

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Aims

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for the children to worship God through words and music, where appropriate;
- 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.

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

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 traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school. Religious tolerance is essential to the ethos at HCS.

Organisation

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. At HCS, we ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and give them opportunities to participate in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

We take the themes of our assemblies from a variety of sources, including the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect on the teachings of other faiths and also build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.

In the Senior School the assembly is taken in turn by different teachers, providing a variety of religious and good citizenship based themes. A senior member of staff is present at each assembly.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

We invite parents to our class assemblies in the Junior School. Parents are encouraged to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

All parents are invited to special services and communion services in the school chapel.

Roles and Responsibilities

In the Junior School, the Headteacher or other members of staff normally conduct assemblies, but sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups conduct them.

In the Senior School, assemblies are taken by most staff, the school chaplain or visiting clergy.

Pupils frequently take part in assemblies and as they move through school take on responsibility for organising some tutor group assemblies.

Review Date: December 2012