

# SHERRARDSWOOD SCHOOL

## POLICY ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

### 1

1.1 The aims and objectives of collective worship are to:

- provide an opportunity for children to worship God;
- enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- encourage participation and response;
- develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes.

### 2 **Collective worship**

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

2.2 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 the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

2.3 While most acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

### 3 **Organisation of collective worship**

3.1 We hold regular acts of collective worship, which are either whole-school assemblies, separate infant or separate junior or separate senior assemblies, or a class assembly.

3.2 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. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate fully in prayer and hymns when these are included. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, and sometimes candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

3.3 The assemblies are normally conducted by the Headmistress or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups.

3.4 Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised. Sherrardswood School is a successful school, and we shall continue to celebrate the successes of all our children at our assemblies.

3.5 Parents are invited to attend some assemblies and these are printed on the school calendar. We encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements.

3.6 Governors' attendance at our assemblies is always welcome.

#### **4 Right of withdrawal**

- 4.1 We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.
- 4.2 The Headmistress keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.