

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Date: March 2010
2014

Last updated: January 2017

Date review due: January 2020

Portfolio Group responsible: Curriculum & Christian
Distinctiveness

Origin: Assistant Headteacher (J Larrington)



Academy Context

This average sized 11-19 Academy is built into a hill within a rural isolated area. Around half of the students come from the local town but the remainder travel some distance to the Academy. Much of the local employment is seasonal. Almost all the students are White British. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than that seen nationally, the largest proportion of these students having emotional, behavioural and social, moderate learning and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. There is a learning support unit (LSU) within the Academy and a Local Additional Provision (HUB) that students with a variety of needs can access.

Aims and Values

We serve and support our community providing a child-centred education that reflects Christian values. Respecting the dignity and potential of each individual person and sensitive to the needs of a diverse society, we strive to enhance and strengthen our values:

- Hope
- Kindness
- Courage
- Integrity
- Trust
- Respect
- Responsibility

These values are central to our school.

We are committed to the highest standards of academic excellence; we are dedicated to providing the best possible education for all our students by developing the knowledge, understanding and skills essential for learning and leading a fulfilled life.

Introduction

At The Ilfracombe Academy, we believe that Collective Worship (assembly and reflection) plays a very important role in the life and ethos of our School. It is an opportunity to celebrate all aspects of school life, reflect our Christian distinctiveness, to support our curriculum and core values, and to provide an opportunity for stillness and reflection in what is often a very busy, active day for our students.

Aims

THIS POLICY WILL HELP THE SCHOOL TO FULFIL ITS AIMS BY:

- encouraging students to be open to new ideas
- providing a caring and reflective environment based on Christian values
- encouraging respect and tolerance
- supporting and strengthening what we aim to do in every aspect of school life
- supporting the value we place on the development of the whole child, i.e. spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual growth
- offering the space young people need to develop a reflective approach to life
- offering the space for young people to express and reflect on their own beliefs in a way that is appropriate in a church school setting.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY:

Through collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for young people to:

- become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- grow in understanding of other people and their beliefs and values
- explore the language which people use to express their beliefs and values
- deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them, including helping them to experience awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy.
- grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimuli
- to provide an opportunity to celebrate major Christian festivals

TO FULFIL THIS POLICY THE LEADERSHIP GROUP AND GOVERNORS OF THE SCHOOL WILL WORK TOWARDS:

- all registered school age pupils having the opportunity to take part in an act of worship each day
- acts of worship are wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character for the majority of the time and allow for an appropriate response without coercion.
- acts of worship are appropriate, with regard to the age, aptitude and background of the young people involved
- the faith background of both the staff and the young people is respected at all times.

Collective worship, whether in assembly or tutor time reflection, will:

- be acceptable to the whole community, staff and pupils
- include a variety of elements at different times
- involve the pupils.

Educational benefits

1. Collective Worship is of educational value to children, young people and adults within the Academy community. It provides a means of developing an appreciation that goes beyond the material world, fostering a concern for others and providing a forum for exploring shared values.
2. It is important that young people become familiar with the language and silence common to many forms of public worship. They are all likely to attend, at the very least, at some point in their lives, a funeral, a wedding or a baptism.
3. Collective Worship is a shared experience. It offers children, young people and adults an opportunity to have an insight into humanity's shared search for God, and in doing so builds community in and beyond the Academy.
4. Collective Worship offers opportunities for co-operation and the fostering of strong relationships between the Academy and the local communities they serve. Local faith

leaders are utilised as a resource and invited to play a part in Collective Worship in the Academy.

The Legal Position

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that collective worship must be on a daily basis for all registered pupils. Furthermore, acts of worship “must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, i.e. reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief.” As a Church of England Academy, our worship is fully in line with the principles and practice of worship in the Church of England. At The Ilfracombe Academy, we have developed a range of themes and topics through which collective worship takes place. For example, key themes include our school’s Christian values of hope, kindness, courage, integrity, trust, respect and responsibility. We believe these themes are clearly Christian in nature but are universal in their application. We recognise that in our school we have some pupils from faith backgrounds and that many pupils have no religious background at all. Great care is taken in our assemblies and reflections to ensure that all pupils feel valued and special and that their integrity as human beings is consistently upheld. Collective Worship at The Ilfracombe Academy is an inclusive activity. Parents do have, of course, the right of withdrawal from Collective Worship on religious grounds. This school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the head teacher/worship co-ordinator followed by written confirmation of withdrawal. The school has a system of suitable supervision for students withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship. However, no additional work is set or followed in this time.

Context of Collective Worship

Collective Worship at The Ilfracombe Academy takes place in the dining hall in either year group or House groups (the school has no individual space large enough to accommodate the whole school). Acts of Worship take place in the broader framework of school assemblies and are planned thematically to reflect our core values and Christian festivals, although they also reflect current affairs (eg natural disasters with a fundraising response, national Remembrance week etc). Tutors attend all assemblies, and the usual pattern is outlined below, and is published on the school calendar:

- weekly Year based assembly with Head of Year
- termly House based assembly with Head of House
- half termly Achievement Assembly with Head of Year and the Headteacher
- half Termly Worship assembly with a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- half termly, Local Clergy support our assemblies during times of key Christian festivals

There is a detailed plan of assemblies with suggested resources put together by the Assistant Headteacher (Worship Coordinator) and the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) supported by the heads of year. The assembly leader has the final responsibility of putting together the assembly, relating it closely to the particular audience. The heads of year and members of the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for maintaining records of the worship assemblies they deliver, and these are ‘banked’ for future use.

In addition, there is a ‘reflection for the week provided for use in tutor groups once per week. This is shared with students by their tutors, enabling those not involved in the formal assembly to

engage in a time of reflection. The reflection is broadcast on the internal TV network as a daily reminder.

Worship is evaluated annually, via the Academy Quality Assurance processes including pupil and staff questionnaires, student voice, and regular ‘drop-ins’ by the senior team to monitor the quality of the experiences being offered.

Conclusion

Collective Worship plays a very important role in our school as we seek to develop our students in the skills of reflection and empathy, to encourage and celebrate their talents and to promote their spiritual and moral development.

POLICY HISTORY				
Policy / Version Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation Date	Review Date
March 2011	Updated	Judith Larrington	March 2011	March 2014
May 2014	Updates linked to Academy / Church status	Judith Larrington	September 14	July 2017
January 2017	Updated by Senior Staff – minor amendments made	Judith Larrington	January 2017	July 2017