



MARYLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Collective worship
POLICY**

Updated April 2023



Maryland Primary School Collective Worship Policy

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

What is collective worship?

The term 'worship' comes from an Anglo-Saxon word, meaning 'attribute worth' or 'worth-ship'.

Traditionally, the meaning of the word can be used when paying homage to a divine power, however it also refers to the celebration of, or honour paid to individuals, or events that the community considers 'worthy'.

The term 'collective' means something 'done by people acting as a group'.

Aims

Collective worship at Maryland Primary School contributes to the moral, spiritual, cultural and educational development of all pupils. Children will be educated **about** world religions as part of the R.E. curriculum. Through collective worship, we aim for to:

- Develop community spirit
- Develop a sense of worth
- Promote a common ethos and shared values
- Promote harmony amongst all who attend the school, regardless of personal religion and belief.
- Prepare children for the moral challenges of the outside world

We aim for children to:

- Understand the changing world they live in and develop a sense of belonging,
- Develop an understanding of morals and behaviour which adhere to the school's rules and values, develop empathy, care, sensitivity and a positive self image.
- Understand appropriate behaviour within specific settings and gatherings and reflect on matters of right and wrong.
- Respect, not just tolerate, each other's cultures and beliefs
- Celebrate each other's successes and achievements through sharing work and ideas
- Understand the importance of religious stories and ideas found in Christianity and other religions
- Appreciate and celebrate festivals and significant events within the school community
- Reflect on topics shared and their own approach to relationships with peers and adults within the school and outside in the community.

Legal requirements

The DfE expects schools to conduct a daily act of collective worship (guidance dated 1994). This can be a short reflection time in the classroom together, or as part of an assembly in the hall. At Maryland we follow Collective Worship SACRE guidance for schools in Newham.

School context

Maryland is a maintained, non-denominational, diverse school with children from 50 different countries, representing a background in many faiths and beliefs. Collective worship at Maryland is not confessional, veneration to a divine power and does not include prayer. It embraces morals and values (British Values, the school's values and the Equality Statement). In line with the DfE guidance, collective worship at Maryland is of a broadly Christian character.

How collective worship is organised

At Maryland, collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly each day. An assembly may involve all of the pupils in the school, separate key stage or class assemblies. It is not an individual activity or expression of faith. Assembly (coming together) enhances our value of harmony.

Assemblies are regarded as a special time in the day, provide periods of calm reflection and are conducted accordingly. Children are expected to behave respectfully and thoughtfully and are asked to come in and leave assemblies in a quiet manner.

In each assembly there will be a short time given to reflect on the stimulus. To focus attention a relevant music video might be played, a picture or image displayed, a story or poem read. The act of singing can be a very



positive opportunity for celebration or reflection. The selection of songs will be reflective of the school values, vision and ethos.

We do not seek to preach or convert or indoctrinate. We consider praying to be an act of private religious worship. Collective worship does not expect pupils to behave in a way that undermines their personal beliefs. All assemblies must include a short time for reflection or moral thought.

The Headteacher and senior leadership team lead assemblies on Mondays, Wednesdays (Critical Thinking, Values and Equality is embedded in all assemblies) and Fridays; other staff members take assemblies on other days including singing assemblies in both key stages.

Assemblies are planned around a programme of weekly themes which include the Headteacher's vision for the year and Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) topics. e.g. festivals, equality themes, celebration of notable figures' lives, anti-bullying week, mental health week etc. The development of themes will be structured across the week to reflect a broad approach and to link with a number of curriculum areas. Staff are advised of the theme of the week through assembly rotas.

Assemblies may also reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage children to participate by having 'Being Brilliant' assemblies and class assemblies, during which children may show their work and share successes with others, and can raise issues that they have discussed in their classes. These assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school and celebrate them together. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school - that all children and their achievements are valued.

The use and role of visitors

Visitors may be invited to assemblies/collective worship on occasions and these visits are noted and approved by the Headteacher. Prior to attending, visitors are given information on the diversity of the school population, the purpose of collective worship at Maryland, the age range of the children, the theme and timings, etc. to ensure standards and continuity. All staff are given notice of any visitor attending the school via the staff update and calendar.

Record keeping

Weekly records of assemblies are kept on assembly tables in both halls.
A broad central bank of resources is continually built up to support and develop weekly themes.

Monitoring

Informal monitoring is carried out by the senior leadership team regularly. The leader for R.E. is required to report formally on collective worship to the local authority on a regular basis. The governing board has an open invitation to collective worship events and many attend.

Rights of withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from assemblies. This is discussed on the child's admission into school. Maryland's assemblies focus on harmony which is successful in ensuring all children take part.

Equal Opportunities statement

Collective worship at Maryland aims to provide opportunities for ALL children to reach their potential. Both boys and girls are given equal recognition for their contributions. Stereotypical views on gender, race and ethnicity relating to unconscious bias are constantly challenged and opportunities are given to develop equal opportunities for children who are learning English as an additional language, through opportunities to develop their language, during collaborative and practical activities.

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