

## **The Central Importance Collective Worship has at Reigate Parish Church Primary School**

Collective Worship is an essential part of our school life.

"We like learning about Jesus and God."

"It always tells a story that helps us to be better. We like singing and celebration assembly because you can be proud of people."

"I like the stories. I like to learn about the bible. I like going up to the front to help."

"I like that the teachers tell us about Jesus and stories from the Bible. I like class assemblies. I like the story of Noah and the ark."

These are just some of the quotes that children from Reception to Year 3 said about collective worship in our annual questionnaire, June 2017.

We meet daily either as a whole school or in key stages. Every week children listen to assemblies from the Headteacher, teachers, visiting clergy and other visitors. The assemblies follow a similar structure (gathering, engaging, input, responding, reflection) but the style of the person leading the assembly varies and this is enjoyed by everyone. Some people use pictures, some utilise video, some rely on oral storytelling while others employ props. Whatever their style, they are engaging, the message is clear and children leave with a greater understanding of God, Jesus, the Bible, society and of themselves. Collective Worship links in with RE lessons, PSHE lessons, playing with friends at playtimes plus children will make connections to their topics, where they see the relevance. Our children talk with confidence about their own understanding of Christianity, faith and belief and have the self-assurance to make their own minds up and not to be swayed by parents, peers or school.

Reigate Parish, an expanding primary school, has a comprehensive collective worship rota which focuses on one of the school values each month and is annually reviewed by the Headteacher and the vicar. The rota is circulated to everyone who leads worship so they understand the focus of their assembly and how this fits in with the other planned assemblies. Annually the vicar leads training for the teachers on how to structure their assembly, giving them the confidence to elicit the core Christian message through their delivery.

A favourite assembly is the Friday Celebration Assembly when two children from each class receive their celebration certificate for something of note they have done that week. Children bring certificates in from achievements they have got from external clubs and often we see swimming, gymnastics, football, skiing and Brownie certificates, medals or badges. Everyone gets a big clap at the end of the assembly.

Children equally enjoy active participation in assemblies. They are always encouraged to contribute their ideas to questions; to lead at the front the signs we use in the songs we sing; and to say, from the front, their own prayer linking ideas they have heard in the assembly. All children in the school have opportunities to help lead collective worship. They all have a class assembly where they showcase what they have been learning to the whole school and to their parents.

This year working with the Headteacher, each half term children from each year group can lead, practice and deliver a whole school assembly on the value of generosity. This is very popular and the children have to meet in their own time; work together to make decisions on the content of the assembly; ask the SBM if she will play the piano to accompany their song choice; practice their lines at home and rehearse their assembly several times so their presentation is polished. Recently, after the Year 3 children led their assembly consisting of a puppet show, an explanation, prayers and a song the children reflected that they had learnt saying "it is better to give than

receive", "that generosity is a sign of kindness", "that it's nice to give to others", and "it makes me feel happy when I give something to someone."

Annually in our whole school questionnaire we also ask parents, staff and governors their perceptions of collective worship and their comments last year included:

"Collective worship is a warm, celebratory atmosphere where children are learning through and with each other, using music and song and stories. A chance for year groups to come together." from a parent.

"Collective worship is important and brings in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit's presence in the school. There has never been a time in history when I feel it is so important that we raise Kingdom Kids." from a parent.

"Collective worship is an important part of the spiritual development of our children."

"I think collective worship gets better and better each year. I have learnt so much, from the Christian Values to stories from the Old Testament which I had forgotten about!" from a member of staff.

"Collective worship is a chance to come together as a school, as a team and as a community" from a member of staff.

"Collective worship is highly valued here. Collective worship styles are varied, engaging and delivered well. The children have a strong knowledge of the bible. The children enjoy collective worship" from a member of staff.

Daily we see evidence of the impact of collective worship on children's lives (and that of our staff), they articulate precisely our 11 school values, they can say how they are showing that value in action and explain its importance to them as individuals.

Final words on Collective Worship from the children:

"It is fun learning new things, we love the visitors who come and take assembly and assemblies are all about how God loves us and we learn about Bible stories."

Written by Frances Davis, Headteacher, March 5<sup>th</sup> 2018



## Joshua and the Walls of Jericho

Assembly led by a teacher and with the children acting out the walls of Jericho falling down



singing and signing "Be Bold Be Strong"

