



# Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy

## ***Safeguarding Statement***

*West Heath Primary will continuously strive to ensure that everyone in our school is treated with respect and dignity. Each person in our school will be given fair and equal opportunity to develop their full potential with positive regard to gender, ethnicity, cultural and religious background, sexuality or disability. West Heath Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share this commitment. Please also refer to the*

*No Platform, Visiting Speaker Policy.*

Owner	RE Coordinator
Date of review	November 2018
Date of next review	November 2020

## **West Heath Primary School Collective Worship Policy and RE policy**

### **Aims**

One of our school's key drivers is Values Education. We want our pupils to grow up to be well rounded individuals, with a strong moral understanding of British values, so that they are fully prepared for life in modern Britain. We see school worship as an educational opportunity to encourage pupils to:

- show interest in, and a concern for, members of the school community
- celebrate special occasions together
- show concern for the daily happenings in school life, the local community and the wider world
- share appreciation of worthwhile projects undertaken by groups within the school
- explore and review the variety of values, attitudes, standards, manifested in religions and society
- reflect upon dimensions of human life – the wonder, beauty, joy, heroism, humour, tragedy, sorrow, solemnity etc...;
- reflect on the way in which humankind has expressed the deepest spiritual feelings, through the creative and expressive arts, scientific discovery, religious practice, service to God and other people.

### **Introduction**

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be: "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character" for the majority of the time. They must also be: "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils." Within our school, there are children from Christian backgrounds, children from religions other than Christianity and children from nonreligious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our children to worship, we have to consider the backgrounds that our children come from. It is therefore not the practice of West Heath Primary to preach to or convert pupils. The faith background of both the staff and pupils' families is respected at all times.

The Head Teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body. Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Head Teacher. Teachers may also withdraw from worship.

It is important for us to understand that a school community is not a worshipping community and the law recognises this by requiring "collective" not "corporate" worship. Broadly, worship in school is more appropriately referred to as worth-ship. This might encompass what is offered in a spirit of admiration, celebration and respect to God and/or people of excellence, worthy of honour and by extension to concepts, principles and conduct, which are worth of celebration as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit. Worship defined in this way draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection, for pupils and staff, whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. In this way, collective worship is inclusive not exclusive.

### **British Values Statement**

West Heath Primary School values freedom of speech and the expression of beliefs / ideology as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both pupils and teachers have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that is designed to manipulate the vulnerable or that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles in which freedom of speech is valued. Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion.

### **Procedure**

At West Heath we provide daily acts of collective worship for registered pupils. Where it is inappropriate for some pupils to take part in collective worship the Head Teacher will liaise with parents or religious groups to provide alternative daily provision. This will include parents attending school at assembly time to supervise their child.

The Head Teacher is responsible for arranging the collective worship after consulting with the Governing Body. Daily assembly will be mainly of a broadly Christian character and will be values led.

Assembly will:

- ✓ be acceptable to the whole community, staff and pupils
- ✓ include a variety of elements at different times but maintain a standard format
- ✓ involve the pupils
- ✓ contain a song or reflection

The Assembly routines

- Assembly will begin every day at 8.55am and will last approximately 25mins.
- Pupils and staff must enter and leave the hall quietly
- All classes will be expected to attend on time.
- Reception class will, join the rest of the school for assembly after the 1st half term (autumn).
- The member of staff taking assembly should be ready to greet the school at the start of assembly.

At West Heath, we strongly believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of the worship. We plan the time so that there is a variety in content and methods employed, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection/worship and also joy and celebration. We choose from a range of methods, including:

- pupils' contributions
- sacred and secular stories/readings
- dance/drama
- prayer/meditation/personal reflection/songs/hymns/music
- visual aids/focal points
- dialogue
- visitors

Through our teaching of Religious Education at West Heath, we aim to expand our children's spiritual, moral and cultural development and prepare pupils for a future in society by:

1. Learning from faith.
2. Learning about religious traditions.

## Learning from Faith

The dispositions of pupils will be developed using the **treasury of faith**. Drawing on **the beliefs, expressions and practical actions of religious traditions**, pupils should grow intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, and practically by being enabled to:

- express and respond to shared human experiences, such as, joy, thankfulness, grief, hope, pity, care and humility
- deploy and enhance skills to engage sensitively and empathetically with the richness and the challenges of diversity in the modern world
- value and use religious insights, to help sustain key social institutions, such as, the family, voluntary organisations, religious communities, the rule of law and democratic processes
- consider reflectively and actively matters that relate to the fundamental sense, purpose and meaning of life

## Learning about religious traditions

Pupils should be offered a holistic view of religious traditions, their beliefs, their expressions, and their practical actions. Thus pupils should be helped to develop their knowledge, their affections, their dispositions, their skills and relationships with others in society by:

- learning about key religious practices and beliefs, sacred writings, persons and institutions
- learning about significant religious stories, narratives, events, and places
- Exploring culturally important, and widely valued, religious expressions e.g. in art, music, literature, film, artefacts, architecture, dance, commemorations, scientific and business activities
- Engaging with religious aspirations and commitments to personal and social well-being
- Each half-term we devote a whole day of the school timetable to RE. The RE co-ordinator provides each teacher with a specific disposition and a religious tradition, which each class's activities will be based around. The RE co-ordinator will also provide teachers with suggested activities, which will act as the Medium Term Planning. This planning is taken from the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for the teaching of Religious Education. Work from each RE Day should be found in pupils books.
- The aim of our RE days is to raise the profile of the subject. By devoting a full day each half term to the subject we are ensuring that the school meets its statutory requirements. However, teachers should also seek out other opportunities to teach RE. Added to this, three of our assemblies each week will be dedicated to the teaching of our school's value words. Religious stories and teachings will be used regularly during these assemblies.
- **Assessment**
- After each RE day has finished each teacher assesses the children's work and the results are then added to assessment grid and handed the RE co-ordinator.

## Success Criteria

At West Heath, we will evaluate our acts of collective worship against some of the following:

- involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- the growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- positive response to shared experiences
- an atmosphere which matches the theme
- a contribution to individual and community sense of well-being

- appropriate behaviour
- a place in the overall plan of the school
- enrichment of pupils' experiences.

### **Reflection Time**

We feel that reflection is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. Nevertheless, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers (saying 'Amen') in which they do not believe. We have developed various forms of introductions to our reflection, which distances children, but gives them the opportunity to participate at their own personal level. E.g. "If you wish to pray, please do so but if not, please think about ....." In this way, we are able to include most pupils. The use of regular moments of silence provides opportunities for some pupils to reflect in a personal way; at the very least it offers time for quietness and collection of thought.

### **Our Adopted Values**



### **Planning and Evidence**

Through our teaching of Religious Education at West Heath, we aim to expand our children's spiritual, moral and cultural development and prepare pupils for a future in society.

Each half-term we devote a whole day of the school timetable to RE. The RE co-ordinator provides each year group with a specific disposition and a religious tradition, taken from the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for the teaching of Religious Education. The learning outcomes and activities of the day will be based around these dispositions and traditions. The RE co-ordinator will also provide teachers with suggested activities, which will act as the Medium Term Planning.

The aim of our RE days is to raise the profile of the subject. By devoting a full day each half term to the subject, we are ensuring that the school meets its statutory requirements. However, teachers should also seek out other opportunities to teach RE across the curriculum.

Work from each RE Day must be evidenced in the class Curriculum Scrapbook, which will be monitored regularly by the RE coordinator.

In addition to the RE days, three of our assemblies each week will be dedicated to the teaching of our school values. Religious stories and teachings will be used regularly during these assemblies.