

Collective Worship Policy

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Collective Worship Policy

Guidance on what this policy should contain from the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE):

- A philosophical statement
- The legal requirements, including the right of withdrawal by parents and teachers
- Time: at what time, each day will collective worship take place and for how long? *
- Content of each day and approach i.e. praise through song, visitor, teacher led, praise, class presentation etc.
- Planning: who plans the worship, is there a specific co-ordinator, what are the themes used and what resources and books will be used?
- How staff, pupils and visitors contribute to collective worship
- Music: planning and what type? Live music, selection of CDs classical, modern, jazz, religious etc.
- How a record of the themes and content will be kept?
- Information for parents on the right to withdraw their child from collective worship, what provision the school can make and what the parent might provide for the withdrawn child
- Information on the staff right of withdrawal
- Future plans and date of review
- Evaluation to consider the impact of CW
- Not essential, but helpful as an appendix, is a planning pro-forma for members of staff so that planning and delivery are consistent.

Introduction

This policy is intended to ensure consistency across the school in terms of collective worship. Collective worship at Heron Academy happens in accordance with Lambeth SACRE guidelines and is mainly of a broadly Christian character and also reflects the attitudes, views and beliefs of those present in a manner suitable to the ages and abilities of the pupils.

Aims

We aim for collective worship to give the school the opportunity to reflect upon and reaffirm shared values, to sustain and support the traditions of the home and of the faith communities of the pupils, and promote understanding and appreciation of spiritual and moral values.

Collective worship at Heron Academy aims specifically:

- To foster a sense of community by bringing pupils together and encouraging sensitivity to the needs of others
- To increase sensitivity to the beauty, power & mysteries of the world
- To create an atmosphere for silence & quiet reflection
- To provide a time for sharing achievements in personal and school life
- To experience and reflect on common ethos and shared values
- To share worship in as far as pupils are able
- To experience and respond to a range of diverse religious beliefs

Through the experience of worship, it is hoped that a sense of reverence, awe, wonder, mystery, a sense of pattern, sequence & order and a sense of uniqueness, self-worth, identity & thoughtfulness will develop.

The Law on Collective Worship

The delivery of collective worship is guided by the Education Reform Act of 1988 and guidance document Circular 1/94 which state that:

- collective worship must be provided daily (separate arrangements may be made for nurseries special schools)
- collective worship may take place at any time of the school day
- schools may decide on the age/grouping of pupils and these may vary from day to day
- the time decided for the delivery of collective worship may vary for different groups from day to day
- generally collective worship should take place on school premises
- The content of the majority of acts of collective worship in a term should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, reflecting the broad traditions of the Christian belief."
- The content should have regard for the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of pupils
- Parents may withdraw their pupils from collective worship and teachers/support staff may withdraw from collective worship but only on grounds of religious conscience and not for other activities.
- The responsibility for arranging collective worship at a voluntary or foundation school rests with the governing body after consultation with the head teacher. The responsibility for arranging collective worship at any other maintained state school rests with the head teacher after consultation with the governing body.
- Every maintained school is required under the Education (School Information) Regulations 1996 to include in its annual prospectus information about the collective worship provided by the school and how parents may withdraw their pupils from it and to show the RE curriculum on its website.

Strategies for Delivery

All pupils at school must be involved in the daily act of worship unless the parent requests a pupil is not included*

The content of collective worship may be:

- Christian stories or themes
- Moral values
- Celebrations of achievement of individuals or groups
- Celebrations of what has been learned in the classroom
- Celebrations of religious festivals
- Learning about different religions, cultural groups or communities
- Celebration of patterns of life such as leavers or Birthdays
- Provision of spiritual experiences & development of spiritual awareness

Collective worship contributes to the religious education of pupils but is not a substitute for it and there should be no confusion between the two. *Parents are asked to discuss this with the Headteacher

Collective worship is held at several suitable times in the day. Likewise, collective worship happens both in small groups and as a single act of worship for larger groups at a key stage or whole school level.

At Heron Academy, collective worship takes the form of:

- A weekly assembly
- Daily thanksgiving before lunch as a class group which includes a moment of shared focus and reflection with a song/massage story to signal lunch.
- A daily opportunity for fostering a sense of fellowship & achievement, as well as space for reflection and silence, within the class reflection time session at the end of the school day.
- Opportunities within the week for more extended silence, relaxation and reflection during yoga, at the end of the movement session.
- Annual whole school celebrations & events such as Harvest Festival, Eid celebrations and Nativity.

Assemblies:

The themes for assemblies, alongside how these are to be explored with the pupils in an appropriate way, are recorded in our overview of assembly topics and individual assembly plans. There is an overview of Assembly topics, and individual assembly session plans. The assembly themes are decided by the teaching team, Our EDI lead and SLT, and are regularly reviewed to ensure they continue to reflect the interests of the population of the school and the wider community. They are not set in stone and can be altered and responsive to current affairs and changes in the world around us.

In planning collective worship, we recognise that pupils come from different backgrounds of various denominations of Christianity and other world faiths and ensure that collective worship is not a vehicle for religious indoctrination.

A range of strategies to worship are employed including creative silence, prayer/meditation, dance & drama, songs, music, stories, artefacts and natural materials.

In the planning of acts of worship, the school considers themes from the school calendar of events, the calendars of the various religions, the international calendars & other world events.

Class based daily reflection:

This is a protected time of whole class reflection and an opportunity to share successes, reflect on the day, and engage in quiet contemplation. We use natural objects and a set routine to help the pupils engage and also signal the end of the school day.

Assessment, Recording & Reporting

- Teachers observations of pupil's progress and achievements, as well as their experiences during collective worship, will be recorded using the school's assessment tool on Tapestry.

- Individual achievements celebrated in assemblies are noted on the “star of the week” display in the corridor and are available to be seen by pupils, staff and visitors.

Health & Safety

We aim to deliver collective worship in accordance with Health and Safety regulations. Staff refer to both our own Health and Safety policy. Artefacts that are not made for unsupervised use by pupils should be kept in a safe place and only be used under adult supervision. No candles in school.

Monitoring

- Each class teacher is responsible for including opportunities for class-based collective worship on their timetable.
- Small group sessions that provide opportunities for reflection and meditation (yoga, movement, etc) will have session plans outlining the intentions, routine and delivery of the session, alongside any specific learning goals for individual pupils and also listing all necessary resources. These will be written by the class teacher.
- End of day reflection time will follow a central plan which individual class teachers can then adapt and alter to suit the needs of their specific groups of pupils (there is proforma for this)
- The head-teacher is responsible for ensuring that collective worship occurs in school.
- The senior leadership team will look at school-wide planning each term and should offer advice, experience and ideas to colleagues. This should be done through feedback about plans as well as sharing knowledge and ideas.
- Planning of the content of assemblies will be the responsibility of the teacher in charge.
- Recording the achievements of individual pupils is the responsibility of the class teacher and other staff working with that pupil.

Equal Opportunities

We ensure that all pupils have equal access to collective worship on a daily basis. We use a wide range of resources that reflect and celebrate the diversity of the pupils in our school and the wider community and a variety of teaching approaches to ensure all the pupils can access the resources. We provide opportunities for dealing with religious diversity in Britain and our local community. We actively avoid stereotypes by using examples of positive role models wherever possible. We endeavour to ensure that the celebration of achievements of all pupils happens on an equal basis and have introduced an equal opportunity monitoring system to ensure that this happens. Staff should also refer to the school Equal Opportunities Policy.

Right to withdraw

Parents/carers may withdraw their pupils from collective worship and teachers and support staff may withdraw from collective worship but only on grounds of religious conscience and not for other activities. This must be discussed with the headteacher.

Parents and carers

Parents are encouraged to contribute to collective worship by sending in artefacts, music, etc, which reflect their pupils' life-experience. They are also encouraged to share their own experiences through visits, photographs etc.

- Parents are invited to attend special assemblies & to contribute wherever possible.
- The religious & cultural beliefs & values of parents are respected at all times.