

Howes Primary School Policy on Collective Worship



1 Aims and objectives

1.1 The aims and objectives of collective worship are:

- 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;

Howes Primary School believes that collective worship should be a reflection of the important value questions in life. Howes Primary School believes that children, regardless of their religious or philosophical backgrounds, should be encouraged, inspired and challenged by the religious and moral speakers they experience. Howes Primary School believes that its collective worship should recognise that most students do not come from a particular religious background.

2 Collective worship

2.1 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 The 1988 Education Reform Act, states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', and we normally base our assemblies within those guidelines. 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.

3 Organisation of collective worship

3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship. This forms part of each daily assembly, which can be a whole-school assembly, a phase assembly or a 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, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in 'Quiet Time'. We may create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

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

3.4 We take the themes of our assemblies from the curriculum, from key messages about behaviours or moral choices, the traditions of the Christian faith festivals that mark the events of the Christian calendar and also

important festivals from other World Religions. We plan our assemblies well in advance of the day they take place.

3.5 Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. 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. Howes Primary School is a successful school, and we shall continue to celebrate the successes of all our children at our assemblies. Families will be invited to some assemblies to share the achievements of the children.

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 and carers 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 has 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 the Governors. Any monitoring by a Governor must be shared with the Headteacher before reporting back to the full committee.

5.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.

Date approved by Governors: September 2018

Date for review: September 2021