



Whitburn Church of England Academy

Collective Worship Policy

Preface

The Academy Vision and Values can be found here:

<https://www.whitburncofeacademy.org/about-us/academy-ethos.html>

This policy and its associated procedures are based on these key principles and values.

Introduction

Collective Worship plays a central role in the life of our school community and is an expression of our Christian Vision as a Church of England Academy. This policy and its associated procedures aim to exemplify the Academy's Christian Vision of 'Excellence for All'. We are committed to offering high quality Collective Worship, as required by the Education Reform Act (1988). Our approach to Collective Worship aims to meet the needs of all members of our school community, wherever they may be on their journey of faith and belief, by providing opportunities to encounter faith in an 'inclusive, invitation and inspiring'¹ manner, welcoming people of all faiths and none.

Whilst worship is 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'²; as a Church School, our Collective Worship also aims to reflect the Anglican status of the Academy, as expressed in its trust deed, by building on the lived diversity of Anglican tradition and identity around the world.

This policy applies to all year groups, including Sixth Form students.

Provision

Students have the opportunity to take part in an act of Collective Worship each day. This takes place either in tutor time, in year groups, key stages or as a whole school community. All students are also given the opportunity to take a lead in Collective Worship, for example, through leading 'Thought for the Week' in form time, or by leading year group Worship Assemblies with their tutor group.

Our Collective Worship is characterised by opportunities for quiet prayer, stillness and reflection, as well as helping students to consider how they might pursue their God-given potential and use their gifts to serve others in the communities in which they find themselves (John 10:10). Consequently, Collective Worship plays a central role in fostering our strong sense of community; it also makes an important contribution to the aspiration, achievement, personal development and wellbeing of all our students.

¹ The Church of England Education Office, *Collective Worship in Church of England Schools - Guidance Document: Inclusive, invitational, Inspiring*; D Holloway (March 2021) This policy closely references this document throughout. [Collective Worship Guidance 18052021.pdf \(churchofengland.org\)](https://www.churchofengland.org/collective-worship-guidance-18052021.pdf)

² Education Reform Act 1988 section 7(1) and the corresponding section of the Education Act 1993

The Right of Withdrawal

Parents/carers may request that their child be withdrawn from Collective Worship. Sixth Form students who are over the age of 18 have the right to withdraw themselves.

‘Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring’

Our Worship is ‘collective’ in that it involves meeting together as a community and having an opportunity for stillness, reflection and, for some, prayer - in an otherwise busy working environment. Our worship does not assume faith, but offers opportunities for all members of our school community to think, to ask questions, to reflect and the space to pray if they wish to. Care is taken to ensure that the language used is accessible, does not assume faith, and is warmly welcoming.

The metaphor of ‘warm fires and open doors’³ illustrates this well. During Collective Worship, the door is open and all are welcomed in. Each person can choose to sit as near or as far away from the fire as they feel comfortable.

Our Collective Worship also aims to be ‘formational and transformational’⁴, encouraging students and adults alike to ask big questions, and to motivate them into thinking reflectively and acting differently. Our aim is to motivate students to become courageous advocates for change in their local communities, and in the wider world.

Aims and Objectives (with reference to SIAMS Inquiry Question 3)⁵

Our Collective Worship explores the Academy’s Christian Vision through our community’s shared ‘Be Values’, which were chosen by the students themselves. These values also aim to develop character and contribute to academic progress.



Our Collective Worship aims to:

³ Speech by David Thomson, Bishop of Huntingdon 2014 quoted in *The Fruits of the Spirit: A Church of England Discussion Paper on Character Education* (The Church of England Education Office 2015) Page 13

⁴ *Collective Worship in Church of England Schools - Guidance Document: Inclusive, invitational, Inspiring*; Page 3

⁵ [SIAMS Framework 2023 p.9](#)

- Help students and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the trinitarian nature of God.
- Offer the opportunity, without compulsion, to all students and adults to grow and flourish spiritually through experiences of prayer, stillness, worship and reflection.
- Enable all students and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship and festivals.
- Enable students to develop skills through engaging in the planning, leading and evaluation of collective worship in ways that lead to improving practice.

Theme of the Week

Our 'Be Values' are used to inform the Themes for the Week, which are set out each year in the school calendar. Interactive, multimedia PowerPoint resources are written and provided by the Collective Worship Coordinator on each weekly theme, to support form tutors with leading collective worship.

*Please see **Appendix 1** for an exemplar Collective Worship Calendar.*

Worship Assemblies

Further similar weekly resources are also produced in parallel with the Theme of the Week for Pastoral Year Leads, to support them with their leading of Collective Worship with their year group.

Throughout the year, Special Whole School and Key Stage Worship Assemblies mark seasons in the Church calendar; dates are as closely aligned with the Church calendar as possible, within the constraints of term time. These Worship Assemblies are kindly attended by Governors, some members of the local Parish Church congregation and, when possible, the Priest-in-Charge of Whitburn Parish Church.

Further Collective Worship events happen at key points during the academic year, such as our Y7 and Y11 Assemblies of Light, the Carol Service, and year group Church services that are held at Whitburn Parish Church. We also participate in Collective Worship activities that are organised by the Diocese of Durham such as providing Year 10 leaders for the Year 6 Leavers' Services in Durham Cathedral, and the annual schools' Pilgrimage walking across to Holy Island in Northumberland at low tide.

Developing Staff Expertise

There is a named member of staff in charge of Coordinating Collective Worship.

Staff in charge of coordinating Collective Worship have access to training and advice through the local Diocesan Joint Education Team.

The Collective Worship Coordinator is responsible for providing training, support and guidance to the wider staff of the Academy concerning the delivery of Collective Worship.

Approved by the Governing Body on 19th March 2024

Governance

There is a named member of the governing body who is linked to the Collective Worship Coordinator, and this person is normally a representative from the local Parish Council.

Appendix 1 (Exemplar)

Collective Worship Overview: 2023-24

Week beginning	Theme of the Week	Whole School Worship Assembly	Key Stage / Year Group Worship Assembly	NB
4th Sept				Students from Wed 6 th Remembering 9/11
11th Sept	Be Respectful	Welcome to our Community (Mon 11 th 9am)	Y7 Assembly of Light (Fri 15 th 9am)	
18th Sept	Be Helpful			
25th Sept	Be a Learner			
2nd Oct	Be Fair	Harvest Worship (Fri 6 th 9am)		October is Black History Month
9th Oct	Be Kind			Interfaith Week of Prayer for World Peace (8 th -15 th)
16th Oct	Celebrating Racial Diversity			
23rd Oct	Integrity			
Half Term				
6th Nov	Remembering	Remembrance (Fri 10 th 9am)		Remembrance Sunday (12 th Nov)
13th Nov	Valuing One Another			Anti-Bullying Week (13 th -17 th)
20th Nov	Be a Peacemaker			Advent Sunday (3 rd Dec)
27th No	A Thankful Heart			St Andrew's Day (30 th Nov)
4th Dec	Advent	Advent Worship (Tues 5th 9am)		Human Rights Day (10 th Dec)
11th Dec	Patience			Hanukkah (7 th – 15 th Dec)
18th Dec	Light of the World	Carol Service (Thurs 21 st) Christmas Worship (Fri 22nd 12.00)		
Christmas Holiday				
				Epiphany (6 th Jan)
8th Jan	Perseverance	Epiphany Worship (Mon 8 th 9am)		
15th Jan	Joy			
22nd Jan	Freedom	Holocaust Memorial (Fri 26 th 9am)		Holocaust Memorial Day (Saturday 27 th Jan)

29th Jan	The Power of Words			Candlemas (2 nd Feb)
5th Feb	Hope			Internet Safety Day (Tues 6 th Feb)
12th Feb	Love One Another	Lent Worship (Wed 14th 9am)		Ash Wednesday (14 th Feb)
Half Term				
26th Feb	Humility			St David's Day (1 st Mar)
4th Mar	Justice			Fairtrade Fortnight (4 th – 17 th); Ramadan begins (10 th)
11th Mar	Resolving Conflict			St Patrick's Day (17 th Mar)
18th Mar	Servant Leadership			
25th Mar	Easter: Forgiveness and Hope	Easter Worship (Thursday 28th 9am)		Good Friday (29 th)
Easter Holiday				
				Eid-ul-Fitr (c.10th Apr)
15th Apr	Facing Life's Challenges	Facing Life's Challenges (Mon 15th 9am)		
22nd Apr	Encouraging Others		Year 11 Assembly of Light (Fri 26th 9am)	St George's Day (23 rd Apr)
29th Apr	Resilience			
6th May	Be a Good Listener			Deaf Awareness Week (6 th – 12 th May)
13th May	Generosity		Pentecost Worship (NR – year groups only)	Christian Aid Week (12 th -18 th May) Pentecost Sunday (19 th)
20th May	Use your Gifts			
Half Term				
3rd Jun	Stewardship			World Environment Day (5 th June)
10th Jun	Be Forgiving			
17th Jun	Different Pasts, Shared Future			Refugee Week (16 th -22 nd June)
24th Jun	Creativity			
1st Jul	Courage			
8th Jul	Celebrating Achievement			
15th Jul	Be a Team Player	End of Year Worship (Fri 19th Jul 12pm)		

Year Group Worship Assemblies	
Monday	Y11
Tuesday	Y10
Wednesday	Y9 & Sixth Form
Thursday	Y8
Friday	Y7

Collective Worship Policy		
Creation Date	Version	Status
November 2006	1.0	Approved by the Governing Body
Revision Date		
24 th November 2009	2.0	Approved by the Governing Body
1 st February 2011	3.0	Approved by the Governing Body
22 nd May 2012	4.0	Approved by the Governing Body
8 th October 2013	5.0	Approved by the Governing Body
7 th October 2014	6.0	Approved by the Governing Body
3 rd October 2017	7.0	Approved by the Governing Body
19 th March 2019	8.0	Approved by the Governing Body
23 rd March 2022	9.0	Governing Body requested further tweaks to be made
17 th May 2022	9.0	Approved by the Governing Body
16 th May 2023	10.0	Approved by the Governing Body
19 th March 2024	11.0	Approved by the Governing Body