

Witherley C.E. Primary School



Collective Worship Policy

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Ethos Statement

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Churches at parish and diocesan level.

The School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith, and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.

Introduction

Collective Worship, within a Christian context, plays an important part in the life of our school. It is a quality time within the school day when children meet together in a calm and peaceful atmosphere and where all present are given the opportunity to reflect and participate. It should be invitational, inclusive and inspirational.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of Collective Worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for 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 celebrate individual and collective achievements
- to celebrate religious festivals and special occasions

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective Worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an act of worship, reflection or celebration.

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.

While most acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions and non-religious world views that are represented in the school and the wider community.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that worship 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, and sometimes candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship. This may be in the form of a whole-school worship, a class worship or hymn singing practise. The worships are normally conducted by the Headteacher or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by representatives of local religious groups. On occasions the children themselves will plan and lead an assembly.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and relate them to Christian values, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar as well as those of other major religions. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.

Our worships also 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. Worship provides 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.

On a Friday we celebrate children's achievements in and out of school by awarding certificates and awards. Parents and carers of children receiving certificates are invited to attend. We encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows school and the home working together in support of the children's achievements.

The school also worships in church throughout the year on occasions such as Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Ascension Day.

Right of withdrawal

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.

The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from Collective Worship. If parents wish to withdraw their child then we aim to discuss the issue with them to find a solution to their concerns that may not then result in children being withdrawn.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring the policy and practice of Collective Worship is the role of the subject coordinator and lead governor.