



St. Mary's Church of England Primary School, Timsbury

Collective Worship Policy

Introduction

At St. Mary's our daily act of collective worship is viewed as an integral and important part of school life. It is a time when we come together to worship God, reflect, celebrate and share all aspects of our lives, including our spiritual journey. The worship of the school is based on promoting the Christian values which permeate the ethos of the school. As such, the contribution of staff, pupils, church clergy and other visitors is highly valued.

Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the school community to worship God together;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore 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 about Christian worship practices.

Legal Requirements

In line with the school's Anglican foundation and the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', our assemblies are centred around the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Christian Church; however, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from our acts of worship, either partially or wholly. Any parents wishing to do so should make a written request to the Headteacher. 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. Staff who work at the school also have the right to withdraw from leading and taking part in worship.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. This is normally a whole school assembly, although class assemblies are also held regularly.

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 quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully to the teachings and to reflect upon them, and to participate in prayer, hymns and songs in a manner appropriate to the occasion and their individual identity. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using a cross, music and candles and other objects and spiritual aids which act as focal points for the attention of the children.

The Headteacher and Deputy Head usually conduct assemblies but throughout the year, pupils, other staff and visitors also lead worship. Our children also visit St. Mary's Church for special services.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and these often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes for collective worship reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes, well in advance of the day they take place. A file is kept, recording the details of each act of worship. Evaluations completed by children are also kept in the file. Regular training is encouraged and available for those who wish to lead acts of worship.

Our assemblies reflect the learning and celebrate the achievements of our children. We encourage children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements, both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued as unique individuals and all achievements are recognised.

Adopted by the Full Governing Body: May 2014
First review: May 2017
Next Review: May 2020

Signed (Chair of Governors): _____