



*Be the best you can be, every day.*

## **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

**THIS DOCUMENT IS** a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for Collective Worship at North Downs Primary School.

**IT WAS DEVELOPED IT WAS WRITTEN** based on statutory requirements and through a process of consultation with governors and staff.

**IT HAS BEEN TAKEN FOR APPROVAL** to the Governors in the Autumn Term 2025.

**THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED** in the Autumn Term 2027.

### **Aims of collective worship**

Within the context of our collective worship programme we aim to:

- provide an opportunity for members of the school community to worship God, however defined or understood
- assist members of the school community in considering spiritual and moral issues
- enable the exploration of personal beliefs and values
- encourage participation and response and develop a sense of community
- promote a common ethos and shared values
- reinforce positive behaviour and attitudes
- explore what worship is, how worship is conducted, including the different ways in which people worship

### **Assembly and collective worship**

- An assembly as any gathering of the school community, or part thereof, for whatever purpose. For example, to give out notices, impart information.
- We hold an assembly every day, a part of which is our act of collective worship.
- Collective worship is a gathering of the school community, or part thereof, to join together in worship that reflects the range of religious and non-religious beliefs and practices represented in our school community. Consequently, it is both reverent and inclusive. It is not the corporate worship on the faith community but rather a collective gathering of people from different faiths and none coming together.
- Our school has a statutory responsibility to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils on the school roll. The daily act of worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character' and take sufficient account of 'other beliefs and practices represented in the school'.

### **Organisation of collective worship**

- We hold a daily act of collective worship which forms part of each morning's assembly. Most of our assemblies are whole-school, although occasionally we hold separate class assemblies.
- We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. This includes during our collective worship element of assembly which provides a period of calm reflection and for some prayer. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way.

- Christian prayer and songs/hymns are sung which children and adults participate in at a level appropriate to their faith background. We ask anyone who does not practice prayer to be respectful and reflect on the meaning for themselves.
- We use music and sometimes candles or other objects to act as a focal point for our act of collective worship.
- The headteacher or other members of staff normally conduct our assembly/act of collective worship. Sometimes local clergy or other representatives of local religious group conduct our act of collective worship instead.
- We use themes for our assemblies/acts of collective worship drawing on, for example,
  - festivals and events of the Christian calendar
  - shared human values such as respect, dignity and equality explored through Christian and other faith tradition's teachings
  - key events in the school calendar such as anti-bullying week
  - charitable giving such as Children in Need
  - topics that build on teaching within the curriculum and/or relate to other key school priorities such as for example exploring British Values as required by law
- Our assemblies/acts of collective worship reflect and celebrate the achievements and learning of our children. We encourage sharing of good work and ask children to raise issues that they have discussed in class. We provide opportunities to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and outside of school as well as for their behaviour. Thus our assemblies/acts of collective worship play an important part in building up and promoting the ethos of our school.
- Parents are invited to some assemblies/acts of collective worship and we encourage them to attend, as this also promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way in which home and school work together to support the attainment and achievement of our children.
- Governors are welcome to attend our assemblies/acts of collective worship at any time.

### **Right of withdrawal**

- All children are expected to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission, 'on grounds of conscience', for their child to be excused from attending the collective worship element. The school will arrange for any withdrawn child to be supervised. Any parent who considers this should first discuss it with the headteacher. The headteacher keeps a record of any child withdrawn from collective worship.
- Staff have the right, 'on grounds of conscience', not to participate in or lead an act of collective worship although that right does not include the requirement to attend assembly. Should a staff member request withdrawal the time involved remains directed time.

### **Monitoring and review**

- It is the role of a named school governor with responsibility for collective worship to monitor policy and practice in this important areas of school life. The governor concerned liaises with the headteacher before reporting **annually** to the whole governing body about the contribution and effectiveness of collective worship to the life of the school.