

# Collective Worship Policy

Policy was updated: September 2016

Next review date: September 2019

## Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues and issues relating to faith and belief. To enable children to explore , and appropriately express their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- To teach children how to worship and be reflective
- To deliver the above within a very broad Christian framework (as outlined below) which also gives space and affirmation towards other faiths and beliefs.

## Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves children, staff and other adults participating in an assembly.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that Collective Worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a Christian

character', we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school and wider society.

### **Organisation of Collective Worship**

We hold a daily act of worship in our school. This forms part of each assembly, which is normally a whole school assembly.

Assembly would normally but not always include the following elements.

- Music as children enter quietly
- An introduction and greeting
- Notices for all or part of the school
- Sometimes a presentation or activity which may be from a teacher/headteacher, invited guest or children themselves.
- Sometimes singing or music
- Prayer, including regular use of the Lord's prayer.
- Sometimes the lighting and extinguishing of a candle to mark the beginning and end of an assembly

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be thoughtful and listen carefully to the teachings and participate in their own way. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

We encourage the children to take an active part in planning and delivering aspects of the assemblies.

The Head Teacher; members of staff; children and visitors conduct assemblies. Visitors include local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar and sometimes festivals and days that are important to other faiths and wider society, eg. remembrance. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies from a slightly amended version of the Church of England's Values For Life well in advance of the day they take place. We currently have a six year plan to cover the values so that every child who attends the school throughout their primary years will experience the full range of the values at some stage.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We dedicate one assembly per week to celebration of achievements throughout the previous week. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward the children for their achievements both in and out of school. They provide an important role in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that the children are valued and their achievements celebrated. Each class has a special assembly in the year when they invite their parents to share their learning and the things that they have been discussing with their class.

Governor's attend assemblies regularly and are always welcome.

The normal expectation is that all staff will attend an assembly, with obvious sensitivity to other work demands. The purpose of staff attendance is as follows:

- To increase the sense of specialness for the children
- To enable adults and children to participate together and foster the sense that the issues of faith, morality and ethos that are raised in assembly are not just important for children but throughout life.
- To enable teaching staff to be aware of what has been discussed in assembly should it come up later on in class.
- To ensure that messages received in collective worship are reinforced and 'patterned' throughout the school day

### **Right of Withdrawal**

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

### **Monitoring and Review**

It is the role of the Governing Body's Ethos Committee to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The governors concerned liaise with the Head Teacher before reporting to the Full Governing Body on religious education and collective worship.

