

Elmtree Infant and Nursery School



Together we reach for the stars



Empowering our unique schools to Excel

Collective Worship Policy

Policy Level:	4	ODBST Policy Guidance Member Schools may use the document to inform the drafting of their non-statutory policy. No approval from the ODBST Board is necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:		
Committee responsible:	AEC	
Approved by:	AEC	
Date Approved:	21 March 2023	
Date for Next Review:	21 March 2025	

In reviewing this policy the Trust Board has had regards to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged.

The collective worship policy at Elmtree Infant and Nursery School pays due regard to statutory requirements and has taken account of the guidance offered by the board of trustees of ODBST.

Collective worship is a valued and valuable part of school life and is taken seriously, because it shapes our approach to others and to what we do in school.

Collective worship at Elmtree is carried out daily in our assemblies. Children are invited to reflect and consider the implications of the content and how this may affect them as growing individuals.

Aims of collective worship

Collective worship in Elmtree Infant and Nursery School aims to provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to:

- experience a variety of styles of worship
- celebrate together e.g. festivals, school values, individual achievements
- build a sense of community/foster corporate identity;
- develop a reflective approach to living which sometimes encourages understanding of and invitation to prayer;
- look beyond the physical, material and measurable
- worship God or reflect on human values;
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading, presentation and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed in doing any of the above

Statutory requirements

Through its funding agreement with the DfE, Collective Worship must

- take place for every child not withdrawn by their parents (post 16 students can withdraw themselves) every day
- be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils
- take place on the school premises, except on occasions, with agreement of governors

Therefore, at Elmtree Infant and Nursery School our collective worship reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. Not every act of collective worship must comply with this; just the majority so we can include material from other religions and non-religious world views.

Collective Worship and the Curriculum

Collective worship time is distinct from curriculum time given to any subject including religious education. However, in Elmtree Infants and Nursery School, we aim to enable collective worship and aspects of children's classroom learning to be mutually supportive.

Collective worship provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in line with school policy. To achieve this it addresses a wide variety of themes and topics, uses diverse stimuli and resources and provides pupils with opportunities to 'respond' at their own level.

The Management of Collective Worship

The Headteacher is responsible for the provision of collective worship, supported by and after consultation with the governing body. The following arrangements exist to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate collective worship:

1. Headteacher draws up a rota for leading collective worship and themes for each week.
2. Headteacher observes collective worship (from a range of formats) per term to ensure that they comply with school policy and the law. Governors may also attend collective worship to monitor their policy.

The Organisation of Collective Worship

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings in the school hall, or one of the multi-purpose rooms, or the classroom.

Monday	Planned story reflective of topical celebrations and festivals
Tuesday	School Visions and Values
Wednesday	Wellbeing and mindfulness
Thursday	PSHE focus
Friday	Celebration Assembly

These are subject to change to reflect different dates in the religious calendar.

Leadership

Every member of the school staff, pupils and occasional visitors will be involved in leading acts of worship at some point in the school year.

Planning Acts of Collective Worship

The content of all acts of collective worship is considered carefully to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all pupils, as well as the balance between Christianity and other faiths.

Termly planning sheets list themes, special occasions and events, but there is flexibility to allow the inclusion of current and topical issues. Weekly planning and recording sheets (could be included in the appendix), enable the monitoring and evaluation of acts of worship.

Visitors are welcomed to lead collective worship from time to time and are given guidance on our worship policy. Leaders from faiths within the area help us to increase the pupils' awareness, promote respect and raise the esteem of the pupils who belong to these faiths.

The Act of Collective Worship

We use a variety of styles, active and interactive methods and a range of resources in our acts of collective worship. Leaders make decisions about these elements according to what is most appropriate to the content, the ages, aptitudes and the backgrounds of the pupils.

Where prayer is included in our acts of worship it is introduced with a form of words that invites but does not coerce pupils to participate. Our prayers are addressed to 'God' rather than Jesus as this is inclusive of the beliefs of our non-Christian religious pupils. We hope that pupils who prefer not to pray will use these moments to reflect on the important messages shared in our worship.

Collective worship should not be confused with assembly. We often take the opportunity of pupils gathered together to share announcements and notices. Using a variety of strategies e.g. music, silence etc. we indicate clearly to all present when worship begins and ends.

Withdrawal

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship and staff (and students in the sixth form) are also free to withdraw from involvement in this aspect of school life. We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the Head Teacher in writing so that school records are accurate. We also appreciate opportunities to speak with parents and staff who have concerns about collective worship, always keen to develop our understanding of sensitivities and to overcome difficulties where possible. Those pupils who are withdrawn from worship are cared for by a member of the school's staff; parents may provide suitable activities for children so withdrawn.