

COPDOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL
COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Introduction

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. We hold a daily act of collective worship, which forms part of our assembly.

Legal Responsibility

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that

- all pupils must take part in a collective act of worship every day
- this may be as a whole school or in different age groupings
- the act of worship may happen at any time in the school day
- Collective Worship should be, “wholly or mainly of a Christian Character.” We, therefore, normally base our assemblies on the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school. Some assemblies will reflect the traditions of other religions represented in the school or the wider community.
- all parents have the right to withdraw their children from school worship in any school.

Organisation of Collective Worship

There is an act of collective worship each day.

Monday	Teacher – Learning Behaviour for the week School Council	10.25 – 10.45am
Tuesday	Headteacher – Values assembly	10.25 – 10.45am
Wednesday	Teacher - singing (Mental Health theme) Local Clergy, visitor	1 – 1:20 pm
Thursday	Teacher – SEAL theme or Festival / special days	10.25 – 10.45am
Friday	Family Assembly – Headteacher / Deputy head	2.45 – 3.10pm

Acts of worship are sometimes held at St Peter’s Church to mark special occasions or distinct festivals in the school or church year. These may include Harvest Festival, Carol Services, etc.

All parents are advised of their rights to withdraw their children from the collective act of worship in the school prospectus.

Family Assemblies

Our assemblies, especially Family Assemblies, reflect the learning and achievement of the children. We encourage children to lead as well as participate in assemblies through reading, singing, performing and showing examples of their work. They also have the opportunity to discuss issues raised in class or in School Council. Assemblies provide the opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important role in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements recognised. Copdock School will continue to celebrate the successes of all our children in our assemblies.

Aims for Worship and Inclusion

At Copdock we acknowledge that the majority of our school community is not a ‘worshipping community’ in the same sense as a local church. A broad definition which has been referred to as ‘worth-ship’, might encompass what is offered in a spirit of admiration, celebration and respect

to people of excellence, worthy of honour. Similarly, by extension, to concepts, principles and conduct which are worthy of celebration, as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit. Worship thus defined draws on literature, music, drama, art and other sources of inspiration. It can provide a focus for thought, inspiration and reflection for pupils (and staff) whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. Whilst we provide daily acts of Collective Worship which we believe help children understand some of the features of worship in a believing Christian community, we also try to encapsulate the above principles of 'awe and wonder'.

Our school acts of Collective Worship aim:

- to help children to develop a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them
- to offer children a spiritual dimension to their lives and personal relationships
- to provide regular time and opportunity for reflection and to enable children to move from what is of immediate but passing concern to the broader and more lasting concerns of life
- to develop an awareness of and concern for the needs of others as well as personal needs
- to provide time to share with others the things we have been doing, our thoughts and ideas
- to help children develop shared values - honesty, respect, tolerance, self discipline, forgiveness, stewardship, fairness, etc.,
- to give children experience of being active members of a caring community
- to respond in a compassionate and civilised way to experiences of injustice, cruelty, exploitation, greed, etc.
- to ensure that all pupils feel fully included and are given equal access to and encouraged in undertaking worship regardless of ability, age, ethnic group or gender.

The law also requires us to provide pupils with an opportunity to worship God as part of our Collective Worship. A time of quiet reflection during each act of collective worship, which may involve spoken prayers, offers opportunity for each pupil and adult present to think about what they have heard or to worship God if they should wish to do so.

Creating an appropriate setting for our worship

At Copdock School worship normally takes place in our hall. In order to create an appropriate atmosphere for worship we aim to create a focal point through:

- the use of music or silence
- visual aids through objects or projected images
- pictures or posters
- the use of a candle

Our school follows the GERS approach to structure our daily worship. This structure has four elements:

- gather
- engage
- respond
- send out

We encourage children to be involved in delivering Collective Worship and special celebrations using this structure. Head Pupils welcome all once gathered. Each week, children are also given the opportunity to appraise and experience a range of musical genres, and the theme is played at end of collective worship before the children leave the hall. The genres are also played throughout the week in class.

The Character of Worship

The acts of collective worship in our school are planned to give the children a variety of experiences. These experiences will include:

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- the telling of appropriate stories from the Bible and other sources
- drama
- poetry
- mime
- music - both to listen and to participate in
- visiting speakers
- videos
- occasional use of other visual aids.

The children will be given an opportunity to respond to these experiences through

- silent reflection
- thoughtful spoken response
- spoken prayers
- the singing of songs.

Children are invited to make the prayers their own, by the saying of "Amen" - I agree.
The school will sometimes use the Lord's Prayer to close the act of collective worship.

Visitors who are invited to take assemblies are given a copy of the School's Worship Policy and the relevant worship theme.