



Brockwell Junior School Collective Worship Policy

Background to Collective Worship

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”.

Families who send their children to this school are in the main ‘nominally’ Christian with a small percentage of pupils from other faiths and no faith. In addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our children to worship, we have to consider the background that our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child’s family is respected at all times.

The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Parents of any pupil have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from collective worship.

Definitions

Collective Worship

Worship from within a faith tradition has a very specific definition. A school community is not a worshipping community and the law recognises this by requiring “collective” not “corporate” worship. Broadly, worship in school might encompass what is offered in a spirit of admiration, celebration and respect to God and/or people of excellence, worthy of honour and by extension to concepts, principles and conduct which are worthy of celebration as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit.

Worship defined in this way draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection for pupils and staff whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. In this way collective worship is inclusive not exclusive.

Worship of a Broadly Christian Character

The majority of acts of worship must be of a “broadly Christian character”, and those that are must reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being denominational. Paragraphs 60-63 of the DFE Circular 1/94 asks schools to define this as according a special status to Jesus Christ.

However, if we are to be inclusive in our worship in this school, taking the family backgrounds of the children into consideration, then, when according a special status to Jesus Christ, all pupils, whatever their beliefs, need to be respected. It is therefore appropriate in this school to tell stories of the life of Jesus, but inappropriate for all children to be required to address Him in prayer. Many of the characteristics of Christianity are shared by all the faiths. It is important to concentrate on these as well as those specific to Christianity.

Values and Aims at Brockwell

We believe at this school that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value that we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in our worship. We value this special

Brockwell Junior School - Collective Worship Policy

time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

Through our collective worship, we aim to provide a caring and supporting environment for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of other people in everyday situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not

Worship both reflects and nurtures the ethos of the whole school. It encompasses all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that every member of staff and every pupil may feel involved. In particular school worship here develops the feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

Our Objectives

We see school worship as an educational opportunity with clear objectives. We use this time to encourage pupils to:

- Show interest in, and a concern for, members of the school community
- Celebrate special occasions together
- Show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and the wider world
- Share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by groups within the school
- Explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards, manifested in religions and society including those identified as 'British Values'
- Reflect upon dimensions of human life – the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, sorrowful, solemn....;
- Reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.

Planning

At Brockwell Juniors, we combine our acts of worship with assembly, PSHE or other appropriate lessons, helping to ensure that worship takes place daily within a broad educational framework.

Collective worship at Brockwell Junior School is based on various themes that encompass religious festivals, known national or international events, British Values and Brockwell Values. Stories are used to explore the value; many of these are from the Bible but some are from other religions and cultures as well as non-religious books. We also use this time to recognise the achievements of our pupils, both linked to the chosen value and in other areas. By celebrating what the children have done well, they develop a sense of pride and self-worth as well as learning to value the achievements of others.

The children are involved in the assembly in ways other than just joining in with singing and listening to stories. Involvement includes times of quiet reflection, answering questions or contributing to role play or discussions.

Brockwell Junior School - Collective Worship Policy

We believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. We plan the time so that there is a variety in content and methods, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection/worship.

We Choose from A Range of Methods, Including:

- Picture News with reflections
- Themes (see assembly plans)
- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama/music
- Prayer/reflection/meditation
- songs & hymns
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

Song/Music

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. Singing is an important part of our collective worship. We have a bank of music from which to draw, taken from a variety of cultures and types. Likewise, with the songs we sing. We are careful with our songs to recognise that there might be some words which some of our children would find offensive to sing. We select our songs/music carefully to match the theme.

Prayer

Prayer or Reflection is used in every act of Worship. We are very careful that all children can participate and therefore encourage them to reflect personally, or address their thoughts to their God. We introduce formal prayers in a way which distances children, but gives them the opportunity to participate if they so desire; e.g., 'And now in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well-known Christian/ Hindu/ Muslim prayer/poem/reading...' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions.

Visitors and Visits

We enjoy the fresh approach which visitors can bring to our school worship, but we require them to adhere to our values. All visitors have access to this policy and, unless otherwise agreed, will fit into the theme for the week. We have developed and continue to improve close links with a number of visitors from a variety of religions. Children are also encouraged to take part in visits to church to recognise the celebrations of different Christian religions such as Easter and Christmas, Chesterfield Jamia Mosque and The Open Centre in Derby which promotes understanding of different religions through personal experience.

Success Criteria

At this school evaluate our acts of worship against some of the following:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- Positive response to shared experience
- An atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well being
- A sense of occasion
- Good order

Brockwell Junior School - Collective Worship Policy

- Staff affirmation
- A sense of challenge
- A place in the overall plan of the school
- Enrichment of pupil's experience

This policy will be review by the RE Subject Leader in November 2022