

Garden Fields JMI School, Townsend Drive, St. Albans, Herts, AL3 5RL



Collective Worship Policy

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”. The Headteacher is responsible [under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998] for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the Governing Body. We respect the parents’ right to withdraw their children from this act of worship if they so wish. Any parent wishing to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher. Teachers may also withdraw from worship.

Garden Fields serves a diverse community with the clear majority of pupils from “nominally Christian” and “practising Christian” families. We do, however, have a number of children from other faiths, notably Islam. Thus although we recognise the fact that our assemblies must generally reflect the Christian religion we also recognise that the freedom of believers as well as non-believers must be preserved and allowed for. We recognise that in asking our children to worship we have to consider the background our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or to convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child’s family is respected at all times.

At Garden Fields we feel that our school assembly should reflect and nurture the ethos of the school as a community. We recognise that the school is a large community with a common purpose, and we aim to foster the feeling of “belonging” that is essential for personal development and spiritual growth. We encourage every pupil and every member of staff to feel involved as part of our school community.

Worship at Garden Fields can be defined as the celebration of “worth-ship” i.e. respect to God and people of excellence, worthy of honour and by extension to concepts, principles and conduct which are worthy of celebration as examples of the highest achievements of the human spirit. Thus our worship 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 our collective worship is inclusive and not exclusive. Our act of collective worship, whilst often celebrating a variety of religions will, nevertheless, emphasise the special place and significance of Jesus Christ in the Christian religion in accordance with paragraphs 60 –63 of the DfEE Circular 1/94.

Legal Requirements:

Our act of worship [over the year] will be 51% or more of a Christian character and will *usually* therefore

- Have content of a Christian nature

Adopted by Curriculum Committee - October 2014

Due for Review - October 2017

- ❑ Reflect the teaching of Jesus – love, forgiveness, peace, justice, courage, family, friendship – but may use secular material or materials from other religions and beliefs such as humanism
- ❑ Use Christian practices e.g. singing, prayer, reflection, dance, drama, listening to music

Our assemblies provide a caring and supportive environment for children to:

- ❑ Foster a sense of community
- ❑ Share and promote the ethos and values of this school
- ❑ Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- ❑ Consider the implications of sorrow, bereavement, cruelty and selfishness
- ❑ Provide a time for quiet reflection
- ❑ Explore and review the variety of values, attitudes and standards manifested in other faiths
- ❑ Celebrate special occasions together
- ❑ Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not
- ❑ Show interest in and concern for others [school, local community, wider world]
- ❑ Share examples of worthwhile activities together
- ❑ Celebrate the success of individuals or groups of children
- ❑ Explore values and standards manifested in society
- ❑ Contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our pupils
- ❑ Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- ❑ Encourage a reflective approach to life

At Garden Fields we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. We believe that creating the right atmosphere is crucial to the quality of worship. Therefore we plan the time so that there is a range of content and methods, allowing opportunity for quiet personal reflection/worship.

Current Organisation of Collective Worship:

Mondays	Whole School Assembly led by Headteacher – 6 visits a year from local Vicar
Tuesdays	KS2 Assembly led by staff – KS1 Class reflection
Wednesdays	Year Assemblies
Thursdays	KS1 Assembly led by staff – KS2 Class reflection
Fridays	Whole School Assembly led by Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher

- ❑ Assemblies take place in either the Music School Hall or GFS School according to the rota
- ❑ Children walk into the hall quietly and sit in class rows until all are present
- ❑ Music is played from a ipod or internet on a theme selected for that week
- ❑ Visitors are welcomed from the local community, a charitable organisation or someone associated with a particular theme or event that we are celebrating

All teaching staff lead assemblies on a rota basis on Tuesday or Thursday. All teachers attend the Friday whole school assemblies to ensure a sense of community continues to be nurtured at Garden Fields.

Prayer

We feel that prayer is an optional way of enabling children to focus their thoughts. Children and staff lead prayers or moments of quiet thought / reflection at assembly. All are invited to affirm their

Adopted by Curriculum Committee - October 2014

Due for Review - October 2017

agreement with the prayer by saying "Amen" but are not obliged to do so. The use of regular moments of silence provides opportunities for some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish.

Success Criteria:

At Garden Fields we evaluate our acts of worship against the following:

- √ Involvement, enjoyment, attention, reaction of pupils
- √ The growth of respect and tolerance within the school community
- √ A positive response to the shared experience
- √ An atmosphere that matches the theme
- √ Growth in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- √ A sense of challenge
- √ Enrichment of pupil experience
- √ Staff affirmation
- √ Good order
- √ A sense of occasion