



# Assembly Policy

## Two Rivers School

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## **School Context**

Two Rivers High and Primary Schools are generic special schools for pupils aged 2 to 19 years in Tamworth, Staffordshire. As a school, we strive relentlessly to raise aspirations and attainment by providing high quality teaching and learning in a safe and secure environment in which the pupils' welfare is paramount and where everyone is valued equally. We celebrate the diversity of all our pupils and provide a nurturing environment for effective learning to take place. Our links with the community help to create exciting opportunities for children to learn and gain a well-rounded experience of different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs.

## **Rationale**

This policy outlines the intent, organisation and implementation of assemblies at our school, in line with Department for Education (DfE) expectations and statutory requirements. Assemblies are an essential part of school life, providing a regular opportunity for collective education and reflection that supports the development of pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC), understanding Fundamental British Values and personal development areas as identified by Ofsted.

Assemblies are also used a key mechanism to promote cultural capital and explore themes that are relevant to our wider school community, guided by identified needs and safeguarding trends via MyConcern, as well as national and global contexts.

Inclusion is extremely important to our vision and we aim for collective learning through assemblies to be inclusive of all pupils. There is an expectation that all pupils are present (except those withdrawn by parents/carers) and staff plan and prepare sessions carefully to meet the differing needs and levels of understanding of the pupils. Assemblies are a shared activity that provide an opportunity for pupils of any religious faith or none to focus and reflect on different stimuli and develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness. They also provide a valuable opportunity to promote tolerance and acceptance of all faiths and beliefs, whilst safeguarding pupils against extremist behaviour.

Assemblies are inclusive and sensitive to the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Content is adapted to not be age appropriate, but also stage appropriate, culturally respectful and accessible to all.

## **Assemblies**

### **Aims**

At Two Rivers School we aim to achieve the following in our school assemblies:

- Strengthen and support the school community, affirm the shared values and ethos and celebrate each unique individual member.
- To develop a strong sense of community, belonging and identity across the school and trust.
- Foster and enable a concern for the needs of others.
- Provide the opportunity for pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues and to reflect on their own values and beliefs.

- Lead pupils to a deeper knowledge and understanding of different faiths and world views and promote tolerance and acceptance of these.
- To build cultural capital by providing exposure to significant cultural, historical and social concepts.
- To respond to safeguarding concerns and personal development needs using school-based and community intelligence.
- To enhance digital and online resilience through coverage of key aspects from 'Education for a Connected World'.
- Celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.
- Contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Provide an experience of a variety of forms of Music, Art, Drama, story that lead to personal reflection.
- Encourage participation and response.

## **Organisation**

Assemblies are held once a week. Assemblies follow a specified structure, including time given to a different focus or key theme each week. These themes are planned across an annual calendar (Long Term Plan at High School), giving opportunity to develop an awareness of other religious festivals to support diversity. Themes may also relate to local, national and global celebrations, anniversaries and awareness days. All of the themes support our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Curriculum and some may create additional opportunities to develop specific links to other subjects and curriculum areas. Time is also given to celebrate pupil successes and achievements.

Music is played before and after our assemblies to highlight that this is a special time for us to be together. Within assemblies, music (instrumental or vocal) may be used to enhance the atmosphere for worship, stillness and reflection, or to inspire thought and talking points in relation to the planned theme and/or the areas of SMSC development.

Two Rivers High School has a celebration assembly every week in specific phases & pathways (Navigators, Pathfinders, Pioneers and Discoverers). Further assemblies take place weekly on a Friday whereby all (except Discoverers) gather in the school theatre. These are planned in accordance with a long-term overview that aligns with key national events, campaigns (e.g. Anti-Bullying week, Black History Month & Online Safety Week), and pupil needs; they also foster crucial elements of Education for a Connected World, reflecting our commitment to preparing pupils for modern life in Britain. Flexibility is maintained to include reactive topics based on emerging themes or events.

Two Rivers Primary School has two celebration assemblies every Friday. Due to the increased size of Two Rivers Primary School, we now hold assemblies in pathways/key stages.

## **Cultural Capital**

According to Ofsted (EIF 2023), cultural capital is 'the essential knowledge that pupils need to be educated citizens'. Assemblies are a cornerstone in our strategy to broaden horizons for all pupils, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, by:

- Focusing on events and individuals that have shaped national and global history
- Exposing pupils to a wide range of cultural experiences and diverse perspectives
- Enabling pupils to understand local heritage as well as international contexts
- Enriching vocabulary and oracy through storytelling, poetry, music and current affairs

## **Safeguarding and Responsive Practice**

Through careful planning, our assemblies act as a platform for safeguarding education. With input from the designated safeguarding lead and analysis of data (e.g. MyConcern), weekly assemblies may include:

- Education on the protective behaviours related to online safety, bullying, abuse and exploitation
- Responsive sessions designed in collaboration with pastoral and safeguarding teams
- Signposting to support services or follow up interventions.

Assemblies are linked to personal development as a means to support our learners to develop their holistic character, including resilience, confidence and independence.

Assemblies are quality assured where appropriate, with curriculum links and SMSC impact monitored.

## **Visitors to school**

We strongly believe that visitors can enhance the pupils' experiences and engagement in assemblies, and we welcome visitors into school to attend and contribute to assemblies where possible. Visitors provide unique opportunities for pupils to gain direct, personal experience of a range of faiths, cultures and traditions. These opportunities are vital to expanding our pupils' knowledge and understanding of our local community and the wider world. When invited to lead an assembly, visitors must be given clear instructions relating to the age and ability of the pupils, the purpose of occasion or planned theme and appropriate delivery (content and material used). All Visitors have been approved by the Senior Leadership Team. Visitors should report to the office upon arrival and sign in, where they will be greeted and then accompanied by a member of school staff throughout their visit.

## **Responsibility and Monitoring**

Overall responsibility for the provision of collective worship lies with the Headteacher after consultation with the Local Governing Board. The organisation and delivery of assemblies will be planned, monitored and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team.