

# Roundwood Park School



## Collective Worship Policy Reviewed May 2015 (Standards and Curriculum Committee)

### Principles:

Roundwood Park School believes that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, symbolised clearly in our LIFE motto (Learning, Integrity, Friendship, Excellence), and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age students 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 students”.

Families who send their children to this school are in the main ‘nominally’ Christian, but we do have some children from practising Christian families. In addition there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our children to worship we have to consider the background that our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child’s family is respected at all times.

### Aims:

Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of the other people in every day situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person’s life stance, whether it be religious or not

## **Practice:**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Headteacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body.
- The Assistant Headteacher for pastoral care is responsible for planning the calendar of themes and oversees “Thought for the Week” activities on a termly basis. The Assistant Headteacher arranges the assembly rota around these themes.
- All form tutors follow the Thought for the Week and associated learning activities in tutor time.
- All teaching staff are required to attend assemblies unless they have formally withdrawn from them by putting their request in writing and meeting with the Headteacher.
- Parents of a student 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 Headteacher.
- The Education and Inspection Act 2006 makes provision for students in post-16 education to exercise the right to withdraw themselves from the daily act of collective worship, but not from assembly.
- The Assistant Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that parents are reminded on an annual basis of the content of this policy via the school website and RoundUp.

### **Content and structure of assemblies**

- The gathering is addressed for 10 - 15 minutes on a topic of the speaker's choice but usually linked to the ‘Thought for the Week’ selected material. This material is then developed in tutorial sessions that are suggested in a range of learning activities produced for each week by Mrs Zoe Hill. (Miss Carla Coimbra is currently overseeing this as Mrs Hill is on maternity leave).
- Student led assemblies have increased greatly recently – with many increasingly being led by students. House assemblies are also taken regularly by students – usually by the Sixth Form house captains.
- Occasionally, appropriate outside speakers are invited to take an assembly. These range from the school’s Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), speakers from LINKS as well as other organisations such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and Youth Connexions.
- Assemblies taken by senior leaders and pastoral staff generally include a moral theme and may well draw reference to the beliefs of a range of religions, including Christianity.
- The address is sometimes concluded with an opportunity to think quietly or for silent prayer according to conscience.
- Notices/administrative matters follow, as well as the opportunity for Senior Heads of Year and Heads of Year to give out certificates, to congratulate individuals and groups of students on their recent achievements, both in and out of school.

## **Frequency**

Because of the nature of the flooring in the Sports Centre, we really only have one suitable area for assembly (the Hall) which makes it extremely difficult for us to comply fully with the law and have a daily act of collective worship for all students.

We continue to hold two separate assemblies in the Hall each day for different year groups for half of the year. Due to timetable restrictions it has only been possible to hold one assembly on a Thursday throughout the year. This has given a total of eighteen assembly slots over a two week cycle. The frequency of assembly for each year group is as follows:

Year 7, 8, 9, 10 – three assemblies for each year over a two week cycle.

Year 11 – four assemblies over a two week cycle.

Year 12/13 – two assemblies over a two week cycle.

## **‘Thought for the Week’ material**

A ‘Thought for the Week’ programme is delivered by form tutors to supplement the assembly provision. The programme is a series of quotes and learning activities designed to encourage students to reflect on and discuss a specified social/moral issue each week and is delivered by the form teacher during registration time. When the Hall is required for exams we are forced to suspend assemblies and rely on ‘Thought for the Week’ and its associated activities alone.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The Deputy Headteacher and Assistant Headteacher monitor the implementation of this policy on a continual basis.

The Standards and Curriculum committee review this policy every three years.

**DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:** May 2018

This review completed by: Mrs M Mansfield, Assistant Headteacher May 2015