

Deykin Avenue JI School
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Policy on Collective Worship

Deykin Avenue Junior and Infant School has achieved the 'Silver' UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA)

The RRSA is based on the principles of equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation. The Rights of the Child are at the heart of our school's ethos and culture.

This policy covers/ links to the following rights: Article 2: Non-discrimination, Article 12: Views of the child, Article 13: Freedom of expression, Article 14: Freedom of thought, belief and religion

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of collective worship are:

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

Collective worship

In Deykin Avenue Junior and Infants school we do not hold 'religious' assemblies daily but come together to think about moral and social issues. We do have religious assemblies at points throughout the year and try to incorporate all religions in our society. 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.

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we frequently 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.

While many 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.

Collective worship assemblies are appropriate to the school and take into account the family backgrounds of our children. The stories that are told come from a rich variety of backgrounds and traditions that are appropriate to the real life needs of our children.

Organisation of collective worship

We hold a whole school assembly on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. They are taken by members of the school including pupils and visitors. Sometimes we hold special assemblies on a Wednesday, e.g. Harvest on the first Wednesday of October. 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 songs when used. We often create an appropriate atmosphere by using music to enter and leave. We sometimes have a candle to help us focus when asked to reflect upon something.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of faith and from British Values, e.g. honesty, perseverance and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. We also include some festivals from other religions as well, to ensure that all religions are represented. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies well in advance of the day they take place.

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. Deykin Avenue Junior and Infants School is a successful school, and we shall continue to celebrate the successes of all our children at our assemblies.

As well as special class or school assemblies, each week, there are particular assemblies that parents and carers are invited to attend. 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.

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 and carers 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 head teacher keeps 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 Teaching and Learning Committee, which is a sub committee of the Governing Body which is also responsible for religious education. The committee concerned liaises with the head teacher before reporting to the full Governing Body.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years.

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body on.....

Signed:

Date: