, we make a significant contribution to the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of those present. We want all of our children to 'enjoy and achieve' and collective worship provides a valuable vehicle for this.

Aims

- To provide pupils with a range of opportunities to worship God (however defined or understood) and/or to express their gratitude towards creation.
- To give pupils opportunities to reflect on the significance of Christian (and other faith traditions) stories, events and festivals and how these might affect their lives.
- To offer experiences and opportunities for pupils to join in with and respond to a variety of forms of collective worship in order for them to reflect on the significance of their own and others' beliefs.
- To promote our shared values and contribute to our common life together by celebrating individual achievement, school achievement and wider community achievement within the context of collective worship.

These aims mean that our collective worship programme is such that we can include all our school community.

Collective Worship and the Law

We comply with legal requirements by providing regular acts of collective worship for all pupils on the school roll, unless they have been withdrawn by their parent or carer 'on grounds of conscience'. Teachers also have the right not to attend or lead an act of collective worship 'on grounds of conscience'. The majority of our acts of collective worship are 'wholly, or mainly, of a broadly Christian character' whilst recognising the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural insights provided by other principal religions and life-stances represented in Kent and in the United Kingdom.

Collective Worship and Parents

We emphasise the importance of our collective worship programme in developing our school's ethos and values and in providing a range of opportunities for children to consider important issues for life and living. Parents do however have the right to withdraw their child/children from the daily act of collective worship or certain aspects (e.g. direct references to worshipping God through singing). This is clear through the information contained in our prospectus. Parents who wish to consider withdrawing their child/children are

asked to make an appointment with the Executive Headteacher or Head of School. If a child is withdrawn from collective worship, they are requested to complete a meaningful and purposeful activity, where possible linked to worship and are reintegrated for any notices or presentations.

Collective Worship and Staff

Teachers (and sometimes Teaching Assistants) attend collective worship with their class. Pupils and staff organise and lead the weekly class-based act of collective worship. Resources are provided to help with this. All staff are invited to attend the school Harvest Festival and Candlelight Carol Service. However, if an individual teacher feels their own beliefs might be compromised by our programme of collective worship they can discuss this with the Executive Headteacher, since they do have the legal right not to attend collective worship 'on grounds of conscience'. Currently none of our teaching staff withdraw.