

Varna Community Primary School



Policy and Guidelines for Collective Worship

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| Approved by: | Governing Body | Date: Jan 2023 |
| Last reviewed on: | Feb 2019 | |
| Next review due by: | Jan 2025 | |
| Reviewed by | Full Governors | |

VARNA COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

The Policy for Collective Worship at Varna Community Primary School follows the guidance of:

- ◆ Circular 1/94 Religious Education and Collective Worship
- ◆ School Standards and Framework Act 1998 – Chapter VI
- ◆ Manchester LEA Guidelines on Collective Worship in Maintained Schools.

‘In the light of the Christian traditions of Great Britain, collective worship is to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’. (ERA 1988, Education Act 1993)

ERA (1988) and the Education Act (1993) state that acts of worship may contain certain elements drawn from a number of different faiths but that, within each term, the majority of acts of worship must be wholly, or mainly, of a broadly Christian character.

At Varna Community Primary, our collective worship is broadly Christian but is distinct from corporate worship within one particular faith group. There are occasions when other faiths are the focus during collective worship (for example, festivals, holy days, etc.).

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 states that each pupil in attendance at a Community, shall, on each day, take part in an act of collective worship. If parents request that their child(ren) be wholly or partly excused from attendance at religious worship in the school, this shall be respected.

At Varna Community Primary School, pupils take part in a daily act of collective worship and other arrangements are made for those pupils who are exempt.

The Purpose of Collective Worship

- ◆ To contribute to a sense of unity and community for the school as a whole.
- ◆ To promote spiritual, cultural and moral development.
- ◆ To promote British Values.

Principles of Assembly/Collective Worship

Assemblies/collective worship should be pupil-centred, related to pupils’ own experience and concerns. They should acknowledge diversity, and pupils should take an active part in assemblies/collective worship.

Assemblies/collective worship should be educational. They should have a purpose and relate to other curriculum activities. Assemblies should be consistent with the aims of Varna Community Primary School and advance pupils’ learning.

Assemblies/collective worship should be spiritual: a time for reflection and individual worship.

Aims of Collective Worship

- ◆ To provide the opportunity for an experience of worship.
- ◆ To reflect on the values and concerns of the school and the community it serves.
- ◆ To deepen and widen a child’s emotional response.

- ◆ To enable children to gain insights into ways in which people express themselves according to the tenets of their faith.
- ◆ To promote respect and sensitivity for the beliefs and values of others.

Objectives of Collective Worship

To develop a sense of:

- ◆ awe, wonder and mystery
- ◆ interdependence with the natural world
- ◆ pattern, sequence and order
- ◆ self-worth and the worth of others.

To develop an awareness:

- ◆ that life involves choices of belief/attitude/behaviour/relationships
- ◆ that there are issues of meaning, purpose and value in life.

At Varna Community Primary School, the principles of all assemblies/collective worship are that they should be:

- ◆ inclusive
- ◆ educational
- ◆ spiritual

and contribute to the moral, social and cultural development of children and promote British Values. They include worship and are seen as special times when children can feel secure, relaxed and part of a community.

On Monday and Wednesday acts of worship take place during assemblies. On Tuesdays and Thursdays a short period of collective worship takes place in each of the classrooms. On Friday the school comes together as a family to celebrate the week's achievements. Parents are welcome to take part each week in this celebration and in particular once a year when their children perform a class assembly for the school community. The Friday assembly tends to last approximately twenty - thirty minutes.

Planning

Assemblies are planned on a weekly basis, incorporating a theme that fosters spiritual, cultural and moral development and British Values. Themes include examples from various religious cultures and are linked to the Calendar of Religious Festivals for the year:

- ◆ religious events
- ◆ special days
- ◆ special events in the life of Varna Community Primary School
- ◆ topics being undertaken
- ◆ British Values
- ◆ UNRC

At Varna Community Primary School, there is much for which to be thankful, much to praise, much to hope for and request, and we introduce these elements in our assemblies.

The themes teach the children to reflect on serious affairs and offer them the chance to respond through a variety of activities: songs, music making, hymns, drama, role-play, the visual arts, silent thought, prayer and discussion.

Assemblies

- ◆ Meetings are arranged to develop a sense of occasion.
- ◆ Children are expected to enter and leave quietly.
- ◆ While the children are in the Hall, they sit in class groups on the floor.
- ◆ Music, in harmony with the theme, is played at the start and end of the assembly.
- ◆ A hymn or song, appropriate to the theme of the week, is sung.

- ◆ Parents and members of the local community are invited regularly to assemblies each term.
- ◆ Visiting speakers are invited occasionally.

The Law

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from acts of worship.

Provision is made for those children who are withdrawn from collective worship. They are given appropriate work and supervised by members of staff.

In class assembly time, these children will be given work to complete, while the rest of the class takes part in assembly/collective worship.

Staff, equally, have the right to withdraw from collective worship.

The Education Reform Act does not define collective worship. At Varna Community Primary School, we focus on someone or something that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and physical development of all children.

Further Information

Useful Documents and Resources

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| DfES | Religious Education and Collective Worship 1/94 |
| HMSO | School Standard and Framework Act 1998: Chapter VI |