

Hazlemere Church of England Combined School



Collective Worship Policy 2024-27

“Encourage one another and build one another up”

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Headteacher

Signed on behalf of Governing body

Last reviewed Next

reviewed

Aims

Collective worship is central to the life of Hazlemere CoE School, and creates a daily focus on aspects of life in the context of our Christian vision and ethos. Worship is distinctively Christian and offers children and adults the opportunity to grow spiritually individually and together so that the school's vision to see 'Encourage one another and build one another up' can be realised. It seeks to be invitational, inclusive and to inspire hearts and minds of all who are present.

Our school worship reflects the Anglican foundation of the school. However, we recognise that many in our community come from different faiths or world views. Diversity in religion, race and culture is a celebrated aspect of our school community, and the integrity of our pupils and staff, and that of the faith communities which they represent, is always respected. Our aim is that all in our community are both invited to join worship and feel included in this important part of our school day.

Each child experiences a daily act of collective worship. There is a distinction made between assembly, where routine notices and a celebration of achievement take place and collective worship where God is acknowledged and His nature and purposes are reflected upon.

Our collective worship provides pupils and staff the opportunity to:

- celebrate Christian seasons and festivals and pupils' and adults' achievements
- experience prayer, stillness, worship and reflection
- understand the school's vision and its theological inspiration
- understand the school's Christian values and how they influence behaviour and relationships
- grow in understanding of and participation in prayer
- create a reflective approach to life including the exploration of deep questions
- develop as a community centred on our clear and distinctive Christian vision
- experience a variety of styles of worship
- participate and respond, through active involvement in the planning, leading and evaluation of worship
- feel safe and affirmed
- worship God on their own terms.

Worship will reflect aspects of the curriculum and in particular will:

- nurture spiritual growth
- enable participants to consider moral questions in a Christian context
- enhance social understanding and encourage responses to issues through courageous advocacy
- give participants a chance to reflect on the place and importance of faith in the lives of people today
- encourage participants to explore beliefs drawn from their own cultural heritage
- reflect the teachings of Jesus and a Trinitarian theology

Planning and organisation

Collective worship is co-ordinated and led by the Headteacher. Each half term the theme of collective worship is based on the value of the half term and used in whole school or classroom worship. Themes express and explore the school's Christian vision through a variety of lenses, including the way it impacts on our relationships and actions now and throughout our lives. The Headteacher advises members of teaching staff on the structure and content of worship in order to ensure consistency and continuity.

During a school week, collective worship may be organised in whole school or class groups. We recognise that the experiences and needs of each age group differ. In order to stimulate children's imagination and understanding of religious concepts, the content of collective worship should be appropriate to their intellectual ability and maturity. However, we also feel it valuable to share whole school worship that contribute to a sense of unity and wholeness. Teaching staff lead classroom worship.

Weekly, we attend Holy Trinity Church for collective worship; parents, friends and governors are invited to join the school community on these occasions. They include Christmas, Easter and the end of the academic year. Clergy are also invited to attend and to contribute to the worship when it is held in Holy Trinity Church.

Children are frequently involved in leading or contributing to assemblies. Every Wednesday members of the team at Holy Trinity Church lead the worship. From time to time other visitors may lead.

One of the school's foundation governors takes responsibility for knowledge and understanding of the school's collective worship programme. Copies of the termly plan are sent to the collective worship governor who is invited to join the children and staff in daily collective worship as often as they are able, and also to join in the special festival celebrations at Harvest, Christmas, Easter and the end of the year.

Format of collective worship

The format of collective worship changes according to the pupils involved, the leader, the theme and the occasion. However, there are some elements that remain constant and ensure that all pupils and staff present are offered the opportunity to praise God and to reflect in the stillness and quiet.

- Children and adults should enter the place of worship quietly and wait in silence for the assembly and act of worship to begin
- All collective worship should include an opportunity for quiet reflection and a time of prayer. Pupils and staff are invited to participate in prayer. Any who prefer not to pray are expected to respect the time of quiet and use it to reflect on the messages shared during worship
- Stories, drama, music and any other resources used should all contribute to the Christian message which is being shared and celebrated

During the year children will take part in collective worship at different times and in different places. This might include a Prayer Space event, prayer in the Prayer Garden or woodland space, or in another part of the school site; or in the hall as part of a special year group event. These special opportunities for prayer, contemplation and worship are planned jointly with the RE Leader.

Parents are invited to join special celebration assemblies and services at different times of year including Harvest, Christmas, Easter and at the end of the year. These special acts of Collective worship take place either at school or at Holy Trinity Hazlemere

Review and evaluation

Our worship is reviewed each year through discussions with participants, observation, and the reflections of pupils and governors. Their views are fed into the planning of future worship.

Equalities and the law

All pupils whatever their gender, ability, ethnicity or social circumstances have access to collective worship and are encouraged to take part. Those leading collective worship are aware of and understand the effects of stereotyping and will work actively to combat its negative effects.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or any acts of collective worship. In the first instance, parents who may wish to exercise this right should make an appointment to speak with the Headteacher

Resources

A wide variety of resources are used to support the planning and leading of collective worship; the Collective worship Leader is able to advise members of staff who have any queries.

The school benefits from a close relationship with Holy Trinity Church, including the Family and Children's Team from whom resources may also be borrowed.

Reviewed: September 2024

Next review: September 2027