



# Rose Hill Westonbirt

## SCHOOL

### **3. Pastoral**

#### **3.2 COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

Rose Hill Westonbirt School takes note of the requirements of the 1988 Education Reform Act and the distinctiveness of its own setting to devise an effective and evolving pattern unique to itself. Collective worship is a special and worthwhile activity which enhances not only children's learning but also the corporate life of the school.

Contributions arising from curriculum or classroom work within and across timetables, give rise to authentic opportunities for celebration and praise. Collective worship is not only educational, but also spiritual.

We need to help our children to understand that they live in a world where responsibility as well as rights, are essential for all. Collective worship has an important part to play in this process and that is one of the ways in which schools can help to influence the nation's future for the better. Espousing values such as honesty, integrity, compassion, hope, stewardship, sympathy, thankfulness and sacrifice, provides a firm foundation for life.

There is a need for active participation by all concerned and not merely passive presence. We should seek to foster awareness, appreciation, respect, commitment, understanding.

Collective worship is an area of school life which is often controversial and fraught with potential difficulties. We should therefore try to distinguish between learning "about" and learning "from".

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from these assemblies if they have religious objections to their Christian basis but we strongly recommend that all children participate.

#### **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.

The development of spiritual awareness is a much wider issue than religious education – it is a broader concept relating to personal feelings and emotions such as awe, wonder, self-denial, compassion, respect for others, integrity and



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commitment. From a very early age children are confronted with a confusion of messages from a rapidly expanding media. It is therefore not surprising that some children find it difficult to develop personal awareness, social and interpersonal skills and self worth, when they first enter the education system between the ages of four and five.

## **2 Collective worship**

**2.1** We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose 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. Worship means the celebration of all that has worth for a community. This includes morality, social concern, personal development and growth and achievement, as well as religious beliefs and values.

**2.2** 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 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. 'Worship' is generally understood to imply the recognition of a supreme being and it is expected that the words used will, in some form, recognise the existence of a deity.

**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. The school will prepare children for life in a multicultural society.

## **3 Organisation of collective worship**

**3.1** We hold twice-weekly acts of collective worship in our school. This forms part of the morning assembly.

**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 sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

**3.3** The Head Teacher or other members of staff normally conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups conduct them instead.

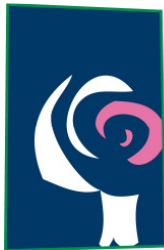
**3.4** We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.



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- 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. Rose Hill Westonbirt School is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all the children in assemblies.
- 3.6** We invite parents to assembly on a termly basis and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.
- 4 Right of withdrawal**
- 4.1** 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 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.
- 4.2** The Head Teacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.
- 5 Monitoring and review**
- 5.1** It is the role of the Head teacher with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.
- 6 Incorporating the spiritual dimension into the National Curriculum**
- 6.1** Spiritual understanding and development is fostered in virtually all areas of the curriculum.
- 6.2** English literature: The careful selection of texts for English literature can provide enormous opportunities for children to explore and understand moral, spiritual, cultural and social issues. For older children the classic examples are *Lord of the Flies* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Through planning across all key stages, children are encouraged to reflect and question a wide range of issues.
- 6.3** Drama: Affords children the opportunity of working cooperatively and developing skills of compromise, negotiation and assertiveness.
- 6.4** Circle time: The skills developed through circle time with younger children include self-control, self-awareness, confidence, observation, listening and extended communication. It also provides opportunities for reflection and mediation.



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- 6.5** Music: Children will be introduced to the importance of music in a spiritual context. They are given opportunities to appreciate music from other countries, cultures and traditions. Through clear direction children gain the capacity to express ideas, thoughts and feelings through the subject.
- 6.6** Art: Children are encouraged to explore all aspects of society and their place within it. Contextual studies allow children to understand cultural differences and the diversity of belief. Individuality and personal response are valued and the children are encouraged to discuss and present, through their work, opinions, values, beliefs and experiences.
- 6.7** Science: There are many opportunities to generate awe and wonder through the teaching of science, e.g. the Big Bang, the theory of evolution.
- 6.8** Humanities: In geography, environmental awareness and concern for current issues is an important and growing element of the subject. History provides a wealth of opportunities for addressing the personal, cultural, moral and spiritual development of children, e.g. the crusades, Tudor society, the slave trade, the Holocaust.
- 6.9** Teaching the principles of right and wrong will be a key aim and will be reflected in the ethos of the school.

Signed.....

Date.....

To be reviewed by .....