



Castle Hill School

POLICY ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Policy Created	2006
Committee	Joint
Last review	2019
Frequency	2 years
Date to be reviewed	2021

Collective Act of Worship

- At Castle Hill School we recognise the distinction between Religious Education and Collective Acts of Worship. Separate R.E. lessons are based on Castle Hill R.E. Scheme of Work and the Local Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education in Kirklees and Calderdale 2014-2019. We define Collective Act of Worship as the opportunity to recognise, affirm and celebrate the values and ethos of the school family. It helps the school community to express its common aims and purpose and to share in a range of spiritual and sensory experiences, which enable pupils and adults to make some sense of the world in which they live. This definition is based on 'Advice and guidance on collective worship, May 2016 provided by Kirklees Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education.
- All pupils are invited to attend a daily act of collective worship, except for sixth formers who are allowed to decide for themselves whether to attend, which is broadly multi-faith in focus. Faiths included are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Judaism, with most emphasis on Christianity and Islam because of the nature of our school population. We aim to celebrate diversity and promote mutual respect. Pupils of all religions and of no particular faith gain a great deal from a quiet, spiritual time in their day. However, it is understood that pupil needs must be a prime consideration when complying with this legislation and as such the act of worship and its frequency is adapted where appropriate.
- The underlying aim of all acts of worship is to enhance pupils' spiritual and moral development. The planned programme for Collective Acts of Worship demonstrates clear educational objectives and links with the daily learning experiences of pupils and with the daily life of the school, the community and the world at large. This further supports and informs the schools commitment to Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) learning and understanding.

Collective Worship at Castle Hill is organised as follows:

- A weekly secondary assembly in the Hall on Wednesday afternoons.
- Primary whole class or paired classes assemblies happen throughout the week with a focus on sensory experiences based on key religious festivals celebrating foods, music and art as well as shared moments of quiet time and reflection.
- Sixth Form embed informal collective experiences throughout the week with a focus on key religious festivals celebrating foods, music and art as well as shared moments of quiet time and reflection.
- Quiet times at the end of the day, daily whenever possible.
- Whole school assemblies, normally one or two per term to celebrate major festivals e.g. Harvest, Divali, the Hajj pilgrimage, Eid-ul-Fitr, Christmas and Easter. Primary, secondary and sixth form students normally attend these assemblies.
- Suggested themes for all Collective Worship are issued each term by the R.E. curriculum leader.
- Ideas and resources are found on the R.E. shelves in the secondary storeroom.
- The R.E. curriculum leader is available for ideas and support.

At Castle Hill School we often incorporate the following aspects:

- A darkened room with a safe candle or optic fibre light.
- Gentle lyrical music, possibly of a religious nature. The R.E. boxes have a small supply and the R.E. co-ordinator has a personal collection which can be used. It may be useful to start the act of worship with the same piece of music each day to key the pupils in. Also a bell, gong or chime bells can be used to key pupils in to the start of the session.
- A time in the busy day for all staff and pupils to sit down together and share a sense of community. It is well worth staff doing jobs before or after the session so that all pupils can focus on this quiet time without distraction. It is a good time for staff and pupils to thank each other for a kindness or a particular achievement. Learning to value each other's

achievements develops pupil's maturity and promotes the school's commitment to Wellbeing.

- A recap of a recent repair of a relationship, if appropriate and useful to the individuals and group and promotes the school's commitment to Wellbeing.
 - A variety of artefacts to be used sensitively and in accordance with current guidance– see R.E. boxes.
 - Religious or moral stories, relating to the weekly theme, a class theme or a festival – see the R.E. shelves. These can be simplified, acted out and brought to life using sensory items – see story boxes kept on the R.E. shelves.
 - Silence, reflection, meditation.
 - Pleasant, relaxing scents. Refer to Castle Hill sensory Baseline.
 - Pupil participation – special food or drink to share; the simple act of passing around food and serving oneself last shows kindness. Songs and chants. Items to promote awe and wonder e.g. a beautiful shell, fur or silk, a parachute, a scented flower, the sun on a crystal. Signs and symbols standing for peace and other aspects of religions – Christians shake hands or hug to wish each other peace; Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists put their palms together and bow as a sign of respect and good wishes; Jews say “Shalom” as a greeting which means “Peace”. Holding hands in a circle or passing a handshake around the circle are powerful things, especially after a difficult day.
 - A quiet thought or prayer; this could be based on the weekly theme, some occurrence in the day or the news. See R.E. shelves for Christian prayer books, but often the prayers we make up ourselves are the best; the simpler the better.
 - Symbols used as part of the school's behaviour policy e.g. “Listen”, “Look”, “Quiet”, “Hands on Knees”, “Take Turns”, can provide useful reminders.
 - A clear end to the Act of Worship, e.g. using music, a particular sound, a song, signs or symbols. Refer to Castle Hill sensory and communication Baseline.
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- Teachers tailor the Act of Worship to daily events in class and the pupils' interests. The weekly themes which can be found on the server under ‘Collective Act of Worship’ are there to provide a structured framework for class acts of worship and

assemblies and, apart from the festivals and where weekly themes include their current R.E. unit, teachers can choose to give them more or less focus.

- Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their child or children from all or part of collective worship; this can be arranged in consultation and in writing with the head teacher.

However, we feel that Collective Worship gives our pupils and students the opportunity to be quiet, reflect, share and celebrate and forms an important part of school life.