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# Collective Worship Policy



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Approved By: Foundation Governors

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Next Review Date: Spring Term 2019

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## **The March Church of England Primary School**

### **Collective Worship Policy**

#### **Aims and purpose**

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to enjoy a sense of community spirit and to feel they belong;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship, giving them an opportunity to pray and reflect

#### **Collective worship**

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion with the purpose of showing reverence to God. It is a specific time each day to come together and reflect and celebrate who we are and who God is. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in assemblies. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

As a Church Aided school our worship also reflects our Anglican Tradition.

#### **Organisation of collective worship**

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. At The March we gather together at the start of the day in whole school assemblies on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, led by a member of the teaching staff and visitors from local parishes. We also have whole school choral worship on Wednesdays and a Celebration assembly on Fridays.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way, explaining to children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. Being quiet and thoughtful helps one to listen carefully to the teaching. They are also given the opportunity to participate fully in prayer and hymns. An appropriate atmosphere is created by using music and candles or other objects that act as a focal point for reflection. These themes are reinforced in each class Reflection Area.

The headteacher or other members of staff normally conduct assemblies. Weekly local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups also lead worship on Mondays. We have close links with the parishes of Oving and Westhampnett and both clergy are invited to attend and lead some of our assemblies. Special celebrations throughout the year are conducted in St Peter's Church, Westhampnett our local church. Marking events throughout the year help the children to recognise the spiritual elements to the seasons of our lives, which we hope will strengthen them in their future years.

House captains often participate in assemblies, organising and deliver assemblies in keeping with the half-term's theme. They are responsible for choosing music, decorating the reflection area, choosing a reading and any ICT input.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the 'Values for Life' curriculum and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Collective worship themes also reflect themes in the Religious Education curriculum. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place. The file of plans and evaluations are kept in the staff room. A child in a different year group of key stage 2 is invited to evaluate the assemblies too, which helps the person leading the assembly to judge how effective they feel the assembly has been and to plan accordingly in future.

On Fridays our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by sharing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which includes valuing all children and celebrating their achievements. A God centred focus is essential. At the end of every month there is a special Headteacher's Award assembly which recognises the special effort of individual children in each class. Each Friday two children from each class receive Merit Certificates for their efforts in behaviour or learning. We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

### **Right of withdrawal**

We expect all children to attend assembly, as it is an essential part of our school life together and helps children to feel that they belong. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the role of the co-ordinator and a named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher before reporting to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

**Signed:**

**Date:**

