



Oakfield Academy

Collective Worship Policy

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Statement of intent

We are setting out to help our pupils be ...

- Diverse, celebrating their own beliefs, values and cultures, as well as those of others.
- Respectful, treating everyone with equality and fairness, regardless of their beliefs.
- Passionate about their own beliefs, celebrations and values.
- Curious, asking questions to help them to understand the beliefs of others more clearly.

Collective worship enables children to demonstrate the above through learning about the importance of worship to people from different faith groups, as well as recognising common values which are shared between world religions, cultures and communities.

Our intention for collective worship is to:

- Provide an opportunity for the children to worship God or a greater power that they may believe in
- Enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues
- Enable children to explore their own beliefs
- Encourage participation and response
- Develop in children a sense of community spirit
- Promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes
- Provide the opportunity for our children to respond to the worship offered

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- The Education Reform Act 1988
- The Education Act 1993
- DfE (1994) 'Religious Education and Collective Worship'
- DfE (2010) Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance
- DfE (2012) 'Religious education (RE) and collective worship in academies and free schools'
- DfE (1994) Religious education and collective worship (Circular 1/94)

1. Collective worship

- 1.1. We understand worship to be a special act or occasion that shows reverence to God or a greater power. Collective worship involves all children in school coming together and participating in an assembly. Our assemblies reflect values, celebrations and festivals observed across the world, as well as in our school community. All children, regardless of their religious culture, race, gender, lifestyle or ability, are given equal opportunities to access this part of the school's curriculum. All teachers are given equal opportunities to deliver these assemblies.
- 1.2. The 1988 Education Reform Act states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. We conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school.
- 1.3. Children are also given an opportunity to reflect at the end of each assembly. This reflection is focused around the values that have been explored during the assembly.

2. Organisation of Collective worship

- 2.1. We hold a daily act of collective worship in our school.
- 2.2. We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way.
- 2.3. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection and it is regarded as a special time. Children are expected to behave in an appropriate, respectful way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in songs.
- 2.4. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and candles to act as a focal point for the attention of the children.
- 2.5. Members of staff normally conduct assemblies, but occasionally representatives of local religious groups or other visitors conduct them instead. 3 times a year, our assemblies take place at a local church to mark Harvest, Christingle and Easter. Children from each class present learning that they have completed relating to these celebrations. Families, governors and members of our school community are invited to join us for these assemblies.
- 2.6. We take some of the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Christian faith and reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. We also reflect traditions and celebrations of other world religions. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. In addition, some assemblies mark non-religious world and community events and festivals eg Pride, Martin Luther King Jr Day, Children in Need etc.
- 2.7. Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of schools. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school. Celebration assemblies are held fortnightly and certificates are awarded for children who have reflected positive learning behaviours or have achieved something within school. Special mentions are given to children who have shared an achievement from outside of school. In addition to this, whole class achievements for accuracy

on 'Times Table Rockstars' and 'Accelerated Reader' are celebrated and rewarded with a class trophy. Headteacher's awards are awarded once every half term, awarding 2 children from each class for excellent learning. These pieces of learning are then displayed in a gold frame outside the Headteacher's office for the next half term.

- 2.8. We welcome governors' attendance at our assemblies at any time.

3. Right of withdrawal

- 3.1. "All students are entitled to receive RE as part of a broad and balanced curriculum at school which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development" - Religious education in English schools: Non-statutory guidance 2010. However, the law gives parents/carers the right to withdraw their child(ren) from collective acts of worship and/or Religious Education lessons, in accordance with the 1988 Education Reform Act. At Oakfield, we respect that right.
- 3.2. Parents and carers have the right to choose whether to withdraw their child from RE and/or Collective Worship without influence from the school, although a school should ensure parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. If students are withdrawn from RE and/or Collective Worship, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost; suitable work relating to the child's religious education should be provided by the parents/carers. Pupils will usually remain on school premises, unless the child is lawfully receiving religious education elsewhere.
- 3.3. Parents can only withdraw their child from RE and Collective Worship, not other curriculum areas. For example, pupils can't be withdrawn from a study of religious art in an art lesson or the study of evolution in science.
- 3.4. In order for a pupil to be withdraw, a school [by law](#), must be satisfied:
- 3.4.1. "that the parent of the pupil desires him to receive religious education of a kind which is not provided in the school during the periods of time during which he is so excused"
- 3.4.2. "that the pupil cannot with reasonable convenience be sent to another maintained school where religious education of the kind desired by the parent is provided, and"
- 3.4.3. "that arrangements have been made for him to receive religious education of that kind during school hours elsewhere."
- 3.5. It is important to remember the contribution RE makes to the development of children and the promotion of Fundamental British Values.
- 3.6. If a parent or carer wishes to withdraw a child from RE, they are advised to arrange a meeting with Mrs Light-Rowse who will be able to support them.
- 3.7. Formal notice of withdrawal must then be given in writing to the Headteacher.