



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

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As a Church of England Academy, we are inclusive of all regardless of creed, colour, race, gender, sexual orientation or ability. We hope to transform the lives of our pupils, students and our wider community by putting our core values of love, integrity, generosity, hope and tolerance (LIGHT) into action. As such, all should feel welcome and respected. Schools are, in part, measured by academic success. Pupils and students know this. We must help and enable each pupil and student to succeed to the best of their ability by providing high quality lessons and an appropriate curriculum for our pupils and students.

Introduction

Our Collective Worship Policy strengthens and supports the Christian identity of our Academy, reaffirms our vision and associated values of 'Light' (Love, Integrity, Generosity, Hope and Tolerance) celebrates the central role that each pupil / student has to play in their community. Our worship reflects the variety of traditions found in the Church of England and will recognize and follow the Christian liturgical year. The daily Christian act of worship is central to our ethos and is supported by all staff and governors. It makes an important contribution to the overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the whole school community.

What is Collective Worship?

Legislation requires schools, including Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools, to conduct daily acts of Collective Worship. However, the legislation does not define what is meant by the term 'Collective Worship'.

'Worship' through prayer and liturgy we enable pupils, students and staff to express and declare their faith; inspire and strengthen them in their daily lives and provoke such responses as praise, thanksgiving, joy love, wonder, commitment and repentance. Two main aspects of worship are: **Offering to God** praise, adoration, petition and confession; and **Receiving** – for example fellowship, forgiveness, inspiration, strength and love.

"... Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'collective worship' rather than 'corporate worship'. (DfE Circular 1/94 para 57)

Corporate Worship assumes a shared set of beliefs and values, i.e. a worshipping congregation meeting on a Sunday, where the worship is confessional and evangelistic (to spread the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness).

Collective Worship reflects an awareness of, a respect and sensitivity to, the presence of people from a variety of religious backgrounds as well as those of no formal faith. It is our shared membership of the Academy community rather than the holding of a particular religious' belief which brings people together for worship.

"Appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes." (DfE Circular 1/94 p.22).

Collective Worship at the John Wallis Academy gives pupils, students and school staff the opportunity to:

- Explore a relationship with God in Jesus Christ
- Engage in an act of community
- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Be still and reflect
- Explore the big questions of life and respond to national events
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ through Biblical texts
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges

- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar
- To consider spiritual and moral issues and, through reflection, raise awareness of the ultimate questions relating to matters of faith

In line with the requirements of the requirements of the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) schedule, we aim to ensure that collective worship:

- Offers the opportunity, without compulsion, to all pupils, students and adults to grow spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enables all pupils, students and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican/Methodist worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- Helps pupils, students and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and to develop their understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God and its language.
- Enables pupils, students as well as adults to engage in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.
- Encourages local church community partnerships to support the school effectively in developing its provision for collective worship.

The Anglican Christian Tradition

The following are shared as Christian elements of collective worship:

- Exploring the Christian understanding of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Using the Bible for inspiration, stories and guidance.
- Observing the cycle of the Church's Year – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and Saints Days amongst ordinary days.
- Learning and saying prayers from a number of sources, in particular the Lord's Prayer, the Academy Prayer and the blessings in common use.
- Using a wide variety of hymns and songs from traditional to modern.
- Experiencing Christian symbols in worship and reflecting on their meaning.
- The use of prayer, silence and reflection.

We may also use elements which are more distinctively Anglican:

- Using Anglican sentences and responses at the beginning and end of worship.
- Celebrating Eucharist.

Implementation

Primary

Collective Worship is planned by a variety of stakeholders including staff, students, pupils, the incumbent of our local churches and external visitors in consultation with the collective worship leader. This act of worship can take place at any time of the Academy school day and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class.

In Primary plans systematically and cohesively using in the Primary phase the Canterbury Diocesan Collective Worship Planning which is adapted and changed to meet the needs of our community. This

ensures that there is a shared understanding of the long- and short-term planning of worship and this enables continuity.

Secondary

The daily act of Collective Worship will take place in 'assembly' and 'Tutor Time' and will be given the highest importance by those responsible for ensuring that it happens. It will always be distinct from announcements or other presentations or business.

Each Year Group has an assembly once a week. On the days that a Year Group does not have an assembly, each Tutor Group will spend time with their Form Tutor. The Academy Chaplain produces '**Reflections for the week**' which includes a Bible passage and prayer.

Visitors to our school are asked to read and comply with our school visitor and safeguarding policies: see [Appendix 7 of the Academy Safeguarding Policy](#). This should include discussing the content of any worship with a member of the Senior Leadership and the Academy Chaplain, in order to ascertain its suitability for the school community. Visitors are never left alone with children as the supervision of students and pupils remains the responsibility of school staff.

We are mindful of the variation in personal spiritual styles and provide a range of creative opportunities including *e.g. music, silence, symbolism, drama, use of IT*.

Our worship consists of 4 stages:

- *Gather* – we welcome the community, for example, *(with music, liturgy and the lighting of a candle)*.
- *Engage* – we share, for example, *(a Bible reading, followed by an activity to engage pupils with the Christian message)*.
- *Respond* – pupils, for example, *(discuss, share, reflect, pray or sing)*.
- *Send* – we share, for example, *(the message of the worship again and ask pupils to think about how they will affect their day / learning/ behaviour. We close with liturgy, final prayer, music and the blowing out of our special candle)*.

Expectations of Pupils and Students

Students and pupils are invited to plan and lead worship on a voluntary basis. They work with the Collective Worship Leader to develop their own understanding of worship and to design a worship to support the spiritual development of their peers.

Developing Worship

The school allocates part of its budget to support the daily act of collect worship. The collective worship leader attends regular professional development with Canterbury Diocese and accesses a wide range of resources to ensure that worship is both inspiring and engaging.

Self-assessment and Inspection

Our Academy regularly evaluates our acts of collective worship and the impact it has on the school and its wider community. This involves monitoring by school leaders, staff, students, pupils and governors in order to grow and develop. We also welcome the contributions of parents and pupils through our questionnaires, which are reviewed and considered on a regular basis. These are shared with our Senior Leadership Team, Year Leaders, Academy Chaplain and full Governing Body and play an integral part in developing the spiritual growth of the school. Worship is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

The legal requirements of collective worship in Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools.

- Be conducted in accordance with the provision of the Trust Deeds of the Academy and Instrument of Government and should be consistent with the beliefs and practices of the Church of England.
- The Governing Body should ensure that all students/pupils **each day** engage meaningfully in a real act of Christian worship which is in accordance with the faith and practice of the Church.
- Arrangements for collective worship, in foundation schools of a religious character, are the responsibility of the Governing Body, after consulting with the Headteacher (*DfE Circular 1/94 para 52 & 53*).
- All acts of worship in Church schools must be Christian in character (based on Biblical teachings).
- All registered students/pupils (apart from those whose parents exercise the right to withdraw) must on 'each school day take part in an act of collective worship'.

Parental Withdrawal

Worship is regarded as special time which wholly reflects our ethos as a church school. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none. We respect the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from acts of collective worship. However, as Collective Worship is central to our ethos, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss this decision with parents and those students who are over the age of 18.