

Collective Worship Policy

Meir Heath Academy



Approved by: Mrs M Southern / Mr J Spencer

Date: September 2023

Last reviewed on: September 2023

Next review due by: September 2024

Our Aims:

We want our assemblies to:

- Provide a brief period of relaxation from the busy life of school, when children will have time to pause for thought in an atmosphere of peace and quiet. This involves a quiet and well-ordered arrival and departure;
- Provide the children with an opportunity to contemplate the spiritual dimension of their life through music, images and words. This may involve considering the writings of the world's great religions, their prophets and followers to provide a source of meaningful stories and philosophies for life or may simply involve reflecting upon the people and places in the World around us to gain a sense of the awe and wonder of creation;
- Provide an opportunity for private quiet contemplation and prayers;
- Have a sense of occasion that separates them from the rest of the school day

Statutory requirements:

Collective Worship MUST:-

- Be provided for all pupils each school day, this may be at any time and in any educationally viable grouping on the school premises.
- Be the responsibility of the Principal in consultation with the governing body.
- Be mainly of a broadly Christian character, reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief, on most occasions over any term. It must not be distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.
- Take into account the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of pupils.
- Allow withdrawal for those who choose.

Collective Worship SHOULD:-

- Be appropriate to an educational setting.
- Be given appropriate status.
- Provide a sense of occasion separate from other school activities, including assemblies.
- Be different in character from worship amongst a voluntary group with beliefs in common.
- Foster a thought-provoking atmosphere allowing for spiritual reflection and response.
- Be respectful of pupil and staff integrity.
- Be inclusive rather than divisive, protecting the rights of individuals and minorities.
- Be challenging and enjoyable.
- Be relevant to the needs of pupils, including different learning styles e.g. visual, auditory and

- kinaesthetic etc.
- Encourage pupil participation.
- Enable pupils to practise certain skills such as being still, listening, participating, saying or singing
- words together.
- Foster a sense of community and shared values.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to respond to specific amounts of religious experience (personal,biographical, scriptural) and to engage in, or observe, religious activities (prayer, singing, silence).
- Contain elements drawn from faiths other than Christianity or from broad human experience which is not explicitly religious.

Organisation:

At Meir Heath Academy the children benefit from whole school, key stage, and classroom acts of Worship led by the Principal, SLT and class teachers

Content of worship:

A half - termly rota of themes is devised by the Principal which support the Christian faith but can also be interpreted in other ways. The themes are often supported by songs, music and prayer; sometimes children are invited to say their own prayers. All staff receive a list of themes.

Themes for class worship may be connected to the rota or may be influenced by issues related to the particular class, year group, topic or national/international events

Creating Atmosphere:

Staff have their own expertise for creating the right atmosphere for Collective Worship but the following guide must be followed:-

1. Suitable music can be chosen with help from the Principal/Music Co-ordinator.
2. A set arrangement for seating is in operation.
3. Pupils should enter and leave the Hall quietly through the appropriate doors.
4. All staff are expected to participate in Collective Worship (unless they have agreed with the Principal not to participate) as this contributes to the 'specialness' of the time together.
5. In class a Circle Time setting may be considered to create greater intimacy during some class worship times.

Visitors:

We recognise that members of the local community are important resources for all education including collective worship. Some visits are pre-arranged but others may be identified and organised on request to the Principal.

Withdrawal:

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from acts of worship and arrangements can be made for children withdrawn to be supervised. The Principal will always discuss these arrangements with parents in order to come to an agreed procedure. Staff may ask

to be excused from acts of worship on grounds of faith but should discuss this with the Principal.

Our School Prayer (written by the children)

Thank you Lord for food and water
Each mother, father, son and daughter.
Thank you Lord for friendship and learning,
Towards our goals we're always turning.
Thank you Lord for holding us together,
Keeping us safe for ever and ever.
Thank you Lord for this great nation,
Justice, hope and education.
Thank you Lord for different cultures,
Enriching all our wonderful futures.