

Collective Worship Policy

Aims and Purposes

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- To encourage and enable children to explore their social, moral spiritual and cultural beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit and belonging
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We encourage everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

Organisation of collective worship

We hold daily collective worship assemblies in our school. This forms part of each afternoon, which is normally a whole-school assembly, although sometimes we also hold separate class or Key Stage assemblies. We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way.

Assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

The headteacher or other members of teaching staff normally conduct assemblies, but sometimes other representatives of local religious groups or community groups lead them instead.

Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build upon topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum or focus on moral and cultural reflection. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes a term in advance of the day they take place.

Our assemblies also reflect the achievements and learning of our 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 children are valued and all achievements are encouraged and recognized, empowering children in their learning journey. Chestnuts School is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all the children in assemblies.

We invite parents to come into assembly occasionally and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and school work together to support the achievements of our children.

We encourage governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

Right of withdrawal

We encourage all children to attend assembly and therefore explore their spiritual, moral social and cultural beliefs. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending assemblies and worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. A record is however kept of all children who withdraw from selected collective worship.

Monitoring and review

It is the role of the Teaching and Learning committee to monitor this policy and the practice of collective worship. The governors concerned liaise with the headteacher before reporting to the other governors on religious education and collective worship.