



## Collective Worship Policy

### Background Information

The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) requires, "All pupils in attendance at a maintained school" to "take part in a daily act of Collective Worship." (ERA Section 6 (1)). The DCSF Circular (1/94) states that the/a daily act of collective worship should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character that is 'reflecting' the 'broad traditions of Christian belief' without being denominationally biased.

### At Warmington School, we will:

- Provide the opportunity for pupils to worship and to reflect on their own thoughts and ideas;
- Provide opportunities for pupils to consider moral issues and to explore their own beliefs;
- Encourage participation and response whether through active involvement in presentation of worship or through listening to, watching and joining in with the worship offered;
- Develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, reinforcing positive attitudes;
- Give pupils the opportunity to respond to things of worth;
- Contribute to the moral and spiritual development of our pupils;
- Provide opportunities for the development of the skills of reflection;
- Respect the integrity of all;
- Reflect upon the symbols used by a range of faiths and their use in worship;
- Observe the cycle of the Anglican year; Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter and reflect upon and share events of other faiths and calendars;
- Provide opportunities to learn traditional responses and prayers as well as opportunities for meditation and silence during worship
- Offer pupils the opportunity to learn about and to celebrate, shared values and beliefs from other faiths;
- Encourage an acceptance of all, regardless of age, race, gender or religious opinion.

### School Worship shall:

- Be mainly expressed through the daily assembly; however, there will be many opportunities for classes to reflect and share upon key values that are part of the curriculum and this is to be actively encouraged;
- Be collective, not corporate. 'Collective' means the gathering together of a school group or groups for worship and reflection. It does not in any way suggest an act of worship which involves a group meeting to subscribe to any particular faith or denomination of a faith, nor does it seek a uniform response from pupils. It is school policy to encourage a diversity of beliefs and points of view to allow each individual child to respond as an individual;
- Be an affirmation and celebration of the values and ethos of the school;
- Provide a period of time for reflection, contemplation and stillness;
- Follow the Northamptonshire SACRE Guidance that the Act of Worship shall:
  - Be broadly Christian
  - Respect the integrity of all present
- Provide an opportunity for all to respond to things of worth. This will involve:
  - Participation;



- Observation;
  - Recognition of and response to, the spiritual dimension of human experience;
  - Participation through singing hymns or appropriate songs listening to music;
  - Reading or listening to words of scripture or other appropriate readings
- Contribute to and support the school aims, those particularly relevant are as follows:
- Encourage each child to mature into an independent, caring responsible individual
  - Provide a caring environment in which the highest standards of behaviour are expected and positively reinforced
  - Create a happy purposeful environment in which to work and play
  - Provide equal opportunities for everyone in the whole school community

### **Personal, Spiritual and Moral Education/British Values**

The importance and impact can be further developed by giving consideration to the following, which can be developed through worship and assembly, by discussion, listening to stories, taking part in plays, sharing experiences, etc.

Through our collective worship, we will develop the following values which are both broadly Christian and also integral British values (the list is not exhaustive):

Compassion, Concern, Consideration, Conviction, Co-operation, Corporate responsibility, Forgiveness, Honesty, Humility, Integrity, Mercy, Perseverance, Respect, Self-Knowledge, Self-reliance, Self-sacrifice, Tolerance and Trust.

### **Guidance on reflection**

Pupils shall be given the opportunity to develop skills of reflection. Reflection is more beneficial when the invitation is given to reflect upon a specific idea. Reflection can be religious or non-religious and can be aided by consistent and regular reinforcement of expectations.

The worship experience of pupils should involve the opportunity to reflect, be thankful and to celebrate. These experiences should be directed at school values and personal values. These will, for example, be used in assemblies, collective worship and grace to allow all to reflect on values and for our children to respond in their own individual ways.

### **Broadly Christian Character**

While it is a legal requirement to ensure that collective worship is of a broadly Christian character, Warrington School is a non-denominational school; therefore, sensitivity to the faith backgrounds of all pupils is required. It is, for example, appropriate for the school to tell the life and teachings of Jesus, but inappropriate for all pupils to be required to address Jesus directly in prayer.

In order to achieve an act of worship which meets the above requirements, we will concentrate on the characteristics which are shared by faiths as well as those which are specific to Christianity.

### **Quality Worship and Good Practice:**

#### Collective Worship is most effective when it:

Is based upon planning of themes with clear objectives;

Focuses on a range of values – concern for daily happenings in school life, events around the world, appreciating successes in the school and reflecting upon the different dimensions of human life;



- Involves pupils and a range of staff and visitors;
- Encourages and helps others to listen;
- Involves time for reflection and individual thought;
- Emphasises quality and not quantity;
- Uses a variety of methods and delivery;
- Offers open access to assembly.

Participation by children is essential to their development and understanding; it encourages others to listen and can be developed by, for example:

- Circle time e.g. sharing experiences/ideas and offering solutions;
- Demonstrations of hobbies/skills, this encourages personal development of children;
- Use of artefacts/visual aids;
- Use of Music, dance and drama
- Raising self-esteem in a variety of ways;
- Providing opportunities to challenge stereotypes;
- Having reflection time at the end of a topic or RE lesson so that pupils reflect on what they have learned and the impact it may have.

### **Organisation**

Collective Worship and assembly are combined to ensure that collective worship takes place within a broad educational framework. These are held every afternoon between 2.50pm and 3.10pm. On Fridays a 'sharing assembly' is held in the school hall with merit certificates awarded to pupils nominated by staff members. Acts of Worship and assembly are lead either by the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or by staff members.

It is the current practice to invite parents and friends to attend specific whole school celebrations, e.g. Christmas and Sharing Assemblies. Some of these are held in the local church and the vicar also holds regular assemblies in school.

### **Planning and Evaluation**

A record of the content and character of each Act of Collective Worship and Assembly is retained within school. Collective worship should be evaluated as part of the on-going dialogue process in the school.

### **Parental Concerns**

All parental letters dealing with concerns or desires about Collective Worship are filed separately.

### **Right of Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. Parents are required to inform the school of their decision in writing.

Parents may arrange for alternative provision for their children.

The school informs parents of supervision arrangements.

The school prospectus contains a statement with regard to parental rights to withdraw children from Collective Worship.

### **Teachers and Staff**

Staff are required to contribute to the moral, spiritual development of their pupils. They will, on occasions, be required to attend school assemblies but may withdraw from the Act of Collective Worship, thus exercising their legal right.

They will not be required to lead an Act of Worship if they exercise their right of non-participation. The school respects the right for staff to exercise this right, should they wish to do so.