

LOUDWATER COMBINED SCHOOL

Policy on Collective Worship

Aims and objectives

At Loudwater Combined School, we define collective worship as a time when members of the school community come together to collectively give worth to a variety of spiritual, moral, social and cultural ideas.

Opportunities for worship come about through moments of quiet reflection and contemplation. During these moments children are given the opportunity to silently give thanks or praise. In this way, children of any faith, and those with no faith can take the opportunity to worship, or not.

Collective worship promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by:

- providing pupils with the knowledge and insight into values and beliefs that enable them to reflect on their experiences in a way which develops their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge, (spiritual)
- teaching the principles which distinguish right from wrong, (moral)
- encouraging pupils to relate positively to others, take responsibility, participate fully in the community and develop an understanding of citizenship, (social)
- teach pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures. (cultural)

Through collective worship we aim to develop pupils' personal qualities including their self-esteem, their sense of identity, their appreciation of awe and wonder, their openness to new ideas, their respect for others and their ability to reflect on these qualities and other aspects of life's fundamental experiences.

Collective worship is one way in which we promote the school's commitment to equality of opportunity by celebrating, giving value to and learning about different ethnic and faith groups, in particular, those represented within the school community.

We use collective worship time to promote pupils' understanding of the cycle of the year through the exploration of the annual cycle of nature and the annual cycle of religious and non-religious celebrations. We promote pupils' moral development by exploring values and qualities that can be supported by both members of faith communities and by those who are not members of a faith community.

Organisation of collective worship

We hold a daily act of collective worship. On a Tuesday and Friday these are whole-school assemblies. On other days collective worship takes place in the classroom. These acts of worship are focused around our value of the month or our inspirational person.

During the spring term class assemblies are held on a Thursday and parents are invited to attend. At the end of each month each class leads a values assembly to which parents are invited. Additional assemblies may be held to provide information about religious celebrations as they occur; these may be Christian or from other religions.

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 and to listen carefully. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

The assemblies are normally conducted by the head teacher, deputy head teacher or other members of staff, but occasionally may be led by visitors or other representatives of local religious groups.

We take the themes of our assemblies from a variety of sources; the traditions of the Christian faith and festivals celebrated by other religions. The focus for our assemblies comes from the value we are focusing on each month, our inspirational person and the question of the week. Each term a list of planned foci for assemblies is drawn up by the head teacher, however we do recognise that this may need to be changed if there are major current events which have relevance to our children.

Achievement and class 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.

Parents are invited to attend their child's class and values assemblies. We encourage this to promote community spirit, and show the school and parents working together in support of the children's achievements. Governors' attendance at our assemblies is always welcome.

Right of withdrawal

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.

The Headteacher will keep a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring the policy and practice of collective worship is the role of the Admissions and Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body.

This policy is reviewed every three years.

October 2022