



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-vision-and-values/>

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.



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](#)

Our Collective Worship aims to:

- 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.

Governance

A named member of the governing body (**still to be confirmed as of 17th March 2026**), 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: 2025-26

	Week beginning	Theme of the Week	Whole School Worship Assembly	Key Stage / Year Group Worship Assembly	NB
1	1st Sept				Students return on Wed 3rd
2	8th Sept	Be Respectful	Welcome to our Community (Monday 8th at 9am)	Y7 Assembly of Light (Fri 12th at 9am)	
1	15th Sept	Be Helpful			
2	22nd Sept	Be a Learner			
1	29th Sept	Be Fair			
2	6th Oct	Be Kind	Harvest Worship (Friday 10th Oct at 9am)		October is Black History Month
1	13th Oct	Celebrating Racial Diversity			Interfaith Week of Prayer for World Peace
2	20th Oct	Integrity			
Half Term					
1	3rd Nov	Valuing One Another			Remembrance Sunday 9th
2	10th Nov	Remembering	Remembrance Assembly (Tuesday 11th Nov at 9am)		Antibullying Week
1	17th Nov	Be a Peacemaker			
2	24th Nov	A Thankful Heart			Advent Sunday 30 th November St Andrew's Day 30 th November
1	1st Dec	Advent	Advent Worship (Monday 1 st December at 9am)		
2	8th Dec	Patience			Human Rights Day 10 th December
1	15th Dec	Light of the World	Carol Service (Thursday 18 th at 6pm) Christmas Worship (Friday 19 th at 12.00)		

Christmas Holiday					
2	5th Jan	Perseverance	Epiphany Worship (Tuesday 6 th January at 9am)		Epiphany 6 th January
1	12th Jan	Hope			
2	19th Jan	Resilience			
1	26th Jan	Freedom	Holocaust Memorial Assembly (Tuesday 27 th January at 9am)		Holocaust Memorial Day 27 th January
2	2nd Feb	The Power of Words			Candlemas 2 nd February
1	9th Feb	Love One Another			Valentine's Day 14 th February
2	16 th Feb	Humility	Ash Wednesday Worship (Wednesday 18 th February at 9am)		Ramadan begins 17 th February Ash Wednesday 18 th February
Half Term					
					St David's Day 1 st March
1	2nd Mar	Justice			Fairtrade Fortnight (March 2 nd – 15 th)
2	9th Mar	Encouraging Others			
1	16th Mar	Resolving Conflict			Id-ul-Fitr c. March 20 th (depending on the moon) St Patrick's Day 17 th March
2	23rd Mar	Servant Leadership			
1	30th Mar	Easter: Forgiveness and Hope	Easter Worship (Thursday 2 nd April at 9am)		Good Friday 3 rd April
Easter Holiday					
2	20th Apr	Facing Life's Challenges		Y11 Assembly of Light (Friday 24 th April at 9am)	St George's Day 23 rd April
1	27th Apr	Be Forgiving			
2	4th May	Be a Good Listener			
1	11th May	Generosity			Christian Aid Week
2	18th May	Use Your Gifts		Pentecost Worship Assemblies (NR - Year Groups in Lecture Theatre)	Pentecost Sunday 24 th May

Half Term					
1	1st Jun	Stewardship			World Environment Day 5 th June
2	8th Jun	Joy			
1	15th Jun	Different Pasts, Shared Future			Refugee Week
2	22nd Jun	Creativity			
1	29 th Jun	Courage			
2	6th Jul	Celebrating Achievement			
1	13th Jul	Be a Team Player	End of Year Worship (Friday 17 th July at 12.00)		

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

Collective Worship Policy		
Review Cycle: Annually		
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
18 th March 2025	12.0	Approved by the Governing Body
17 th March 2026	13.0	Approved by the Governing Body