



St Mary Abbots 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;
 - 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 how to worship.
 - to teach children about British values

2 Collective worship

- 2.1 We understand worship to be a special act or occasion, the purpose of which 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 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.

3 Organisation of collective worship

- 3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school. This forms part of each morning assembly, which is normally a whole-school assembly, although on Wednesdays and Thursdays, we have separate KS1 and KS2 assemblies. On Tuesday, a member of the clergy team from St Mary Abbot's Church comes to school to lead a whole school assembly. On Thursday, Key Stage 2 pupils have a weekly Eucharist Service at the church led by the clergy team. A class leads the service, preparing prayers and a reading and gospel reading prescribed for the day. Pupils robe as servers and candle bearers and take a pride in their area of responsibility. Parents are invited to attend the weekly Eucharist service and are informed in the newsletter which class will be leading the service and when. On Fridays, we have Class assemblies to which parents are invited and we also have a 'Celebration of Achievement' acknowledgement at the end of the class assembly or a Celebration of Achievement' in its entirety.

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- 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 light a candle (a sign of God's presence) together with using other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children. There is time for reflection too.
- 3.3.1** The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and all members of teaching staff lead assemblies. Sometimes visitors are invited to the school to lead an assembly for a specific focus, such as raising money for a charity or to talk about his/her line of work.
- 3.4** We 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. Staff plan the assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place. A two-year cycle of assembly themes has been prepared by the Headteacher and is followed by the school community as far as is appropriate. The Headteacher updates it on an annual basis and circulates it to the clergy team, the SLT and a copy is available in the staffroom for all staff to access. On Wednesdays in KS2 and Thursdays in KS1, the focus is on learning about a different country that may have been visited by a staff member. The purpose of this is to ensure that all pupils are aware of National and International perspectives of the world and are not just living in a bubble.
- 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 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 and all achievements are recognised. St Mary Abbot's School is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of all the children in our special Celebration of Achievement assembly held on a Friday.
- 3.6** We invite parents to a class assembly on Fridays. These dates are circulated to parents at the beginning of each term. We also warmly invite and encourage parents to attend our weekly KS2 Eucharist services, end of term services, and our specific whole school services such as our Harvest Service and Ash Wednesday Eucharist Service held at St Mary Abbot's Church, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way that home, school and church work together to support the achievements of our children.
- 3.7** We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies and church services at any time.
- 4** **Celebrate the richness of assemblies**
Assemblies add so much to the school community in so many different areas.
- communal events - time to come together to have shared experience
 - spiritual and reflective events - an opportunity to step back and consider bigger issues and to see things from a different perspective

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- learning events - finding out about others and how they live, or the teachings of religious or moral leaders for example
- celebratory events - a time to celebrate seasons, festivals, achievements
- artistic events - drama, dance, music, poetry and more all have their place in assemblies
- fun events - games, interactive stories etc.

5 Right of withdrawal

- 5.1** 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 Education Act and was restated in the Education Reform Act.
- 5.2** The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

6 Monitoring and review

- 6.1** The Headteacher is the co-ordinator for Religious Education and Collective Worship at the school. The curriculum committee monitor the policy and practice of Religious Education and Collective Worship and report to the governors on Religious Education and Collective Worship. This policy will be reviewed every two years and updated as appropriate.

Signed: N Doyle

Date: 2017

Reviewed by Governors every two years – 2019