

Collective Worship Policy

Adopted: July 2014

Next Review: July 2017

Aims and Objectives

At JCoSS we always seek to reflect in our worship the Jewish Ethos of the school and its care for all who work here. Students are helped to understand the meaning of Jewish worship.

Our central aims of collective worship are to:

- enable students and staff to explore and celebrate the differences and diversity found in the variety of forms of worship in the Jewish tradition.
- seek to deepen and widen the experience of those of 'faith' and encourage those of 'no faith' so that they begin to feel for themselves something of what it means to worship.
- use celebration, silence, stilling, reflection, contemplation, meditation, prayer, song, symbols and imagery as vehicles for worship and spiritual growth.
- provide opportunities for the whole school community to address spirituality
- encourage all present to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Jewish pluralist framework by learning more about the Jewish faith and by encountering God through worship.
- raise awareness through reflection of the ultimate questions of life relating to matters of faith.
- reaffirm, strengthen and practise key Jewish values. (e.g. love, peace, compassion, forgiveness, charity) and celebrate each unique individual member of the school community as made in the image of God.
- nurture and encourage respect and care for God's created world by promoting a positive attitude to environmental issues locally, nationally and globally.
- seek to provide opportunities for spiritual, social and moral development that is characterised by feelings such as awe, wonder, being uplifted, elation, appreciation, gratitude, respect, and reverence.
- develop a sense of community within the school, the locality, and foster the sense of being part of a wider community through the celebration of achievements, festivals and special occasions.
- foster a concern for the needs of others.

In summary within our daily act of collective worship, we aim to:

- provide an opportunity for students to worship God;
- celebrate all that is good and beautiful and express thankfulness for the joy of being alive;
- provide opportunities for students to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the darker side of life;
- ensure that the experiences provided are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the students;
- give time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space;
- illustrate forms of worship that others have found helpful in their spiritual development, e.g. silent contemplation, dance, singing;

- provide a rich variety of forms of expression, e.g. art, drama, music, story and give students the opportunity to experience these at their own level rather than teachers imposing their own interpretations;
- take place in an environment that is conducive to worship, which is professionally coordinated and properly resourced;
- always invite, never coerce, remembering that students will be at different stages of spiritual development and that they should feel able to respond and participate at their own level.

How is collective worship organised at JCoSS?

Assemblies

All assemblies include a moment of spiritual reflection, giving students an opportunity to reflect on an important issue of the day. This might take the form of a prayer, poem or moments silence for students to think about what they have heard.

The Deputy Headteacher: Jewish Ethos, supports staff with the preparation and selection of relevant material if required.

Form Time: Pause for Prayer

On days when there is not a formal assembly Form Tutors will be provided with Pause for Prayer Power Point. This will give all students the opportunity for silent reflection based on the Jewish tradition.

The right of withdrawal

The parents' have a legal right to withdraw their child from acts of worship. This does not mean that the students will be in any way exempt from the Jewish ethos of the school which underpins the whole of school life. Parents are made fully aware of this when they enrol their children. Any parent who wishes to withdraw their child from collective worship must make an appointment to see the Head Teacher and the Director of Jewish Education.

Conclusion

At JCoSS, collective worship is valued and efforts are made to ensure that students and staff take part in high quality activities.