

Wisbech St Mary Church of England (VA) Academy

Collective Worship Policy

“Be the light” (Matthew 5:14-16)

By doing this we enact the Trust’s vision

Rationale

This Collective Worship Policy reflects and reinforces the school’s aims, ethos and values and demonstrates the partnership between the conduct and content of school worship and the ethos of the whole school.

At Wisbech St. Mary Academy, we consider Collective Worship to be a significant educational activity that both reflects and explores the schools distinctive Christian character and contributes to the academic achievement, personal development and well-being of all learners. It is a time when we come together to share our love of God and celebrate our achievements.

Therefore, Collective Worship at Wisbech St. Mary Academy is planned to:

- Be inspirational and inclusive. It aims to engage all learners who should be able to talk about the impact it makes on their relationships and on life in the school;
- Regularly include Biblical material and Christian teaching and which will explore and relate to the school’s core Christian values;
- Have a strong focus on the person of Jesus Christ and his position central to the Christian faith;
- Help all learners to understand Anglican and other Christian traditions found in the UK and worldwide.
- Challenge all learners of all backgrounds to understand and embark on their own spiritual journey. They should understand the value of prayer, reflection and stillness;
- Contribute significantly to pupil’s “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; by providing all learners with something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, and something to respond to;
- Be an opportunity to celebrate and give thanks for achievements within the school, local and international community and occasions of significance, including festivals.
- Have a strong focus on God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit enabling all learners to embark on an understanding of the Trinity;

Inclusion

Wisbech St. Mary Academy is a school for everyone, regardless of beliefs. Therefore, during Collective Worship, we are always sensitive to the very wide range of backgrounds and beliefs represented by our school community. This includes:

- Those who have, or who come from families with, Christian commitment and belief
- Parents who have chosen a church school (or who support its ethos) because they wish their children to experience something of the Christian faith
- Members of other faith communities
- Those who may not share in any particular religious belief

Aims

The positive educational outcomes of Collective Worship at Wisbech St. Mary Academy include opportunities for:

- The whole community to celebrate;

- Sharing and experiencing differences;
- Developing a culture of learning;
- Building a sense of group identity;
- Encouraging a sense of personal and social responsibility;
- A break from the busyness and pressures of life (for stillness and quiet);
- Learning how to behave in a large social group;
- Exploring feelings and emotions;
- Learning how to perform in front of an audience and learning how to respond to a performance;
- Making visible the school's leadership;
- Developing inner awareness;
- Valuing self and the views and opinions of others;
- Promoting fundamental British values.
- Developing a sense of community spirit.

Legal requirements

The law requires the Headteacher and Governing Body of every school to provide a daily act of Collective Worship which is in line with the schools Trust Deed and foundation. Schools are obliged to give their reasons if they feel they are not able to comply with this part of the law. The School meets this requirement and this is explained to all involved in the planning and delivery of acts of worship.

Withdrawal from Collective Worship

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from acts of worship however, in such circumstances, parents are encouraged to discuss their reasons for withdrawal with the Headteacher. The school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. The head teacher will keep a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship in our school. This forms part of each morning assembly, which takes the form of a whole school collective worship (4 days a week) and class collective worship (1 day a week).

We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that collective time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and we often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our collective worship reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. Our collective worship curriculum is designed to promote spiritual growth and moral development, helping students to develop a sense of belonging and connection to one another and to the wider community. Through a variety of engaging activities, including prayer, storytelling, and songs, we foster an atmosphere of reverence and respect. This curriculum supports our mission to Be The Light, encouraging them to explore their own beliefs while learning about and respecting the diverse perspectives of others.

Our collective worship reflects the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Worship offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the

school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised. Wisbech St. Mary Academy is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all the children in worship.

We regularly invite parents to join regular collective worship and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

Whole school collective worship is held on 4 days of the week with a class based worship held on the remaining day.

Whole school Celebration collective worship is held on a Friday, the school gathers for this worship, in which the achievements of pupils at the school are celebrated. This worship will normally provide opportunities for spiritual development.

	School Involvement	Leader
Monday	Whole school	Headteacher
Tuesday	Whole school Choral worship	Deputy Head Teacher
Wednesday	Class based collective worship	Class teacher
Thursday	Whole school	Class teacher
Friday	Whole school celebration	Headteacher

Pupils are involved in the planning and leading of Collective Worship in the following ways:

- Collective worship Leaders meet on a half termly basis, and is made up of Year 6 Children who are responsible for planning and leading an act of Collective Worship. Pupils are encouraged to suggest the theme and message of the act of worship and consider how they will deliver this message to other pupils;
- Each class may have responsibility for preparing and delivering part of a longer Collective Worship which may be held at Church to celebrate a specific time of year (e.g. Christmas, Easter, and Harvest).
- Year 6 prepare and deliver the act of worship in church.
- In most acts of collective worship, individual pupils are invited to lead prayers, which pupils of all ages are keen to do.
- Pupils are invited to be volunteers on an 'ad hoc' basis to act out or role play situations/stories.

Themes

We have devised our own collective worship curriculum, influenced by the Diocese of Ely Collective worship collection, with a range of resources and links to other sites.

Our Christian values of excellence, responsibility, compassion, perseverance, courage and respect form the basis of our worship and wider school life. Care is taken to ensure that understanding of each value is rooted in the Bible and the example of Jesus.

We have added in significant dates in the Christian year and days of particular importance such as Remembrance Day.

Themes for collective worship are planned by the RE lead using the Diocese of Ely themes.

Monitoring and review

The monitoring and evaluation of Collective Worship forms part of the school's programme of monitoring. This is done through:

- Formal observations of Acts of Collective Worship led by a range of leaders;
- Pupil discussion groups with the Headteacher, collective worship lead or Governor;
- Informal observations of how pupils are putting the messages from Collective Worship into practice.

The school's governors have a role monitoring Collective Worship. The programme of acts of Collective Worship is coordinated by the Collective Worship co-ordinator. We welcome governor attendance at our assemblies at any time.

Approved by the Governing Body:

September 2024

Next Review: September 2025