

Policy for:

Our Collective Act of Worship

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THE GROVE SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT

COLLECTIVE ACT OF WORSHIP

Rationale

We recognise the specific value to school life which the Worship Assembly contributes and that there is a definite distinction between this and Religious Education. Assemblies create a unity and continuity to school life through providing a time when school morals and values can be discussed to enhance the ethos of our school life. Most Assemblies are taken objectively, through a story approach which generally has no specific denominational basis but does follow a broadly Christian approach which usually contains a moral or a social problem and involves the children in the story by reflecting and encouraging discussion. In other Assemblies specific reference is made to the wide range of cultures and traditions which contribute to our multi-cultural society. Certain stories linked directly to Christianity are told throughout the school year to encourage a development and understanding of our own culture and traditions through following regular yearly references to events in the Christian calendar such as Christmas and Easter. Through following this pattern it is intended to gradually develop the maturity of each child's perceptions whilst reinforcing the knowledge learnt.

Purpose

During collective worship we aim to:

- Fulfil statutory requirements of a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
- Reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian character and on our own beliefs.

- Allow a pause for reflection and stillness in the midst of the pressure of the school day.
- Develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values.
- Provide a variety of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Provide opportunities for expressing shared experiences and interests and for celebrating special occasions together.
- Provide opportunities for self reflection and an awareness of individiaul mental health.
- Provide opportunities in which pupils interact with other year groups, staff and on occasions the wider community, (Covid 19 depndent) as well as offering opportunities to perform and respond to a presentation of readings, music, dance, drama or prayer.

Aims

Through a Collective Act of Worship we aim to develop:

- An awareness of each child's perceptions of themselves through developing an awareness of their own feelings, emotions, senses and awareness of reactions to events.
- An awareness of others and each child's awareness of their own relationships at school, at home and within the community, awareness of the needs of others and their achievements and the stages of life from birth to death.
- An awareness for each child of their own needs, of recognising their own worth, their self esteem and achievements, their need for privacy, acknowledging a range of their own positive and negative feelings, of having a choice, of being able to communicate "no" and to know that this is respected, to accept oneself and ones own purpose in life.
- An awareness of the needs of others and valuing them their self-esteem and acknowledging the rights of others to have different feelings. To learn to care, share and give.

- An awareness of the world which surrounds us and its beauty, the uniqueness of the natural man-made and sensory world and how we can care and look after our world.
- An awareness of developing the sense of mystery, wonder and curiosity, extending sensory awareness whilst also developing an awareness of religious feelings.
- An awareness of celebrating life through personal, school and home events, festivals and celebrations both secular and religious including multi-cultural and multifaith themes and exploring the common elements of religion.
- An awareness of reflecting on life as a whole and the need for each one of us to experience stillness, quiet and privacy whilst also developing an awareness of being alone and of belonging.

Adapted from Religious Education for Very Special Children by Flo Longhorn, 1993, pg3

Guidelines

Assemblies are non-denominational and conducted in a manner which is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all pupils in the school community. Assemblies are regarded as a special time in the day, provide periods of calm reflection and are conducted accordingly. Children are expected to behave respectfully and thoughtfully.

Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. An assembly may involve all of the pupils or class assemblies. The time of the assembly may vary.

The focus of Worship Assemblies is very much on being together, thinking of our own needs, the needs of others, following through moral stories which encourage thoughtfulness, caring, sharing and positive behaviours, which are then discussed within the school context and how each child can show and express these attitudes. An appreciation of our world is encouraged through educational visits and discussions before and after, bringing objects into the Assembly to hold, touch and treasure and also through the use of books, pictures and artefacts. Celebrating life is achieved through discussions about visits to hospitals,discussing family, friends and staff's children's births, christenings, and special events.

A prize giving and celebration of success throughout the school year is held at the end of the summer term when awards are given to every child. Also some reference to changes and developments over the past school year.Throughout the year any certificates won for example for riding, swimming, etc will be kept and presented by the Chair of Governors or another member of the Governing Body at the Summer Assembly. Certificates made "in school" recognise the achievements of each child and may make reference to any National Curriculum subject area. All children receive at least one certificate, of which photocopies are made and put into each child's Individual Education Plan and for older pupils into their Record of Achievement Folders.

Cross curricular links

Whilst the collective act of worship is quite distinct and separate to Religious Education much of the emphasis and ethos is so finely linked that to avoid duplication and unnecessary repetition it is suggested that full and complete reference should also be made to the Religious Education Policy Document. Additionally much of the moral education and developing children's thinking about the awareness of "me" and "the needs of myself" and "others" and "the

needs of others" links very closely to Personal and Social Education. An awareness of the beauty of the world around us and celebrating life links closely to Geography, History, Music and Art.

Assessment Progression and Achievement

Within Collective Act of Worship there is no separate record of any objectives which may be identified for a child, although this time may be specifically mentioned within a child's IEP and the progression and achievement recorded under the specific subject area. Predominantly this generally relates to behaviour and English objectives, but other subject areas may contain objectives which are specific to this time of day.

Health and Safety

At all times regard for the health and safety of pupils and staff should be considered. Reference to our Health and Safety guidelines is essential.

Behaviour

Reference to our school behaviour policy and if relevant a child's behavioural objectives in their IEP is essential. Teaching a child self-discipline and motivation is central towards successful progress and achievement in all learning, throughout the school day, which is relevant to both structured and non-structured situations.