

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Reviewed by the Premises and Curriculum Committee 10 November 2016

Date of Next Review: November 2020

Legislation

Legislation on Religious Education and Collective Worship states that:

- * all children shall participate in a collective act of worship every school day;
- * the act of worship may take place at any time during the school day;
- * the act of worship may take place in any school grouping;
- * the act of worship shall be wholly or mainly Christian over a period of time;
- * the act of worship shall be non-denominational;
- * parents have the right to withdraw children from this activity;
- * teachers have the right to withdraw from this activity, though not from assembly;
- * acts of worship can take place off the premises, with the agreement of the governors, but only in addition to the daily act of worship in the school.

Key aspects to worship

The following key aspects should be borne in mind when planning assemblies:

a) Content

Content of whole school assemblies will usually reflect current issues or where the headteacher feels would have a particular resonance with the children. In addition the children will receive a monthly bible story assembly from members of the local church

b) Atmosphere

This is a crucial 'ingredient' of worship. A considered choice of calming music upon entry can make a major difference to the atmosphere being created. All children are expected to enter the Hall in silence and to sit quietly when waiting for the Assembly to start. The following should be borne in mind:

Relationships between staff & pupils, reinforcing the ethos of the school.

Location (usually in the Hall), a special time in the day, quiet, comfort etc.

A correct balance between quiet & talking & the use of music, drama, poetry, art.

Participation by staff & pupils.

Separation of discipline & administrative issues from worship.

c) Reflection

This can be built in using a variety of methods:

Use of music, using sound, short periods of silence, thinking as pupils listen, focus on an object, reflective poems, written prayers (by children, staff or more formal prayers), responsive prayers, etc.

d) Participation

Pupils may participate in a variety of ways:

Participation is a very strong element of the whole school assembly with usually a class, sitting on benches at the front leading the discussion. The other children are encouraged to give their thought/reflections on what they have heard after the 'class discussion.'

Schedule of Daily Acts of Worship

Whole School assembly 2:45-3:20 Friday each week

Class assemblies: either 12:45-1:00 or 2:00-2:15 Monday to Thursday

In addition to the act of worship, assemblies may include other elements, such as RE, celebrating children's work and achievements, social and moral development, music, speaking and listening, etc.

Assemblies, especially class assemblies, provide opportunities for children to plan and lead, or to actively participate, but must focus on worship.

Children of different religious sects eg: Jehovah Witness families are catered for with separate provision.

Above all, **the act of worship should be a quality time for children to experience and develop their own spiritual dimension.** It should always be a very special time in the busy school day.