

# Hadley Wood School Collective Act of Worship Policy February 2018

## Definition of Collective Worship and Legal Requirements

Collective Worship should be regarded as a special experience, separate from the children's everyday experiences. It can therefore be interpreted very openly and widely as an act which brings a school group to a point where they are able to make a shared, reflective response to a divine being, power, ideal or value of some worth, wholly or mainly within the broad traditions of Christian belief on the majority of occasions. Collective Worship is not only educational but also spiritual: it widens children's knowledge of the world and gives time for contemplating with reverence and awe the meaning and mystery of human life.



## Our Vision

...that every child will leave our school confident in their own abilities and excited about the future, with the strategies and skills to tackle tasks and situations in a capable manner and caring about their planet and their fellow humans.

Worship is understood as an act of collective (rather than corporate) worship in a school. As a multi-faith and multi-ethnic school, Hadley Wood School defines Collective Worship as the joining together of the school population, regardless of their individual beliefs or non-beliefs, to celebrate worthy events and achievements. Collective Worship is seen as an essential part of the school's broadly based and balanced curriculum, in line with the agreed vision.

It is a legal requirement under the 1988 Education Reform Act that all schools perform a daily act of Collective Worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature without being denominational. All children should be involved in the daily act of worship unless withdrawn by the parent or guardian. Teachers also have the right of withdrawal from collective worship.

## Aims

Through our Collective Worship we aim to:

- celebrate worthy events and achievements for pupils, the school and the community as a whole
- promote British values
- introduce children to a variety of faiths, showing some children what it is to worship while reaffirming the beliefs of others
- promote the spiritual and moral development of pupils as required by the ERA 1988

## Content and Delivery

Hadley Wood School is an accredited Values-based Education School and has an agreed set of school values selected by pupils, parents, staff and governors. During our Collective Act of Worship, as in all subject areas, we aim to include the values in all of our discussions. This allows children to focus on the value of the month and learn in a respectful manner which is fundamental to the study of religions and religious practices as well as our school vision. Through our Collective Worship we hope to create an atmosphere that promotes thought and reflection and which nurtures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Collective Worship at Hadley Wood School aims to be interesting, informative and educational. It should be a time when ideas and beliefs can be explored, discussed and developed and, wherever possible,

children are involved in presenting, performing in, or responding to, Collective Worship. Full use is made of resources such as books, films, video, slides, music and pictures in order to engage our pupils. A variety of media are used to stimulate children, for example drama, song, poetry, prayer, readings, story and dance. All of these can enable pupils to come to a deeper understanding of the spiritual dimension to their lives and are seen as steps in the promotion of pupils' spiritual development. We aim to make the environment in which our assemblies take place comfortable and stimulating, with an atmosphere of mutual respect and tolerance.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children regardless of race, religion or gender are entitled to attend and participate in the acts of Collective Worship. Our assemblies aim to take into consideration the ages and abilities as well as the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children in our school. We aim to ensure that an equal balance is achieved regarding the race, religion and gender during our assemblies.

The ERA does allow parents to withdraw their child from Collective Acts of Worship if they so wish, however, it is intended that the assemblies delivered at Hadley Wood School are inclusive and respectful of the integrity of all pupils and staff. Where parents express concern about their child participating in Collective Acts of Worship, we request that they meet with the Headteacher in order to establish a shared understanding of the statutory requirements.

### **Organisation**

Collective Worship is planned into assemblies termly, and religious festivals are highlighted and celebrated. Assemblies are always related to the value of the month, celebratory events or religious festivals.

The general outline for the week's assemblies is as follows:

**Monday** – Whole School Values Assembly (Headteacher)

**Tuesday** – Values Based Music Assembly (Staff lead)

**Wednesday** – Key Stage Values Assembly / Class Presentation Assemblies – Class Teachers on a rota

**Thursday** – Whole School Values Assembly / Religious Festivals / Guest Speaker (Deputy Headteacher)

**Friday** – Achievement Assembly – Revisiting the Value of the Month and celebrating the success of individuals

Children always participate in these assemblies and parents are invited to class assemblies termly. Members of religious groups in the community are invited to share and celebrate religious festivals. In the achievement assembly, we celebrate the success of pupils. Certificates are awarded and the children come to the front of the hall to collect these and receive praise by the rest of the school. Star of the Week, values and achievement certificate winners are also praised by all during this assembly. The Whole School Acts of Worship end with a moment of reflection and often a values song.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Deputy Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that daily acts of collective worship take place and organises the assembly rota, inviting guest speakers and highlighting religious festivals to be celebrated.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring is a regular and ongoing process, with those responsible being the headteacher, Deputy headteacher, RE Coordinator and members of the Senior Management Team, as well as the school governors. Any of the above individuals may lead and attend assemblies and evaluate and discuss any issues that arise.

Review Date: February 2020