

HAZEL WOOD INFANT SCHOOL

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

At Hazel Wood School we follow the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act. Collective Worship is important to us as a time to affirm and celebrate our school community and the values which we hold.

We interpret worship as:

... a form of human activity, when we purposely put ourselves in the position of paying particular attention to those things in life, which have the greatest meaning for us.

(The amazing fact of Quaker Worship, G H Goman)

It provides us with a space in time for reflection and stillness and for experiencing a different dimension to thought.

Our values are broadly Christian, but our worship is open to all staff and children and no assumptions are made about their personal commitment.

VALUES

Our school values are based around the Rights, Respects and Responsibilities (RRR) agenda.

AIMS

- ◆ To explore and strengthen the values and ethos of our school community.
- ◆ To foster a sense of awe, wonder and mystery.
- ◆ To encourage a depth of thought and response and to provide time for quiet reflection and prayer.
- ◆ To discuss and value relationships and express feelings and emotions.
- ◆ To foster a sense of belonging and community.
- ◆ To celebrate the achievements and strengths of members of our school community.
- ◆ To provide a time when the transcendent can be appreciated or experienced.
- ◆ To develop knowledge of the Christian faith, past and present, its values, beliefs,

- traditions and patterns of worship.
- ◆ To develop awareness of others' beliefs, cultures, patterns of worship, ceremonies and festivals and that people achieve self-knowledge and a sense of belonging by adherence to a particular faith.
 - ◆ To celebrate each child's unique contribution to our school community.

GUIDANCE

The majority of acts of collective worship will be based on the principles and values of Christianity. There may be times when awareness of other religious traditions is raised, but the place for fuller exploration of these issues is in religious education.

Acts of collective worship should provide opportunities to **reflect, respond and revere**. A wide variety of approaches will extend children's experience and help to ensure the interest of all individuals within our school community.

Acts of collective worship will have a balance of whole school, year group and class worship.

REFLECTION

In order to reflect, staff and children need a stimulus and time to think. It is important that a rich variety of material is used e.g.

Evocative story material, discussion, music, artefacts, mime or role play, brainstorming, guided fantasy where children are invited to explore a story or idea through the use of their imagination, puppets....

In order to focus attention a presenter might:

- ◆ light a candle
- ◆ show a picture or a slide
- ◆ play some music
- ◆ ask for stillness
- ◆ read an evocative poem or piece of prose
- ◆ ask children and staff to make a mental picture.

RESPONSE

Worship demands a level of involvement. Clearly we cannot require children or staff to worship, but opportunities can be offered to respond in some way. Responses might be expressed through silent thoughts or more overtly by:

- ◆ listening to the presenter or a child reading a prayer, a short passage or a poem
- ◆ a child saying a prayer
- ◆ singing or chanting together
- ◆ repeating or reciting a response
- ◆ movement or dance
- ◆ meditation
- ◆ silence or stillness

REVERENCE

A sense of reverence, awe and wonder is perhaps the culmination of all the other elements suggested. It is the recognition, affirmation and celebration of the worthiness of the realities and values, which we hold to be of central importance.

In order to focus and extend children's thinking and to avoid repetition, our acts of collective worship are carefully planned and follow themes based on our school values. We also recognise the need for flexibility and responding to the unexpected.

MONITORING

Both the Headteacher and the RE Co-ordinator will ensure resources are maintained and monitor the content and quality of acts of collective worship.

EARLY YEARS

Initially children in Reception will take part in year group assemblies. They will be introduced to whole school assemblies as soon as teachers feel they are ready, usually within the first few weeks of starting school. It is important to us that our early years children are part of our school community, but we also recognise that large gatherings can be uncomfortable experiences for very young children and may sometimes work against their "thinking in another dimension".

THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Parents have the right, under the 1988 Act, to withdraw their children from all or parts of worship. A teacher, classroom assistant or member of the office staff will supervise children who are withdrawn by their parents.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

All children, irrespective of religious background, race, gender, social status or ability will

be given equal opportunities to access this area of the curriculum.

Approved by the Full Governing Body: 23 November 2011

Review date: November 2013