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| *Inspiring All to Excellence* |  |  |  |
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Heathfields Infant & Wilnecote Junior Academy

# Collective Worship Policy

# Reviewed: October 2022

# Review: October 2024

### **Document Control**

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### **Version Control**

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| **Section** | **Changes Made** |
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### **Rationale**

It is a legal requirement that all school age children take part in a daily act of collective worship for all students which takes account of their age and aptitude [Education Reform Act 1988]. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character” for the majority of the time. Parents of a pupil at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the headteacher.

**Definitions**

**Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all pupils an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful experiences and provides opportunities for the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Worship defined in this way draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection for pupils and staff whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. In this way collective worship is inclusive not exclusive.

**Worship of a broadly Christian character**

By broadly Christian character at Heathfields Infant and Wilnecote Junior Academy we mean that we will:

* Create an atmosphere in which every child feels secure in their own beliefs and has respect for the beliefs of others, whilst acknowledging the broadly Christian traditions of the country
* Provide opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate festivals of major world religions
* Ensure that collective worship topics are presented in relation to one or more religions (or from a moral or spiritual aspect), exploring key concepts common to Christianity and other religions, e.g., love, trust, forgiveness, mercy, humility, courage and integrity, respect for life, value of an individual, justice, co‐operation and service, honesty, and truthfulness.
* To provide pupils with variety in their experience of worship, acts of worship may take the form of a whole school act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for students in different age groups or school groups. Collective Worship may be held at any time during the school day.

**Aims**

Collective worship can both reinforce and contribute to the ethos of the school, in addition to offering a unique occasion in the school day to pause and explore life beyond the prescribed curriculum. It encourages members of the whole school community, teachers and learners together, to challenge assumptions and reflect upon issues which transcend normal day to day experiences. It aims to broaden understanding of and contribute to our search for meaning in life. It can make a significant contribution to the ethos of the school by reinforcing and reflecting the beliefs and values which bind the school community together. It can inspire, uplift, celebrate and give a sense of purpose and direction. By enabling pupils to acknowledge the value of diversity in terms of race, gender, culture and differing abilities, it fosters inclusion, breeds tolerance and nurtures respect It allows those with religious commitment to enter into worship, those who have no such commitment are offered an opportunity to sense what worship can mean and reflect personally.

Collective worship in our school aims to meet our vision of “inspiring all to excellence” along with our core values. Our values are:

* We are brave
* We care
* We celebrate individuality
* We leave no one behind

**Procedure**

In this school, at times, we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. The headteacher usually leads the whole school assemblies, with other staff leading at appropriate times, predominantly during class assemblies.

We choose from a range of methods, including:

* Pupil’s contributions
* Sacred and secular stories/readings
* Dance/drama
* Prayer/meditation/songs/hymns/music
* Artefacts/natural materials
* Visual aids/focal points
* Dialogue/creative silence
* Visitors

Collective worship may also be carried out during curriculum time in subjects such as: Religious Education (R.E.) and Personal Social Health and Economic Eduation (PSHE) as both subjects share the same core values as collective worship.

**Song/music**

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. We are careful with our songs to recognise that there might be some words which some of our children would find offensive to sing. We may change the words of some songs to make them more inclusive. We select our songs/music carefully to match the theme. Every week we have a singing assembly lead by the school’s music lead. During this we take time to consider carefully the words of one of the songs and make this into a worshipful experience by reflecting on and responding to that song.

**Visitors**

We enjoy the fresh approach which visitors can bring to our school worship, but we require them to adhere to our values.

**We expect students to:**

* be respectful
* act in an appropriate manner
* have the daily opportunity for a sense of togetherness which engenders a sense of belonging
* understand of the purpose of worship, which is based on respect for God

**We expect staff to:**

* lead, where applicable, in the agreed manner, collective worship including class assemblies
* respond to collective worship in an appropriate and respectful manner
* develop links with faith groups and at times, offer them the opportunity to lead assemblies and collective worship in the agreed format for our school

**It is not appropriate to:**

* make the students repeat a prayer if they do not wish to
* join their hands if they do not wish
* say ‘Amen’ if they do not wish