



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Last Review: June 2017
Committee: Learning
Date Ratified: 22 October 2020
Next Review: January 2021

Rationale

Our inclusive ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child, spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in our practices. We value opportunities for encouraging students to consider issues outside the prescribed curriculum and encourage this reflective approach to life. This policy is in place to reflect the schools commitment to the spiritual and moral development of our students and echoes the core values of the school.

Definitions

'Collective worship' is defined as any act where members of the school community are given opportunity to reflect upon broader spiritual, moral, social or cultural questions, to reinforce and contribute to the ethos of the school and to challenge their assumptions.

SMSC or spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is defined by OFSTED as:

131. The spiritual development of pupils is shown by their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's faiths, feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

132. The moral development of pupils is shown by their:

- ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong, readily apply this understanding in their own lives and, in so doing, respect the civil and criminal law of England
- understanding of the consequences of their behaviour and actions
- interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues, and being able to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.

133. The social development of pupils is shown by their:

- use of a range of social skills in different contexts, including working and socialising with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds
- willingness to participate in a variety of communities and social settings, including by volunteering, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively
- acceptance and engagement with the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; the pupils develop and demonstrate skills and attitudes that will allow them to participate fully in and contribute positively to life in modern Britain.

134. The cultural development of pupils is shown by their:

- understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others
- understanding and appreciation of the range of different cultures within school and further afield as an essential element of their preparation for life in modern Britain

- knowledge of Britain's democratic parliamentary system and its central role in shaping our history and values, and in continuing to develop Britain
- willingness to participate in and respond positively to artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities
- interest in exploring, improving understanding of and showing respect for different faiths and cultural diversity, and the extent to which they understand, accept, respect and celebrate diversity, as shown by their tolerance and attitudes towards different religious, ethnic and socioeconomic groups in the local, national and global communities.

These definitions have been cited from the OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, January 2015.

Aims

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 the feelings of other people in every day situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not

Statutory requirements

It is a legal requirement, according to the 1998 School standards and framework act, that all registered school age students take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character" for the majority of the time. They must also be "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils".

We recognise that in asking our young people to participate in acts of collective worship that we have to consider the background that our young people come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to prioritise one particular set of religious beliefs, but instead to give students a rounded discussion of life in modern Britain and the viewpoints of people from different faiths. The faith background of both the staff and the student's family is respected at all times.

Withdrawal

The school supports the right of parents to withdraw their children from events with a religious message or context. If a parent/carer asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending such events, the school will comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent/carer who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Headteacher.

The school also supports the right of staff to withdraw themselves from events with a religious message or context. Staff should contact the Headteacher to exercise this right of withdrawal.

Implementation

- Delivery of assemblies will be, in the main, to year groups, but on occasion to House Groups (Years 7 – 11) or to the whole school.
- The Senior Leadership Team, along with Learning Managers, will deliver the majority of assemblies, but all staff will be invited and volunteers used to lead. Tutor groups may also be asked to lead assemblies focussing on a specific theme. Outside agencies will also be invited to lead assemblies.
- A programme of weekly assembly themes will be established at the beginning of each term and a rota of staff will be arranged. (Themes may be changed due to newsworthy events.)
- Assemblies will take place during the afternoon registration (2:05am – 2:20pm), but special assemblies may be held at other times.
- Tutors are required to escort their tutees to their assembly and stay with them throughout. (Any teacher wishing to be exempt from assemblies should approach the Head Teacher).
- Students are always welcome to help with the delivery of assemblies and are encouraged to do so. Any member of staff leading an assembly may involve students in such activities as drama, dance, music, poetry and reading.
- All students have the opportunity to develop their awareness of spiritual and moral issues in Religious Education lessons. The scheme of work covers elements of Christianity and other world religions, that may or may not be represented in our school community.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for monitoring the implementation of this policy after consulting with the governing body.

The School Leader with responsibility for the assembly calendar is responsible for planning the calendar of themes leaders of daily assemblies may choose to follow.

All Form Tutors follow tutorial programmes which include particular discussion topics or topical news discussions. These focus on weekly themes which includes elements of education and discussion around the British Values.

Dissemination

This policy is shared with all staff. The policy is available on the school website for parents/carers and other stakeholders.

Monitoring and review

The Curriculum Committee review this policy on a three year basis. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

This policy relates to the Curriculum policy.