

Woodchurch High School

A Church of England Academy



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY DOCUMENT

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Aims and Objectives

At Woodchurch High School we always seek to reflect in our worship the Christian foundation and values of the school and its care for all who work here. Pupils are helped to understand the meaning of Christian worship and we trust that believers will be able to share in it and that others of other faiths and none will reach the 'threshold of worship'.

Our central aims of collective worship are to:

- enable pupils and staff to explore and celebrate the differences and diversity found in the variety of forms of worship in the Anglican Christian tradition.
- lead the school community to the 'threshold of worship' in order for them to make an informed choice about their own involvement and to consider their own personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- seek to deepen and widen the experience of those of 'faith' and encourage those of 'no faith' so that they begin to feel for themselves something of what it means to worship.
- use celebration, silence, stilling, reflection, contemplation, meditation, prayer, song and imagery as vehicles for worship and spiritual growth.
- provide opportunities for the whole school community to address God directly through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit through acknowledging His presence, reflecting upon His character and giving Him praise and honour.
- use a vocabulary of worship that encourages the whole school community to attend, participate and lead worship.
- raise awareness through collective worship of the ultimate questions of life relating to matters of faith.
- reaffirm, strengthen and practise our Christian values of Forgiveness, Integrity, Humility, Hope, Wisdom, Justice, Trust, Service, Endurance, Compassion and Thankfulness.
- celebrate each unique individual member of the school community as made in the image of God.
- nurture and encourage respect and care for God's created world by promoting a positive attitude to environmental issues locally, nationally and globally.
- seek to provide opportunities for spiritual, social and moral development that is characterised by feelings such as awe, wonder, being uplifted, elation, appreciation, gratitude, respect, and reverence.

- develop a sense of community within the school, the locality, (e.g. local church) and foster the sense of being part of a wider community through the celebration of achievements, festivals and special occasions.
- foster a concern for the needs of others.

In summary within our daily act of collective worship, we aim to provide opportunities for students to:

- celebrate all that is good and beautiful and express thankfulness for the joy of being alive;
- share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the darker times of life;
- have experiences which are relevant to the age, aptitude and family background of the pupils;
- have time for silent reflection and exploration of inner space;
- experience a rich variety of forms of expression, e.g. art, drama, music, story and give pupils the opportunity to experience these at their own level.
- have an environment that is conducive to worship, which is professionally coordinated and properly resourced;
- feel invited, never coerced, remembering that pupils will be at different stages of spiritual development.

Monitoring

Monitoring of collective worship will be carried out jointly by the Headteacher, key senior teachers, Pastoral Team and the Chaplaincy team. Useful strategies for collecting the evidence will include:

- written observations; checking that practice matches planning
- observing pupils attentiveness and level of interest
- conducting occasional formal observations of collective worship and providing feedback
- seeking feedback from pupils, staff and parents
- observing the extent of the collective worship's influence on students' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school
- holding regular discussions with colleagues

- feedback brought to Chaplaincy meetings which will review collective worship which will be held every half term.
- the information gathered via one or more of the strategies listed above will be analysed carefully in order to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the collective worship. The Headteacher, key Senior teachers and the Chaplaincy team will be the main evaluators.
- formal evaluation of collective worship will take place at least annually as detailed in the school improvement plan and chaplaincy action plan.

Review

The Headteacher, Chaplaincy team, Governors and staff will review this policy every three years. A worship planning and record sheet is kept to ensure that acts of worship are generally compatible with the requirements of the policy and to inform our learning and planning for further developments. These will regularly include any formal and informal evaluations of acts of collective worship which will assist monitoring, future planning and delivery. Visitors outside the school community who are regularly involved in acts of worship are provided with a copy of the collective worship policy.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

A daily act of collective worship is held for all pupils regardless of their background of culture or religion. Every effort is made by the school to involve all students unless withdrawn by their parents in accordance with the law.

Management of Collective Worship

It is the ultimate responsibility of the Headteacher and Governing body of a school to ensure a daily act of collective worship takes place. At Woodchurch High School the responsibility to co-ordinate the acts of worship is delegated to the chaplaincy team. They plan themes, produce materials for form time worship, invite and liaise with visiting speakers and keep a record of the content of each programmed act of collective worship. Monitoring and evaluation is the responsibility of the key senior teachers.

Responsibilities

Collective Worship is organised to provide a variety of groupings and will take place in the school hall, or the classroom. Typically each year group will have an act of worship once a week. On the remaining days worship will take place within form groups.

Acts of worship will usually last for approximately 10 minutes, although it is recognized that this time will be shortened or lengthened when it is appropriate.

To celebrate key Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter formal worship services will be held.

Conclusion

At Woodchurch High School, collective worship is highly valued and every effort is made to ensure that all Pupils and staff take an active part in a high quality daily act of collective worship. Worship may contain many elements but at Woodchurch High School we seek to specifically ensure that the act of collective worship is a learning experience as well as a spiritual encounter.

The Right of Withdrawal

The parents' legal right to withdraw their child from acts of worship is clearly laid out in the school prospectus. If there are any pupils whose parents exercise their right to withdraw them from worship, alternative activities will be provided in consultation with the pupils parents. This does not mean that the students will be in any way exempt from the Christian ethos of the school which underpins the whole of school life. Parents are made fully aware of this when they enrol their children.