

# Principles of Inspiring Collective Worship

## Collective Worship

### EDUCATIONAL

#### Universal

Focus on a value or virtue that would be considered acceptable by almost every parent in the city; an idea or concept to which their children could aspire. Beliefs that people could hold in common, and none hold in common.

#### Theistic

Reference to character attributes of God that are likely to be endorsed by most families who have a belief in God. Beliefs that people of faith hold in common.

### Faith-Specific

Presentation of material drawn from the resources of one particular faith tradition. Beliefs that uniquely express a particular faith perspective

### SPIRITUAL

### INCLUSIVE

Promoting the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

#### A policy for Inspiring Collective Worship should contain:

- the aims of Collective Worship in the individual school;
- the principles for Collective Worship (see above);
- the Legal requirements and the school's response to them;
- information about the organisation of Collective Worship - including Leadership, groupings, co-ordination, timing, themes, content and record keeping;
- an acknowledgement of how the universal, theistic and faith-specific aspects of Collective Worship are exemplified in your practice;
- suggestions of ways in which the content could be conveyed (story, poetry, time for reflection, music, dance etc.);
- scheme for monitoring and evaluation.

## **Responsibility and Co-ordination:**

- the Head teacher or equivalent, in consultation with the Governing Body, is responsible for the arrangement for Collective Worship;
- appropriate provision should be made for the responsibility of the delivery of high-quality Collective Worship;
- the delegated responsibility for the co-ordination of Collective Worship forms part of the job description of a member of staff. This need not be the subject leader for RE.

## **Organisation, planning and recording**

### **Collective Worship may:**

- take place at any time in the school day;
- be arranged for the whole school together or sub-sections of it;
- be led by any member of staff, pupil or visitor subject to the oversight of the Head teacher or delegated member of staff and in line with the principles outlined in this document and consistent with current safeguarding requirements.

### **High-quality Collective Worship is:**

- planned in advance;
- flexible and sensitive, responding to and reflecting on contemporary events;
- subsequently logged in a school's preferred style, noting key features.

### **Determinations:**

*A determination should be considered when the legal requirement for Collective Worship that is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character conflicts with the requirement that the school considers the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of its pupils.*

*A determination is in keeping with promoting Fundamental British Values.*

*Determinations for local authority schools are granted by SACRE, and the usual first step is to approach the RE Adviser.*

## **Collective Worship is educational:**

- a learning experience of real quality, properly planned, prepared, delivered and evaluated;
- broadening and deepening knowledge and understanding;
- offering a variety of experiences;
- challenging but not seeking to convert or indoctrinate, both of which are inappropriate in a school setting.

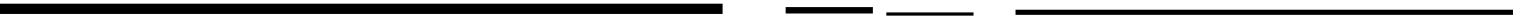
## **Collective Worship is inclusive:**

- relating to pupils' experiences, concerns and needs;
- affirming diversity and respecting integrity of pupils and teachers whatever their faith or non-faith background;
- fostering a sense of community where people of different faiths and of no faith come together as a school and family at the same time;
- offering opportunities to engage at some level;
- providing an opportunity to worship whilst remaining suitable for the whole school community to listen to.

## **Collective Worship is spiritual:**

- refreshing the spirit with a time to gather, be still and reflect;
- creating an opportunity to be uplifted from the everyday and ordinary and to what is within and beyond themselves;
- creating an atmosphere conducive to worship while accepting that some pupils will make no personal response;
- offering opportunities for pupils to consider the spiritual dimensions and explore their own beliefs and those

of others.



Birmingham

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# LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA)

**All pupils should take part in an act of Collective Worship on each school day.** *Section 70 (1) SSFA*

This applies to all pupils in Community Schools and Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled Schools, including those in reception and those in the sixth form, but excludes pupils in nursery schools and those in nursery classes attached to primary schools. The legal requirement for special schools in that the school should ensure, so far as is practicable, that every pupil attends a daily act of Collective Worship.

**There may be a single act of Collective Worship for all pupils or separate acts for pupils in different age groups or school groups.**

*Paragraph 2 (2) of Schedule 20, SSFA*

The school has flexibility in deciding the timing and groupings for Collective Worship. This does not have to be the same each day.

**In Community Schools and Foundation, without religious character, the Head teacher, after consultation with the Governing Body, is responsible for the arrangements for Collective Worship.**

*Paragraph 2 (4) of Schedule 20, SSFA*

In schools with a religious character, the responsibility is held by the Governing Body, after consultation with the Head teacher.

**Acts of Collective Worship shall take place on the school premises.**

*Paragraphs 2 (5) and 2 (6) of Schedule 20, SSFA*

There is an exception that, on a special occasion, an act of Collective Worship may take place elsewhere than on the school premises.

**Taken over a school term, the majority of acts of Collective Worship in any Community School or Foundation School which does not have a religious character must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. They should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular, Christian denomination.**

*Paragraph 3 of Schedule 20, SSFA*

It is not necessary for every act of Collective Worship to be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character; An act of Collective Worship may be mainly of a broadly Christian character without being exclusively Christian. On specific occasions Collective Worship may reflect one particular faith. In schools with a religious character, Collective Worship should be in accordance with the provisions of the trust deed relating to the school, or in accordance with the tenets and practices of the religion or religious denomination specified in relation to the school.

**In relation to Community Schools and Foundation Schools without a religious character, acts of Collective Worship should be appropriate having regard to the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the children.**

*Paragraphs 3 and 4 of Schedule 20, SSFA*

Where a Head teacher in consultation with the Governing Body (where the school is not of a religious character) feels it is not appropriate for Collective Worship to be of a broadly Christian character, the school can apply to SACRE to have this requirement lifted. If granted, while the determination has effect, the Collective Worship must not be distinctive of any particular denomination of a religion, although this should not be taken as preventing that worship from being distinctive of any particular religion. A determination does not lift other legal requirements regarding Collective Worship.

**Parents have the right to withdraw their children from any or all of Collective Worship.** *Section 71, SSFA*

The parent does not have to give a reason for this request. The school continues to be responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn by the parent from Collective Worship. Sixth form pupils have their own right to withdraw from Collective Worship, without giving a reason for doing so. It is advisable for schools to keep a record of all such withdrawals.

**All teachers (including Head teachers) can request the right to withdraw from, or not participate in, acts of Collective Worship.**

Teachers must not be discriminated against as a result of their withdrawal from Collective Worship. Teachers should be able to receive advice related to their specific situations from teaching unions. Where an act of Collective Worship forms part of an assembly, the withdrawal applies only to the Collective Worship part of the assembly. In Community Schools and Foundation Schools without a religious character, the Head teacher remains responsible for the arrangements for Collective Worship.

**The school must publish its arrangements for Collective Worship in the School prospectus. Schools wanting advice or support for Collective Worship should contact the RE Adviser Simone Whitehouse on 0121 366 9910 or [simone.whitehouse@servicesforeducation.co.uk](mailto:simone.whitehouse@servicesforeducation.co.uk)**

