

# John F Kennedy Primary School

## Collective Worship Policy



### 1 Aims and purpose

1.1 The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God if they wish to do so;
- to offer experiences and opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to enable children to consider their rights and responsibilities;
- 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 promote respect, tolerance and understanding for those with differing beliefs and backgrounds;
- to teach children how to reflect upon their own beliefs and values.

### 2 Collective worship

2.1 We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

2.2 In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally 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.

2.3 While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

2.4 Collective worship draws on areas of the curriculum. It can also enrich class work, providing different perspectives, promoting thought and understanding and encouraging the quest for further study.

### **3 Organisation of collective worship**

3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school that is distinctive from the curriculum. This forms part of each morning assembly, which is either a whole-school, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 or class assembly.

3.2 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 and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. 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.

3.3 The head teacher or other members of senior staff normally conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups conduct them instead.

3.4 We have a plan for whole school worship linked to the UNCR. We also 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. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We also aim to incorporate sharing local and national happenings, special days, reflecting on significant experiences of life, festivals and materials from other faiths. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

3.5 Our weekly celebration assembly reflects the achievements and learning of the children. This assembly offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. It plays an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

3.6 Throughout the year we invite parents/carers and family to a class assembly. This promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of

the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

3.7 We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

#### **4 Right of withdrawal**

4.1 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. 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.

#### **5 Monitoring and review**

5.1 The head teacher and the R.E. subject leader will monitor this area and report to the governors on religious education and collective worship.

This policy has been written with reference to the SACRE guidance: Gathering Together – Policy and Practice for Collective Worship 2008 and the Education reform Act 1988

Signed:

Date: October 2015