



**St Hugh's School**

*Collective Worship Policy*

## **Collective Worship Policy**

### **1. Aims and Purpose**

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- To provide an opportunity for students to worship God
- To enable students to consider spiritual and moral issues
- To enable students to explore their own beliefs
- To encourage participation and response
- To develop in students a sense of community spirit
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- To teach students how to worship
- To promote racial harmony and respect for all, combating prejudice and discrimination

### **2. Collective Worship**

We understand worship to be a special act of occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in whole school worship, key stage or class groups may gather individually. We expect everyone to take an active part in any act of worship.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, collective worship is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. We conduct our worship and celebrations in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, we also hold worship that reflects other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community.

### **3. Organisation of Collective Worship**

Key stage four assemblies take place on Monday and Tuesday and key stage three assemblies on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Assemblies always end with a prayer and students are encouraged to assist in the reading or the leading of the prayer, related to the theme of the assembly. Each team is included in a rota for a Thought of the Week. Students are again encouraged to actively participate in the choice of this reflection. The Thought of the Week is displayed in the reception area, on the Thought of the Week board and in each team. This is discussed as collective team worship on those days when a key stage does not have an assembly. It covers local and global issues from the current news as well as considering the more personal needs of an individual or group within the school as the need occurs.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell students that worship time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect students to attempt to behave in an appropriate way as best they can. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, signs and symbols, incorporating ICT, and sometimes other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the students.

Worship is usually led by senior leaders and teaching staff. Local clergy and other representatives of local religious groups are also invited to conduct worship throughout the school year.

We take the themes of our worship from the traditions of the Christian faith including, where appropriate, festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our worship on a rota as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

Our worship reflects the achievements and learning of the students. We encourage the students to participate in worship by showing their work to the other students and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Worship offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward students for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all students are valued and all achievements are recognised. St Hugh's School is a successful school and we celebrate the success of all the students in worship.

We invite parents to worship on special occasions 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 the school work together to support the achievements of our students. Places of worship within the community are sometimes used for major events, e.g. Carol Service.

We welcome governors' attendance at our worship at any time.

#### **4. Right of Withdrawal**

We expect all students to attend worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious 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 Act.

The Head Teacher and RE subject leader keep a record of all students who withdraw from collective worship.

#### **5. Monitoring and Review**

It is the role of the Curriculum, Policy and Standards committee to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.