

Collective Worship Policy

1 Aims and purpose

1.1 The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to teach children how to worship;
- to provide an opportunity for Christian children to worship God;
- to provide children of other faiths to worship their gods/prophets;
- to provide children of no faith with a time for reflection and spiritual awareness;
- 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;

2 Collective worship

2.1 We understand worship to be a special act or occasion, the purpose for which is to show reverence. Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an act of worship at an assembly, and involves all members of the school community. 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 the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

2.3 While most acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions that are represented in the school and the wider community – especially at the end of the school faith weeks when we invite parents to share our 'Faith Assembly'. There is a festival wall in the corridor leading to the cloakroom, where there is always a display of current religious festivals.

3 Organisation of collective worship

3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship. This is in the form of an assembly, which is either a whole-school assembly on Monday, and Friday afternoons, Junior assembly on Wednesday afternoon, Infant assembly on Wednesday morning, and a class assembly at the end of the day on the other two days.

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, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, candles, or other objects and artefacts, to focus the attention of the children.

3.3 The assemblies are normally conducted by the headteacher or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups.

- 3.4** We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies at the beginning of the academic year.
- 3.5** Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Celebration assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised. Foxmoor School is a successful school, and we shall continue to celebrate the successes of all our children at our assemblies.
- 3.6** Parents are invited to attend an assembly when a group of children are taking or leading it or they are being recognised for some special achievement. We encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's efforts.
- 3.7** Governors' attendance at our assemblies is always welcome.

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 religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.
- 4.2** The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

5 Monitoring and review

- 5.1** Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of a named school governor, who is also responsible for religious education. The governor concerned liaises with the Headteacher before reporting to the governors.
- 5.2** This policy was ratified by the whole Governing Body and will be monitored and reviewed regularly by them; revised when necessary.

Signed:

Chair of Governors.