



Shipton Bellinger Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

Spring 2025

1. Equal opportunities

Shipton Bellinger Primary School will endeavour to offer equal opportunity of access to all children regardless of gender, race, religion, disability or ability.

2. Rationale

To conduct daily acts of collective worship in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act and Hampshire County guidelines at an appropriate level for children aged 4 - 11.

Collective Worship

- allows a pause for reflection and stillness in the midst of the pressure of the school day;
- provides a rhythm to the life of the school by marking and celebrating special occasions and achievements;
- facilitates the development of a sense of community, of belonging and sharing;
- encourages pupils to learn how to be part of large and small gatherings, as well as offering opportunities to perform and respond to a presentation of readings, dance, drama or prayer.

"Worship isa growing ability to celebrate and reflect on things held to be of worth"

Taken from, "Collective Worship in County Schools", Hants County Council

3. Aims and Values

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for promoting effective worship at Shipton Bellinger Primary School. We believe that Collective Worship both supports and strengthens every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos and the value that we place on the development of the whole child: Spiritually, Morally, Culturally, Socially and intellectually is reflected in our Worship. We value this special time in our school for the opportunity 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. Collective Worship is a time of togetherness and sharing for the whole school community. Through Collective Worship we aim to provide a caring and supporting environment for our children and it provides a time for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and the wider community
- Grow in understanding feelings of other people, in everyday situations and belief
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Respond freely to religious or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not
- Promote British Values
- To recognise the importance of Collective Worship time within the school day.
- To reaffirm, interpret and put into practice the values of our school community.
- To reflect upon spiritual and moral issues.

- To value and respect the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them.
- To participate and respond in various ways.
- To explore feelings such as awe, wonder, mystery and joy.
- To celebrate the achievements of others in our school community.
- To raise awareness of the major world religions with special emphasis on family life, festivals and common themes.

Worship both reflects and nurtures the ethos of the School. It encompasses all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that every member of staff and every child feels involved.

4. The legal position of Collective Worship

The most recent legal statement of the requirements for Collective Worship (as distinct from assembly) are contained in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. These build on similar requirements in Section 346 of the Education Act 1996, the Education Reform Act 1988, and Section 25 of the 1944 Education Act, where the law on compulsory Collective Worship began. Section 70 of the 1998 Act states that, subject to the parental right of excusal or other special arrangements, '...each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of Collective Worship'.

Schedule 20 to the 1998 Act gives more detailed information on the worship requirements. It notes the different practical arrangements that are allowed: 'a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups'. A 'school group' is defined as 'any group in which pupils are taught or take part in other school activities'.

The Headteacher and RE Coordinator is responsible for Collective Worship provision, in consultation with the Governors. The majority of acts of Collective Worship in any given school term should still be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. In other acts of worship, consideration should be given to 'circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils'. This is appropriate to the 'ages and aptitudes' of the pupils.

Collective Worship should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character." "A 'broadly Christian' act of worship must contain some elements which relate to the traditions of Christian belief and which accord a special status to Jesus Christ. (*Circular 1/94*, paragraph 63). This means that over half (51% or more) of the assemblies provided over an entire year should "reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief," but should be non-denominational in character

The way this is interpreted at Shipton Bellinger Primary School is that we generally ensure that over half the assemblies over the year include some of the following:

- Stories from the Bible, both Old and New Testament
- Stories about notable Christians, historical or contemporary
- Information about Christian practice, such as prayer, missionary work, charity etc.
- Christian festivals
- Secular and religious stories with a Christian moral message
- Christian artefacts and images

Themes may be explored through story, drama, music, poetry or song.

At Shipton Bellinger Primary School, we see whole school assemblies as an opportunity to encourage our children to:

- Provide an opportunity to share time and space, joy and peace and learn to grow emotionally and spiritually
- Enable children to reflect and appreciate the values characteristic to Christianity- honesty, integrity, faithfulness, compassion, generosity, courage, responsibility and love and celebrate special occasions together -Advent, Christmas, Harvest, Epiphany, Lent, Easter

- Link the individuality of each child, their religious heritage as well as the ethnic cultures, religious and social diversity of the federated community
- Reflect on dimensions of human life, the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, tragic, sorrowful, solemn
- Show concerns for daily happenings in school life, the local community and the wider world
- Share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by children in the school
- Inspire a love of lifelong learning

Where possible, they will have a visual focus e.g. a picture, artefact, prop or movement and offer the children the opportunity for active participation.

A time will be set aside for worship or quiet reflection. This will be recognised as a sacred time for some people and be identified by the adult saying, "This is our special time for quiet worship or reflection." An adult or child(ren) may say a prayer and children may be invited to prayer.

Generally in any week there will be Collective Worship led by:

- The Headteacher
- Teachers
- Local Church Minister/ Pastoral Church Volunteer

Some Collective Worship sessions will be led by the children. Occasional assemblies may be led by visitors from other faiths or secular groups e.g. a governor, policeman or teacher from another school.

5. Appropriate Atmosphere

Care should be taken to create an appropriate atmosphere for Collective Worship and the quiet entrance and exit of children should enable this. This will be organised by the member of staff responsible for Collective Worship or a nominated responsible child from Year 6.

All staff will endeavour to ensure children are led promptly demonstrating our Shipton Walking into Collective Worship so it can begin on time and ensure some children are not waiting for a long period of time for the whole school to gather together.

Therefore, all children should be ready to begin Collective Worship at 9am and the session will begin promptly. The period of personal reflection will be marked by the lighting of a candle, which will remain lit throughout the reflection time.

6. Organisation

Each week a theme has been selected which is broadly of a Christian nature. This theme is shared with staff through the half termly overview.

Collective Worship takes place each day between 9am and 9:20am. Across the course of the week it is delivered in a variety of ways, but generally runs to the following pattern:

Monday - Led by Headteacher - introducing the theme for the week

Tuesday to Thursday - Led by class teachers.

Friday - STAR Values Assembly

Each term there will be a Family Celebration Assembly that each class will lead, sharing their learning and celebrations for the term. Parents and carers are invited to attend these.

As part of our inclusive approach, we recognise that not all children feel comfortable in a whole school Collective Worship and can find large spaces, such as the hall, overwhelming. Therefore, as part of individualised plans, some children may engage in Collective Worship in alternate spaces with smaller group sizes. It is our expectation that all children attend Collective Worship in the hall, but provision may be put into place for this to be successful. Alternate provisions are reviewed regularly based on individual children's needs. All assemblies are available on Google Drive so the children can have the same Collective Worship delivered elsewhere in the school and are not missing out on opportunities.

7. Celebration through Singing

For each theme, an appropriate song is selected so children can celebrate the theme through singing as well as the Collective Worship experience itself. Each week an assembly will focus on the children learning songs linked with our theme, school values or for a school event. The children will learn about the meaning of the words and how they link to the weekly theme, value or event.

8. Collective Worship and SMSC

Collective Worship is an ideal opportunity each day to help the children learn, understand and celebrate the community and world in which they live and promote SMSC and British Values.

9. Withdrawal from Collective Worship and Families who send their children to Shipton Bellinger Primary School form a multicultural society.

It is a legal requirement that all children attend Collective Worship unless their parents have exercised their right to withdraw their children from all or parts of worship under the 1988 Education Reform Act. In the event of this occurring, children are suitably occupied under the supervision of an adult.

Although Collective Reflection is non-denominational in character, we are mindful that parents may for various reasons wish to withdraw their children from Collective Reflection for reasons based on religion or belief.

We recognise that by asking our children to partake in Collective Worship, we have to consider the background that our children have come from and it is therefore not the practice of the school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and child's family is respected at all times. Parents of a child at our school have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. If parents ask for their child to be wholly or partially withdrawn from Collective Worship, the school will comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent wishing to exercise this right must consult with the Leadership Team.

10. School trips and off site visits

Although there is a legal requirement for an act of Collective Worship to take place each day, there is also a requirement that this takes place on the school premises.

Therefore, although the school will endeavour to do its best, when children are taking part in educational visits that require them to be off the school for the whole day, it may not always be possible to provide Collective Worship.

Agreed by Governors: Spring 2025

Review date: Spring 2027