

Alexandra Primary School



Alexandra

Primary School

Aspire, Perform, Succeed

A Policy for Acts of Collective Worship
at Alexandra Primary School

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Introduction

In accordance to legal requirements set out in DfE Circular Number 1/94 issued on 31st January 1994, all maintained schools must provide daily collective worship for all registered pupils and promote their spiritual, moral and cultural development. The collective act of worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. This policy is written to:

- Support the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of pupils in line with the school's vision and values.
- Provide clarity of purpose so that collective worship is an inclusive, meaningful, and reflective experience for all pupils, regardless of their faith or background.

Families who send their children to Alexandra Primary are from a range of faith backgrounds and some have non-religious backgrounds. Following discussion and consideration of the community served by the school the Governing Body agreed that it would apply to the local SACRE for a 'determination' for the whole school. A determination provides an exemption for the whole school from the requirement that the majority of acts of worship must be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'

Definition of Collective Worship

The nature of the required daily act of collective worship in England and Wales is set out in Schedule 20 of the School Standards and Framework Act.[6] This defines collective worship as "a single act of worship for all pupils" or separate acts of worship for groups of pupils. It should normally take place on school premises. The nature of the acts of worship should take into account the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils.

At Alexandra Primary school, Collective Worship is defined at school as a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, moral issues, traditions and customs and interests. It offers pupils an opportunity to come together and worship, engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities to support the children's ongoing spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The Religion and worldview curriculum supports this and helps prepare children for life in modern Britain by developing deep thinkers who are open minded about religion and worldviews.

At Alexandra, we apply for a Determination which allows us to have collective worship which reflects not only the Christian faith, but also the faiths and traditions of our wider school community. A Determination must be applied for via the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) that operates in Hounslow and renewed every five years.

Aims, Vision, Values and Ethos

At school, we believe that Collective Worship is an opportunity to reflect and consider a range of issues, feelings and questions. An opportunity to experience, understand and celebrate the wide range of cultural and religious backgrounds which are present in our school community, as well as those in the wider community identified in the agreed syllabus for Religious Education Local Authority 'Widening Horizons' guidance alongside additional resources from the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and Kapow RE.

We believe that our approach to Collective Worship helps prepare children to:

Aspire to be successful learners who enjoy learning;

Perform as well as they can, make progress and achieve and become confident individuals who are able to live safe and fulfilling lives;

Succeed as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

... and when children enter their next stages of education and then ultimately employment the young people know that educators and employers want them to have the following attributes; to have...

- a good grasp of basic knowledge and skills;
- be reliable, take responsibility and show resilience;
- an ability to build and maintain relationships;
- an ability to work collaboratively in a team;
- creativity and use problem solving skills.

Alexandra Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all members of the school and its community to demonstrably share this commitment, promote our aims and model our values.

To achieve our aims, we have looked at the main values that will underpin them and link together and start from the first day children join Alexandra Primary so that these should be embedded by the time they leave us, see Appendix 1.

Children should have high aspirations in their school career. Staff, parents and carers will work together to equip children with the skills to perform the best they can whilst at Alexandra. This will then determine success for achievements at school and beyond.

School believes that it is very important to develop a strong set of values and principles, and that children are able to question and understand what it means to grow up in British society. Through a rich, engaging and challenging curriculum, and through a focus on key events in British History we invite pupils to reflect upon their role in a diverse, multicultural and multi faith society.

Alexandra Primary School has identified through discussion with children, staff, parents and Governors, 12 values that support our School Aims and we feel that two British values in particular stand out as being key to develop with the school community:

Respect, treating others as you would like to be treated with

Compassion as part of respect, focussing on what we have in common with each other and not differences.

We set British Values in the context of Respect for each other and our community, having compassion for all.

We aim to equip children with a mature, respectful and sensitive appreciation for difference and diversity. In discussing what it means to be British, children engage critically with stereotypes and prejudices and develop an understanding of how we can celebrate our heritage and home cultures whilst also embracing the ties that bind us together.

Collective Worship contributes to the school's caring ethos and we aim that it is a time when children can:

- Share common aims and values
- Celebrate achievement and special times within the school community and instil a sense of collective and individual pride
- Explore together the world in which we live
- Develop community spirit and a sense of shared responsibility
- Contribute to the positive ethos of the school
- Encourage respect for the beliefs of others

We intend that Collective Worship contributes to the development of the whole child, providing a context within which children can experience feelings such as awe, wonder elation, appreciation, gratitude, respect and reverence and also, if appropriate, prayer.

School provides opportunities to:

- be reflective – encouraging pupils to explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards manifested in religions and society

- reflect on that which is considered worthy
- consider spiritual and moral issues as well as local and world issues
- explore their own beliefs
- develop their own spirituality, encouraging pupils to think about their own beliefs and to explore and develop their 'inner self'.
- encourage pupils to reflect on dimensions of human life – the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, sorrowful, solemn...
- reflect on the direction of their lives
- reinforce positive attitudes and wellbeing
- participate and respond
- reflect on what it means to be human

APS Curriculum

We use a number of packages to support delivery during assemblies from Jigsaw, Simply Collective Worship and The UNICEF Rights Respecting Themes.

School uses Kapow Primary's Religion and Worldviews scheme of work alongside the locally agreed RE Syllabus Widening Horizons. This enables pupils to build their conceptual knowledge through studying religions and worldviews locally, nationally and globally, enabling children to make links and connections between worldviews, develop disciplinary skills and develop their understanding of their personal values and beliefs in relation to their learning.

By revisiting key 'big questions' and building on prior knowledge, pupils will learn about religion and worldviews as lived experiences across the world, consider the impact of worldviews on society and have opportunities to consider their personal views and beliefs.

The modern world needs young people who are sufficiently confident in their own beliefs and values that they can respect the religious and cultural differences of others, and contribute to a cohesive and compassionate society.

Collective Act of Worship (CAW) at Alexandra Primary School

The Collective Act of Worship is distinct from curriculum time and takes place daily within an assembly as a Key Stage or within the classroom. It plays a part in establishing and promoting the ethos of our school. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect and to consider a range of issues, concerns and feelings. Collective Acts of Worship provides the following:

- Time and opportunity for reflective thought, contemplation and if appropriate, prayer; encouraging pupils to explore and review the variety of values, attitudes and standards associated with religions and society
- Exploration of their own spirituality, beliefs and values
- Foster a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- Provide the opportunity to consider spiritual, moral and ethical issues in local, national and world contexts
- Develop thoughtful and extended responses to key questions
- Celebrate difference and diversity and respect for the beliefs of others
- Illuminate, celebrate and commemorate what has meaning, value and purpose for individuals, the school and the wider community

- Encourage pupils to reflect on dimensions of human life for example; the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, solemn...etc.
- As a UNICEF Rights Respecting school, related topics and themes are linked to articles from the UNCRC when conducting Collective Acts of Worship where appropriate

Collective Acts of Worship will at times feature aspects of the curriculum, which will enhance the experiences of pupils by reflecting on the work done in classes. At times, Collective Worship will enrich classwork through its consideration of subject matter from different perspectives.

We acknowledge that the collective act of worship can make a significant contribution to a child's spiritual, moral, spiritual development and wellbeing and it can provide the context for children to experience feelings such as awe, wonder, gratitude, appreciation, respect, elation and reverence and if appropriate prayer.

At Alexandra we recognise the need to consider the backgrounds that our children come from and it is therefore not our practice to preach to or convert the children. The faith backgrounds of staff, children and their families are respected at all times.

Assemblies and collective worship are led by senior staff, sometimes individual classes as well as by other staff and invited leaders or guests.

Pedagogy

A variety of teaching and learning styles are used in the delivery of acts of collective worship. Leaders will choose the style / method and resources which are appropriate to the content, the age of children, ability and the background of the children.

Creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. The time is not over-dominated by school administration or moralising. We plan the time so that there is a variety of content and methods, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection.

Planning

Alexandra Primary School has a termly programme of themes and topics for assemblies and Collective Acts of Worship which link the school values which support our school aims. However, at times there may be themes that children also raise or are learning about through other curriculum areas. We draw themes from issues of global importance, Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning and festivals / events of significance for different faiths.

The act of collective worship takes place as part of whole school or phase assemblies or in class. Assemblies are led by senior staff; class teachers and class assemblies are led by the children. Sometimes invited guests will contribute.

School endeavours to provide an appropriate environment for acts of collective worship at school, in an appropriate space, at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner.

The acts of collective worship are planned to give pupils a variety of experiences to enable them to reflect on, and respond to, things, which our school community believe, are important. These experiences will include:

- The telling of appropriate stories using sacred and secular stories, and readings
- Drama / Dance / Mime,

- Artefacts / natural materials
- Poetry
- Music / songs / reflection / meditation / reflection / prayer
- Media clips, internet video clips and interactive white boards
- Children’s own contributions
- Visitors

Collective worship, whether in assembly or in class time, should:

- Respect the integrity and dignity of pupils and staff so that it is acceptable to the whole community, staff and pupils, and involve the pupils
- Be appropriate to the needs and interests of the pupils
- Be clearly distinguished from everyday activity of the school
- Be inclusive so that everyone can both contribute to it and gain from it and participate in it if this is appropriate

Organisation of Collective Worship

At Alexandra Primary School, we have organised the act of Collective Worship as follows:

Week day	Collective Act of Worship	Person Responsible	Focus
Monday	Class based	Class teacher	Weekly assembly theme
Tuesday	Class based	Class teacher	Weekly assembly theme
Wednesday 9:00 – 9:15 10.15-10.30 10.30-10.45	Infant School Assembly in Infant Hall	SLT member	Introduction of Assembly theme Introduction of theme for the week Singing
Thursday	Class based	Class teachers	Weekly assembly theme
Friday 9:00 – 9:15 10.15-10.30 10.30-10.45	Halls	SLT / Class teachers	Assembly theme related to the Article of the Week Celebration of Good work and achievement through Stars of the week certificates Attendance Singing

Class based assemblies provide children with the opportunity to reflect on the themes raised in assemblies and on any issues that might occur.

The precise details of timings may vary from year group to year group. Acknowledgement of a particular faith’s festival of celebration are also celebrated within a class assembly, where each class performs an assembly during the year. Parents / carers are also invited to attend class assemblies on a regular basis, giving them the opportunity to share celebrations, our values, children’s achievements as this helps develop understanding of our school ethos.

The programme of the weekly focus applies to the acts of worship taking place in KS1 and Reception. Nursery will have a class-based experience of collective worship that will be in accordance with the appropriate guidance contained in the EYFS Curriculum; they will participate in the weekly whole school assemblies when appropriate. The length of collective acts of worship may vary according to the age of the children and or the particular

experience, but generally they will be held within 15 minutes gathering for the year group and whole school settings.

The act of collective worship will comply with appropriate legal requirements for example, containing reverence for a higher being, opportunity to experience awe and wonder etc. Each will be sensitive to the diversity of religious and cultural beliefs and practices present in our multi-faith school, by using appropriate names and terms, and by use of inclusive language.

Expectations

- Staff leading assemblies will ensure that the hall is set up ready for the arrival of the children and or parents including playing music to create an appropriate atmosphere for listening and calm reflection
- Children are expected to enter the hall quietly and sit and listen to any music respectfully whilst waiting for all the children to arrive in assembly
- All present are expected to engage in active listening during the assembly and participate where appropriate
- If a class is late to assembly, they should not enter and return to their classroom for a class assembly
- Staff present should ensure children behave appropriately
- The collective act of worship may be identified in a range of ways including the lighting of a candle, the playing of music, a period of silence or reflection, singing, or the reading of a poem or prayer
- Class teachers must ensure appropriate arrangements are made for pupils in their class who are withdrawn from collective worship

Format of Assemblies

Music may be played at the beginning and ends of assemblies to encourage the pupils to listen and become calm and reflective. Music is often linked to the value or theme of the assembly. We ask the children to sing together as a school community during assemblies.

We select songs from 'Out of the Ark' and 'Sing-Up', which combine the themes of unity, belonging, friendship and respect. Kindness is a key theme entwined throughout all of our assemblies. Staff base their assemblies on Simply Collective Worship cycles of assemblies and the assembly rota reflects this with the themes then related to our school values.

Assembly should enable children to:

- Feel respectful of one another
- Listen, watch, observe, respond and reflect on stories, discussions, questions
- Develop an appreciation of themselves, others and the world about us
- Experience cultural influences and traditions
- Be presented with ideas that are thought provoking
- Celebrate achievements by the wider school community
- Develop vocabulary and ideas concerned with wider communities
- Be attentive listeners and productive learners

Prayer and Reflection

Prayer or reflection is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. Nevertheless, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe so we use various forms of introductions to our reflections which enables all children to participate; e.g. 'And now a moment of stillness, listen to a particular piece of music, listen to the words of a well-known poem, prayer or reading. In this way we are able to use prayers and readings from different faiths and traditions.

Resources

Resources to support the specific faith elements of collective worship will be kept centrally in certain designated areas, e.g. artefacts will be kept in artefact boxes, and books in the artefact boxes will be kept in the appropriate sections of the library. ICT provides opportunity to listen to prayers and find out about customs associated with different faiths.

Staff must be aware of the significance of artefacts and that they must be handled respectfully in and in a reverent way. The RE subject leader will advise on any particular actions that must be observed. Our children themselves have a wealth of experience to share. There are a number of assembly resources for loan from the Headteacher's / Deputy Headteacher's office.

Equal Opportunities

Assemblies and collective act of worship is available to all children attending our school at an appropriate level for the ages, ability and experience of the children. It will show diversity within each faith and be without imposition and allow for freedom of one's own beliefs. A variety of resources will be used to reflect the range and diversity from our community.

The act of worship will:

- Be without imposition and allow for freedom of own belief
- Show that diversity within each faith is recognised.
- Use resources which reflect the range of different faiths and communities.

Withdrawal from Collective Acts of Worship

Parents have the right to withdraw their children wholly or partly from Collective Worship and are not obligated to provide reasons. The school is still responsible for those pupils who do not participate. When parents do not wish their children to participate in collective worship they are encouraged to arrange a meeting with the Head Teacher to discuss the elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part; the practical implications of withdrawal; and whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and, if so, how much.

Teachers are required to attend assemblies as part of their conditions of service. However, they are not obliged to attend or participate in acts of worship. Any teacher wishing to withdraw from Collective Worship must discuss the matter with the Head Teacher.

Health and Safety

Health and safety must be considered whenever a large group of children and staff congregate in the hall. Safe and considered movement into and exiting the hall must always be a priority. The use of candles and matches must also be considered to ensure their safe use.

Parent and Community Involvement

Parents and carers are invited to attend assemblies on a regular basis. This allows them to share in the way the school celebrates, value the pupils' achievements and helps them to understand the ethos and atmosphere of the school. Throughout the year the school holds assemblies that acknowledge the major festivals of our faith communities and parents are also invited to attend these.

Success Criteria

We will evaluate our practice and policy through the following:

- Involvement, engagement, attention and reaction of the children to the content of assemblies and collective acts of worship
- The growth of tolerance, respect and understanding within the school community as seen through monitoring processes
- A contribution to individual and community sense of wellbeing assessed through discussion, pupil voice, school council and other surveys.
- Review of enrichment experiences and responses to shared experiences
- Reaction of the children

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy regularly through staff consultation, pupil and parent voice and with Governors at Teaching and Learning committee to assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. The school will seek to consult with Governors and parents every five years on the renewal of the determination.

Monitoring occurs through informal and formal discussions with staff and feedback provided by parents and visitors. Revision to assembly themes, formats and acts of collective worship will be discussed in the summer term through team and SLT meetings for implementation in the new academic year.

Success criteria may include:

- A sense of occasion
- Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- The growth of respect, tolerance and understanding 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 challenge
- Enrichment of pupil's experience

Related policies:

- Whole, Happy, Healthy
- PSHE Policy
- Equality Policy

Appendix 1 Values that underpin the school aims.

Aspire	Perform	Succeed
Children at Alexandra aspire to be successful learners who enjoy learning through demonstrating the following values:	Children at Alexandra perform as well as they can. To achieve to the best of their ability, they should demonstrate the following values:	Children at Alexandra succeed as responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society. We can teach them the following values for them to succeed:
<p style="text-align: center;">Independence</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers work together to build independence. Learning to support yourself is fundamental for any success you ever hope to achieve. Children also feel self-worth whenever they get to accomplish things on their own. We become more confident in facing challenges, which is important in preparing children for life outside of Alexandra.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Respect</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers endeavour to work and play with everyone within their community and show respect for every group and individual, the school environment and themselves. We demonstrate self-respect and believe that everyone should be treated fairly and equally and with compassion</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Resilience</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers “bounce back” from setbacks. We show resilience and perseverance as we try to achieve our goals. We understand the need to work hard. We are not afraid to take risks and take on-board advice that is given to us to help us in our continual development.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Achievement</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers know what they want to achieve and how to achieve it. We do not give up when things are difficult and show determination to find a solution to a problem if we face any difficulties. We demonstrate our achievements in a variety of ways such as: academically, or through our creative talents and through our social skills and friendships.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Honesty</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & children learn that honesty is to say what we think and is telling what really happened. Honesty is telling the truth. When we feel honest, we feel clear on the inside. There are no contradictions in thoughts, words and actions. We learn that honesty is having a clear conscience and that being honest brings trust.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Collaboration</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers endeavour to work and play with everyone. We believe in the power of teamwork – of cooperating and collaborating. Working together equates to success for all. We show tolerance and understanding for every group and individual and people’s different beliefs and ways of life. We have an understanding of good manners and demonstrate these always.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Ambition</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers embrace challenge and set high expectations for themselves. Children recognise how their school learning can help them to achieve their goals in life and the wider world.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Confidence</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents and carers are enthusiastic and articulate about their learning and their school community. Children know they can say how they feel and know how to communicate their thoughts and feelings. If we teach children to be articulate then they can develop their skills and consequently, become more confident.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Responsibility</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers learn that responsibility is doing your share. We carry out our duties with integrity. We accept what is required and carry out the task to the best of our ability. We know that responsibility lies at home, school and in our world. We know that along with rights there are responsibilities.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Creativity</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers think carefully to find solutions to the problems they may encounter. We express ourselves in many ways and are not afraid to be unique or individual in our acts or thoughts. We celebrate our talents and work hard to develop these. We appreciate and are inspired by the imagination and creativity of others and seek to encourage this.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reflection</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers demonstrate the value of reflection, which is thinking carefully about our learning and actions. We get to know our own strengths and weaknesses and may have quiet time with ourselves and others. This in turn, will allow us to build on our past experiences of learning to make future learning experiences even better.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reliable</p> <p>Alexandra children, staff, parents & carers learn that if you are trustworthy you can be relied on to do the right thing. We learn that trust is not giving in to temptations or wants. We learn that trusting people is part of everyday life. We know that being reliable will allow us to succeed in life at school and beyond.</p>