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**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

Responsibility for Policy: Anita Bell/Elizabeth Johnson

Date policy written/rewritten: May 2016

Date policy ratified by governors: May 2016

Dates policy reviewed: May 2017

May 2018

May 2019

October 2023

Autumn 2024

# **Statutory Duty of School**

The Federation will provide daily collective worship for registered pupils (apart from those who have been **withdrawn by their parents**) either within a daily assembly in class or whole school.

The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Daily collective worship will be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The precise nature will depend on the family background, ages and abilities of the pupils. However, if it is inappropriate for some or all of the pupils to take part in Christian collective worship, the head teacher will apply to the local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) for a determination to have this requirement lifted.

Collective worship will take place at any time in the school day and the whole school does not need to get together at the same time. Collective worship maybe organised into form groups or year groups or whatever is appropriate for the school. It cannot be organised in faith groups unless a determination has been sought and granted by the local SACRE. Worship must be appropriate to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. Worship must not be denominational.

**AIMS/PURPOSE**

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for pupils to:

* worship God
* reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian nature and on their own beliefs
* develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
* consider spiritual and moral issues
* be respectful and respond to the worship offered
* have a sense of togetherness which engenders a sense of belonging

**IMPLEMENTATION**

Within **Dryden School** there will be three weekly whole school assemblies (one of which is a celebration assembly). Everyday students take time to reflect and say the school prayer. This happens after lunch. The school prayer includes Dryden School Values. At this time, students are asked if there is anything they wish to discuss or if anything is on their minds.

Collective worship, whether in assembly or class time, will:

* be a dedicated opportunity for children to reflect/respond
* have a clear message
* be acceptable to the whole community, staff and pupils
* include a variety of elements at different times
* involve the pupils.
* have a dedicated focus which signifies what is being reflected upon.

**“It is useful to start from the children’s own experience, and develop to the broader and more lasting concerns of life.” (‘R.E. and Collective Worship’ – N.A.H.T.)**

At **Hill Top School** there is a weekly ‘Praise Assembly’ every Friday the goal is to celebrate pupil’s successes and achievements.

In addition, on a Friday morning Merit Points are given out to individual pupils who have exceeded in any given area. The individual Merit points are accredited into House Groups over the term when there is an assembly that shows which House Group has the most points.

Assemblies are delivered by Key stage classes on a rota basis and linked to the theme of the week. Students are encouraged to take part in the class assemblies. (Monday KS4/5 and Tuesday KS3).

In addition to weekly themes special days and festivals of all faiths are acknowledged when appropriate. We have had speakers of the Muslim community, Church of England, Gay Pride, and the Jewish Community to deliver informative and entertaining facts on their community and celebrations.

Speakers are also invited into school during this time to share information with us about the job they perform or the life they lead e.g. Salvation Army, Save the Children. This both supports the belief that we are all part of a community and strengthens links between school and the local people.

Mrs Joanne Whitehead is a member of the LA SACRE group and keeps up to date with meetings, training and teaching expectations for RE.

Hill Top School is also aware of the timing of religious festivals and any specific requirements relating to them. Students who observe religious festivals are supported by staff.

Collective Worship at Hill Top lays importance on community cohesion rather than a specific religious element. This includes student views in the student council, PSHEC lessons and their opinions for ECHP’s.

As part of our collective worship pupils will have the opportunity to be quiet and reflect on what has been shared. Pupils and/or adults will lead a prayer session as necessary. Pupils will be invited to put their hands together/hands on their laps and be quiet, calm and respectful.

The Right to Withdraw

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from **Religious Education** (RE) and **collective worship**. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE or collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn.

The Federation remains responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from RE or collective worship, unless the child is lawfully receiving RE, or taking part in collective worship elsewhere.

Parents do not need to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal. The DfE recommends to avoid misunderstanding; the head of school may wish to clarify with any parent wanting to withdraw:

* the religious issues about which the parent would object their child being taught
* the practical implications of withdrawal
* the circumstances in which it would be reasonable to accommodate parents wishes
* if a parent will require any advanced notice of such issue in the future and if so, how much

The right of withdrawal was established in the Education Act 1944, re-enacted in the Education Reform Act 1988 s9(3).

**Teachers**

Teachers cannot be required to lead or attend collective worship except in a community special school where the law provides otherwise. This would normally only happen in a maintained school with a religious designation.

**POLICY REVIEW**

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Federation.