



## **COLLECTIVE ACT OF WORSHIP POLICY**

### **1. Legal framework**

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The Education Reform Act 1988
- The Education Act 1993
- DfE (1994) 'Religious Education and Collective Worship'
- DfE (2010) Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance
- DfE (2012) 'Religious education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools'
- DfE (1994) Religious education and collective worship (Circular 1/94)

### **Definition of collective worship**

'Worship' is not defined in the legislation; therefore, for the purpose of this policy, **"collective worship"** reflects an act which is special or separate from ordinary school activities. It is a time when individuals come together, and consider moral, social and spiritual issues.

To take part in collective worship implies more than a passive attendance, such that it should have the ability to elicit responses from students through debate and discussion.

### **Aims of collective worship**

Collective worship aims to:

- Provide the opportunity for students to worship
- Enable students to consider spiritual and moral issues, as well as explore their own beliefs.
- Encourage participation and response via active involvement or through listening and participating in the worship offered.
- Develop a spirit of community and an understanding of individuals with other beliefs.
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each individual's life stance, whether religious or not.
- Promote a common ethos and shared values.

- Reinforce positive attitudes.
- Provide students with the opportunity to plan, lead or contribute to discussions on key themes and topics, e.g. morality.
- Provide a peaceful environment to enable stillness, prayer and reflection.
- Help students to develop an awareness of their community and the spirit of helping others.

## **2. Organisation and planning**

Every student will participate in the act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn in line with the Right to withdraw section of this policy.

Worship will be of a broadly Christian character; however, there will be influences from other religions found in the local community.

The Headteacher is responsible for creating the agenda for collective worship in discussion with the Governing Board.

The act of worship will be held for **20 minutes daily** with form tutors and assemblies. This will also be delivered through the school's Personal Development programme.

The content of all acts of collective worship will be considered to ensure suitability and relevance to students of all ages and backgrounds.

The Headteacher will establish a timetable for collective worship to make sure progression from each session is carried on to the next, as well as to ensure that learning is practically applied by students to their lives inside and outside of school.

The school may invite visitors or guest speakers to speak during collective worship, in accordance with the timetabled theme.

Where appropriate, each assembly held will have a theme relevant to current affairs and topics agreed by the Headteacher and Governing Board.

## **3. Implementation**

The school will promote rich and meaningful experiences of collective worship that are appropriate to students' needs, ages and interests by:

Presenting displays that promote and enhance spiritual ideas and thoughts.

Encouraging students to reflect and contemplate on their thoughts, feelings and beliefs.

Using artefacts, secular stories, resources, music, art, drama, and guest speakers to engage students' interest.

Involving students in different experiences of worship, e.g. silence, prayer, rituals and shared or written prayers.

The school will take into account students of different ages and abilities when delivering the collective worship programme.

The school will arrange for learning mentors to assist students with SEND if the need arises, in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

#### **4. Right to withdraw**

Parents will have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship and will not be required to provide a reason for doing so.

Parents will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the **Headteacher** following a request of withdrawal in terms of:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the student taking part in.
- The practical implications of their withdrawal.
- Whether the parent will require notice in advance of such worship, and if so, what period of notice is preferred.

Alternative arrangements will be put in place for students who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Alternative arrangements may involve religious worship relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:

- The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational collective worship with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.
- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative arrangements will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

#### **5. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed on an **bi-annual** basis by the Headteacher in agreement with the Governing Board.

This policy will be evaluated in accordance with feedback from questionnaires and class discussions.

Any changes made to this policy and the collective worship programme will be communicated to all members of staff.

The scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2027**.