

Highwood Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

This policy was written in:	September 2015
It was ratified by the Governing Body on:	October 2015
The policy is due for review in:	September 2018

Highwood Primary School Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

At Highwood Primary School we believe that it is important to meet together daily as a community to reinforce our values and to worship together. We endeavour to make Collective Worship or Assembly appropriate to the children in our school. Assemblies are broadly 'Christian' in nature, but take into account that we also need to promote multicultural relations and celebrations within this area. Although collective worship is complimentary to Religious Education, it does not form part of the curriculum for Religious Education.

Collective Worship should:

- Promote a sense of community
- Be educational
- Promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Be a special time
- Enable participants to be actively involved
- Be of high quality

Legal Status of Collective Worship

We adhere to the Education Act of 1995 and follow guidance from the LA linking with Sacre.

We provide collective worship daily; this may take the form of whole school assemblies for all staff and pupils, or separate acts of worship in different age groups or school groups. Collective worship may be held at any time during the school day.

The majority of the acts of collective worship will be of a broadly Christian character. They will be non-denominational. Whilst complying with the law, the school will be sensitive to the fact that some children come from non-Christian backgrounds and others come from families with no faith.

Every child will take part in Assembly unless withdrawn by their parents/carers. All parents are informed, through the school prospectus, of their right to withdraw their child from the Act of Collective Worship.

Organisation of collective worship

Collective worship or assembly is co-ordinated by the Headteacher and a variety of themes and activities are used to ensure a high quality experience for all the children regardless of religious background. A termly programme of assembly

themes is shared with all staff and the member of staff taking assembly plans it for themselves using the theme as a focus. These assemblies have a variety of aims, content and experiences. An assembly would not normally consist of a story, poem, dance, drama, art or visual prompt with a focus linked to the theme, a song and time for reflection or prayer.

The key concepts on which our themes are based reflect the beliefs of Christianity and other major faiths and are linked to our core values.

Assemblies are also used to reflect upon key Christian Festivals as well as those from other faiths. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on the topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.

Our assemblies also reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in sharing assemblies by showing their work to the other children during our 'Celebration Assemblies'.

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell the 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 quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and songs. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects to act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The Headteacher or other members of staff normally conduct assemblies but visitors including the local vicar also attend occasionally.

Prayer

We provide children the opportunity for reflection, either in silence with a focus, with a written known prayer or through informal prayers. We ask the children to be quiet, to think and listen to the words. We do not ask the children to put their hands together but say I am going to say a prayer so close your eyes and listen. If you agree with the prayer, say 'Amen' at the end. The prayers used may:-

- Be taken from one of the major faiths;
- Be made up to reflect the theme;
- May reflect other cultures and traditions.

Spiritual and Moral Development

Worship is used explicitly to promote spiritual and moral development. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to consider and reflect on issues which reflect areas of meaning. This is done through the input, readings, singing, prayers and quiet time for reflection.

These experiences may develop:-

- An awareness of beauty and goodness;
- A sense of awe and humility;
- Praise and thankfulness;
- Reflection on feelings and emotions;
- Celebration;
- The mystery of life.

Music in assemblies

Music enhances the assembly in a number of ways:-

- By providing an opportunity for pupils to listen to and appreciate music either as they come into, go out of, or during assembly linked to the theme.
- Music played during assembly can provide beneficial atmosphere to worship.
- Pupils' knowledge of a range of music may be developed and enhanced through a planned programme of regular listening opportunities which include the chance to listen to particular pieces on more than one occasion.
- Music in assemblies may provide opportunities for pupils to perform.

Right to withdrawal

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent may 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. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.