

St Aidan's Church of England Academy

Collective Worship Policy

Review Date	Autumn 2017
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St Aidan's Church of England Academy

Preface to all policies and procedures.

St Aidan's Church of England Academy is a Christian learning environment at the heart of its community. We promote care, respect and responsibility and expect high standards in all aspects of Academy life.

As a Church of England Academy we aim to build a community clearly based on the Christian values of love, forgiveness and reconciliation, integrity and the unique value of each individual. We aim to build self-esteem, model conflict resolution, protect the weak and are committed to justice and compassion. Mutual respect and trust are central within the Academy.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

Collective Worship Policy

Policy Aims

Through collective worship in our Academy we will:

- provide an experience of worship that will allow children to respond to the presence, power and peace of God
- introduce children to Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the church year
- explore a variety of ways of praying and introduce children to some well known Christian prayers, for example, the Lord’s Prayer
- strengthen and support the Academy community giving expression to and reaffirming the Christian values of the school
- celebrate the gifts that each child brings to the school community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual made in the image of God
- encourage children to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them
- foster a concern for others within the school and wider world
- foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it

Legal Framework

There must be a daily act of collective worship for all pupils which takes account of their age and aptitude. (Education Reform Act 1988). The Academy must comply with a parents right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children. As a church school however, worship is central to the life and work of the Academy and is regarded as a very important part of children’s education

Implementation

Current Plan for Worship

	<i>Sports Hall</i>	<i>Main Hall</i>	<i>Tutor Group</i>
<i>Monday</i>	Yr7	Yr11	All years
<i>Tuesday</i>	Yr8		All years
<i>Wednesday</i>	Yr9		All years
<i>Thursday</i>	Yr10		All years
<i>Friday</i>	Whole School		

*Member of ELT

The Academy has a worship theme for each week. Materials for use in tutor time worship are issued at the end of the previous week by the Worship Co-ordinator.

Collective worship, whether as a whole Academy, Year or Tutor, will:

- have a clear message
- follow the core values of care, respect and responsibility

- be acceptable to the whole community, staff and students
- include a variety of elements at different times
- involve the students
- have a dedicated focus which signifies what is being reflected upon.
- provide a dedicated opportunity for students to reflect/respond to the input
- contribute to SMSC development

Worship may include:

- stories and readings
- songs, hymns and music
- dance and drama
- prayer, meditations
- creative silence
- sacred/secular readings
- artefacts and natural materials
- students' contributions

The Academy will be aware of the timing of religious festivals and any specific requirements relating to them.

The following will be considered:

- Experiences that have the character of pre-worship e.g. joy
- The essence of worship – attending to the divine
- Consequences of worship – e.g. moral and ethical values renewed and directed e.g. courage.

As part of our collective worship students will have the opportunity to be quiet and reflect on what has been shared. Students and/or adults will lead the prayer session and they may be invited to put their hands together/close their eyes, focus on a candle etc. and be quiet, calm and respectful.

Whole Academy Act of Worships will have

- a clear message
- a dedicated focus –eg a lit candle, or artefact that reflects something of the theme
- a clear plan to lead the students into a period of reflection – input, questions, relevance to age/stage
- a dedicated opportunity for the students to offer a response to the input, a prayer related to the input or an opportunity for silent reflection.
- where there is a prayer, students need to be encouraged to listen, be still and reflective and if they wish, to join in the 'Amen' response.

Year worship may also contain a selection of the above

Students will not be made to:

- repeat a prayer
- join their hands

- say 'Amen'

if they do not wish to.

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
- have an understanding that the worship is not done for students but is an experience for all who attend

We expect staff to

- lead where applicable in the agreed manner, including tutor worship
- respond to collective worship in an appropriate 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 Academy

The Right to Withdraw

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from Religious Education (RE) and collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE or collective worship at the Academy. The Academy must comply unless the request is withdrawn.

The Academy remains responsible for the supervision of any student withdrawn from RE or collective worship, unless the child is lawfully receiving RE, or taking part in collective worship elsewhere.

Parents do not need to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal. The Principal may wish to clarify with any parent wanting to withdraw:

- The religious issues about which the parent would object their child being taught
- The practical implications of withdrawal.
- The circumstances in which it would be reasonable to accommodate parents wishes.
- If a parent will require any advanced notice of such issue in the future and if so, how much.
- The right of withdrawal was established in the Education Act 1944, re-enacted in the Education Reform Act 1988.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Governing Body will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.