

Guidelines for Headteachers and Governing Bodies of Barnet Community and foundation Schools

Barnet SACRE's advice to Barnet Local Authority relating to the Act of Collective Worship in our plural society and for the provision of the Act of Collective Worship paying regard to the Council's Equal opportunities Policy. November 2008

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1 Guiding Statement

'The unexamined life is not worth living.' Socrates (469-399 BCE)

2 The Purpose of Collective Worship

Collective Worship provides the time and the opportunity for everyone in the school:

- To stop and reflect
- To focus on things that are of worth
- To develop a sense of community in which all members are valued and which can contribute to the common good of humanity
- To engage with the wider community in which the school exists
- To develop spiritual, moral, cultural, and social understanding.

Section 3 Objectives for Collective Worship

Collective Worship should enable children and young people to:

- Build and develop the shared identity of the community of the school and individual responsibilities as citizens
- Share in things of worth and value
- Focus on things which add significance and meaning to the daily lives of pupils
- Provide experiences which go beyond the immediate and everyday
- Consider matters which challenge children and young people to reflect on their own lives and those of others
- Develop a reflective approach to life by providing some quiet, personal time and which offers opportunities for personal, individual reflection or prayer.
- Engage when appropriate in an expression of personal faith
- Have opportunities to consider the broad traditions of Christian belief and beliefs of other faiths and traditions
- Have opportunities to listen to persons who bear witness to the part faith plays in their lives
- Have opportunities to reflect on the teachings and narrative from Christianity, other faiths, traditions and beliefs and how these might impact on their own lives and that of the wider community.

Section 4 The Act of collective worship as a distinctive part of the school day

The Act of collective Worship should:

- Be seen as a separate and distinct time for the group of children or young people involved and should be signalled by creating a different atmosphere.

For example, by playing music as people enter and before any speaking begins.

- To have a content or focus selected so as to contribute to children and young people's learning
- To be explored through a presentation that could involve, listening, looking, talk, narration, drama, showing and the use of all the senses.
- Be an opportunity for pupils to reflect and consider 'What does this mean to me?'

Section 5 Meeting legal requirements

The Education Act of 1996 requires that Collective Worship in community and foundation schools should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief. Circular 1/94 on which this guidance is based is to be revised in 2008/9 but the advice on Collective Worship is not to be changed.

- All registered pupils should take part
- The timing and organization is flexible

Schools may apply to SACRE to vary the legal requirements for the Act of Collective Worship by seeking for a Determination to alter their arrangements for Collective Worship.

Section 6 Areas of focus

Collective worship should support the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of all pupils through:

Building and developing the shared identity of the school by:

- Considering the values that underpin the school's ethos focussing on positive expectations
- Valuing each others traditions
- Thinking of the needs of others throughout the world

Sharing of things of worth by:

- Celebrating individual and group achievements/consider stories of exemplars
- Appreciate beauty in art, music, dance and literature.

Focus on experiences that add significance or meaning to their own lives by:

- Exploring friendship, caring, sharing, gratitude and disappointment
- Engaging with events in the world

Providing experiences which go beyond the immediate and everyday by:

- Reflecting on happiness, suffering, death, love, stillness, imagination, wondering
- Exploring the self, prayer/inner thoughts, and relationships
- Examining doubts and certainties about puzzling questions and ultimate reality
- Reflecting on individual strengths and weaknesses

Consider matters that challenge children and young people to think about their lives and those of others by:

- Following trends
- Materialism
- Rights and responsibilities
- Making lifestyle decisions
- Responding to the media

Engage where appropriate, in an expression of personal faith by:

- Reciting a personal prayer or demonstrating a ritual

Have opportunities to consider Christianity and other faiths and beliefs by:

- Listening to stories that offer wisdom
- Reflecting on the teachings and narratives from a variety of traditions

Have the opportunity to listen to persons who bear witness to the part faith plays in their lives by:

- Thinking carefully about what a visitor has shared with them
- Reflecting on their own lives and similar or different experiences or ideas.

Appendix 1

The following themes or headings might provide opportunities to look at broadly Christian themes as well as explore the other faiths and traditions.

Authority	Holiness
Birth	Hope
Brotherly and sisterly love	Human capacity for prejudice, cruelty, war and alienation
Caring	Humility
Celebration	Imagination
Challenges to authority	Initiation
Charity	Joy
Common interests	Justice
Communicating	Kindness to others
Community	Neighbourliness
Compassion	Relationships
Contemplation of the worthwhile	Peace
Ecology and Pollution	Praise
Equality	Prayer
Family	Remembrance
Fellowship	Renewal
Forgiveness	Respect
Freedom	Sacred Art
Goodness	Sacred Music
Goodwill	Sacred Writings
Grace	Selflessness.
Harmony	