



## **1 Aims and purpose**

### **1.1 The aims and purpose 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.

## **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.

**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 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.

**2.3** While most acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

## **3 Organisation of collective worship**

**3.1** We hold a daily act of collective worship. This forms part class or whole school assemblies.

**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, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere to focus the attention of the children.

**3.3** The assemblies are normally conducted by the head teacher or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by local clergy, visiting speakers or other representatives of local religious groups.

- 3.4** We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.
- 3.5** Our assemblies 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. Assemblies provide 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.
- 3.6** On occasions there are particular assemblies that parents are invited to attend. We encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements.
- 3.7** Governors' attendance at our assemblies is always welcome.

#### **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 religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents 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.
- 4.2** The head teacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

#### **5 Monitoring and review**

- 5.1** Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of a named school governor, who is also responsible for religious education. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher before reporting to the governors.
- 5.2** This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

## Appendix 1.

### Collective Worship at Isaac Newton Primary School

Our assemblies at Isaac Newton Primary School reflect our religious and cultural learning, our values, our ethos and our school rules. We also focus on 'what it means to be British' through recognition and celebration of fundamental British values. We are also very lucky to have special visitors join us and deliver some of our assemblies. Assemblies are planned and focus on a different value each week (these are related to a specific, over-arching theme). Additionally, assemblies at Isaac Newton Primary School recognise the need to respond to and discuss world events as they occur.

Day	Assembly Type	Information
<b>Monday</b> 10.15- 10.35am	Whole school assembly led by Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher.	Led by Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. The key themes promote British Values and SMSC. Significant Christian festivals are also celebrated e.g Christmas and Easter.
<b>Tuesday</b> 10.15- 10.35am	Whole school singing assembly.	Led by Deputy Headteacher and/or staff member. Children practise and sing a range of songs and hymns.
<b>Wednesday</b> 10.15- 10.35am	Key stage assemblies celebrating significant events and a range of faiths and cultures.	Led by phase leaders (on a rotational basis). Related to specific religious festivals, important occasions and current events. Examples for assemblies have been provided on the planning overview.
<b>Thursday</b>	In class assembly.	Led by class teachers.
<b>Friday</b> 2.45- 3.10pm	Whole school Golden Book and celebration of effort, achievement and attendance.	Led by Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher. The 'Golden Book' assembly will celebrate children's achievements throughout the week, both inside and outside of school. The assembly will also celebrate house points and attendance.

### Promoting British Values at Isaac Newton Primary School

Our assemblies promote various British values including democracy (local, national and international), the rule of law, mutual respect, individual liberty and tolerance of different faiths and cultures. This includes national and internationally celebrated religious events and notable national and international days and events.

### Good Practice at Isaac Newton Primary School

#### The following are features of good practice:

- Clear objectives/intentions
- Suitable timings at appropriate point in the schools day
- A variety of groupings over the course of the week
- Wide staff and pupil involvement no matter what their personal beliefs
- Use of visitors

- Substantial forward planning in terms of themes, leaders, curriculum connections etc.
- Appropriate resources
- Generating the right atmosphere
- A time of quiet for personal reflection/worship
- Having guidance for visiting speakers
- A contribution to the whole school ethos
- A variety of methods

#### **Assemblies should:**

- Not be over-dominated by school administration
- Not be over-moralising

#### **Objectives and Methods**

Ideally school collective worship should encompass all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that every member of staff and every pupil may feel involved. It must both reflect and nurture the whole ethos of the school. In particular, assembly (the usual context for collective worship) develops the feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and spiritual growth.

Each school has to respond positively to its own particular needs but all schools should see assembly as an educational opportunity with clear objectives:

- To show interest in and concern for members of the school community;
- To celebrate special occasions together;
- To show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and wider world;
- To share appreciation of worthwhile activities undertaken by groups within the school;
- To explore and review the variety of values, attitudes and standards manifested in society;
- To reflect upon dimensions of human life, the wonderful, beautiful, joyful, heroic, humorous, tragic, ugly, sorrowful, solemn...

#### **...a range of methods including:**

- Pupils' contributions
- Stories/readings/video and/or film
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/meditation/reflection
- Songs/hymns/music
- Sacred/secular readings
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence

#### **Success Criteria**

If we will wish to evaluate our Collective Worship against a stated criteria some of the suggested criteria are:

- Involvement, enjoyment, attention and reaction of pupils
- Respect and tolerance
- Positive response to shared experience
- A sense of challenge
- An atmosphere which matches the theme
- A contribution to individual and community sense of well-being
- A sense of occasion

- Good order
- A place in the overall plan of the school
- Enrichment of pupils' experience

### **Making Collective Worship Special at Isaac Newton Primary School**

Collective worship should exhibit certain characteristic elements. Generally, pupils should be able to appreciate that this is a special time in the day. Some helpful strategies to ensure this include:

- Use of a symbol to introduce and conclude the act of collective worship, e.g. lighting a candle, showing a special object, revealing or setting up a focal point etc.
- A period of silence prior to and/or following the act of collective worship – a moment of quiet reflection
- A short piece of music to separate the act of collective worship from other school business
- A hymn/song
- A prayer