



Tudor Grange Samworth Academy Collective Worship Policy

With a caring Christian ethos, Tudor Grange Samworth Academy aims to provide a safe and happy environment which allows every child the opportunity to fulfil their potential and make a valuable contribution to the Academy and the wider community.

In line with the recent Church of England Vision for Education we seek for our Collective Worship to chime with Jesus' words in John 10:10: **'I have come to bring life, and life in all it's fullness'**. Therefore being able to contemplate the larger questions of meaning & purpose through Collective Worship is key.

We believe Collective Worship is central to the life and vision of the school. It can express and help fulfil the school aims which are intrinsic to all that goes on at Tudor Grange Samworth Academy.

Aims and purpose

The aims and purpose of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to offer opportunity for participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community belonging;
- to promote a common ethos, with shared values;
- to teach children about different expressions of worship.

Collective worship

Collective Worship is at the heart of our life as a Church of England School. It is an engaging and fulfilling part of school life. The school meets daily, as a whole or in part, for Collective Worship. Recognising the innate spirituality that all children possess, through our Collective Worship we seek to support our children in their own capacities for, and sense of, true awe and wonder. We seek to encourage them to contemplate the existence of God so that they might in some way respond, from their own level of understanding and belief, to any offering, be it through prayer, song, drama or simple contemplation.

The Diocese of Leicester Collective Worship guidelines describe Christian worship as *'an honouring of God. It acknowledges His transcendence and holiness, His 'worth' and 'value'; it is a loving response to His nature as revealed in Jesus Christ. Worship stems from personal experience; it is a central characteristic of faith communities which are in relationship with God. We can never make anyone worship because it is an attitude of the heart focussed on God; in the school/academy situation 'the most' we can do is lead people to the threshold of worship by providing a setting where they may worship God if they so wish'*.

We also acknowledge the unique nature of specifically 'collective' worship. The Diocese of Leicester guidelines state that *'Collective Worship only takes place in schools/academies. It is a term which is used only in education, whereas churches and religions usually think of their worship as being corporate. The implication of this is that when a group of people with shared beliefs gather together with the intention of*

sharing worship then this is a corporate activity. No such assumptions about shared beliefs can be made in the case of a school/academy community, even in a church school/academy'.

Therefore, we understand collective worship in our school to be an *opportunity* where such an 'honouring of God' can happen. We view our meeting together for collective worship as a major contributor to the spiritual development of individuals which also feeds into our school ethos. Through this we can give children opportunities to experience and express awe and wonder.

Collective worship involves members of the school coming together in Church, College and Whole School Assemblies. Collective worship may also include elements of school organisation and information giving in addition to, and separate from, worship. We strive to ensure that every student feels connected in some way to what happens during collective worship, though how they chose to participate may vary. As the Diocese of Leicester guidelines state: *'It is the task of Collective Worship to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised'.*

We acknowledge too that the 2016 Church of England Vision for Education 'Deeply Christian, serving the common good' outlines how Collective Worship in a more pluralistic society has an educative role, and seek to include this aspect within our approach to Collective Worship. As the report states: *'there is a strong educational case for experience of worship being part of school life, since its omission lessens the possibility of understanding traditions to which worship is essential'.*

In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we base our collective worship on the teachings of Christ, the wider Christian Scriptures and the traditions of the Christian Church which exhibit these. However, we conduct our collective worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the school.

While acts of worship in our school are of a Christian character, there may be times of year when festivals/significant days from other faith traditions represented in the school & wider community are acknowledged as taking place, but within the context of a still Christian-based collective worship.

Organisation of collective worship

We meet daily, as a whole or in part, for worship. This forms part of each morning tutor time or college weekly collective worship. Twenty minutes daily is allocated to tutor time or college collective worship.

We conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period for reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, invite them to listen carefully to the teaching, and offer them the opportunity to participate in the prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, and sometimes candles or other objects, to focus the attention of the children.

The collective worship is normally conducted by the Head of School, member of the Senior Leadership Team, other members of staff or the Vicar of St.Christopher's church. Every term there is worship led by local clergy, and sometimes other representatives from local church groups.

We have a plan of themes for collective worship, which is directly linked to the Leicester Diocese calendar. Each weekly theme is supplemented by suggestions for ideas to explore, and resources for stories and ideas are regularly augmented. This guidance is not exhaustive, and staff also often use websites which supply material, which may respond to topical subjects such as natural disasters.

We take themes of our collective worship from the traditions of the Christian faith, and we mark festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our collective worship may be related to learning and topics that are part of the school curriculum. Sometimes the themes are related to personal, social, moral and spiritual values and development.

Our collective worship times incorporate the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in these times by showing their work to the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Collective worship times provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play a part in affirming that all children are valued and achievements are recognised. Tudor Grange Samworth Academy is a successful school, and

we shall continue to celebrate the successes of all our children.

Each Friday there is a 'celebration' assembly. We encourage pupils to not only share their achievements, but to consider those aspects of their lives for which they are thankful or have brought them joy.

Governors' attendance at our collective worship is always welcome.

Right of withdrawal

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The Head of School keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship.

Monitoring and review

Members of the Local Governing Body will monitor the policy and practice of collective worship.

Appendix A

Format of Assembly and Worship

The worship should be planned with clear outcomes. Worship will be monitored through a variety of formats including observations, children's recordings and pupil/parental feedback. Twenty minutes daily is allocated to collect worship.

The weekly cycle of worship takes the following form:

Values Each half-term of the academic year has its own Christian value. Class worship may follow the suggested theme or choose another which reflects a particular area of classroom study. The fruits of the Spirit illustrate particular characteristics in practice within the context of the Christian life.

Theme Sometimes worship will focus upon a specific Christian teaching or particular day, for example the sacraments, or Christians who are commemorated in the Church of England calendar year.

Music The music that welcomes children into the Hall may be chosen to reflect both the value or theme for the week and/ or the requirements of the Music National Curriculum. Children are invited to join in and sing, though this cannot be compelled. The music may be introduced and discussed. Music may simply encourage a reflective and peaceful atmosphere so children are more ready to engage.

Focus To assist children in collective worship, a table with cloth and candle might be used to enable focus. The lit candle signifies worship time. Similarly, adornments or images present in the room might be used as a point of focus for a particular theme or idea.

Movement/Physicality Recent developments in Collective Worship encourage a place for more imaginative practice in Collective worship, including physical aspects. The Church of England Education office vision document 'Deeply Christian' states that *'there is a great deal of wise, imaginative practice in [collective worship] that deserves to be better known'*. The recent 'Seeing Anew' project piloted by Derby Diocese is an example of this, where more imaginative sessions might be used. This could include such things as using different seating plans, whole group dramatic participation or more extensive use of aids or light levels.

Story/Talk A few words to introduce the main story of the morning which will illustrate the theme. N.B. Always try to include the children by encouraging their participation in an active way e.g. drama, question/answer.

Prayer and reflection Children are invited to close their eyes and fold their hands together for prayer times, though this cannot be compelled. Prayer may involve the children in responding orally or in silent

contemplation. This may be followed by the Lord's prayer or the school Prayer, as felt appropriate. Children are invited to respond with 'Amen' : 'so be it'.

Hymn An appropriate hymn or modern faith song may be sung.

Conclusion The Collective Worship leader 'sums up' the Assembly, perhaps involving the children. If possible and appropriate, the children might be left with a 'thought for the day' i.e. a question, or something to think about during the school day e.g. what are your relationships with your classmates like?

Assembly There must be a clear distinction between collective worship and school assemblies. Any messages, notices and school 'business' should take place separately either at the beginning or end of the collective worship time.

Parting Children may leave to music, similarly to entry, and are invited to sing along if they wish.

Music. Children may also be 'sent out' with music to match the theme of the collective worship, if appropriate.

Details of assembly times and personnel are to be found in the Staff Handbook, but may be changed at short notice according to circumstances.

Appendix B

The following festivals connected with the Christian faith, may be the subject of individual collective worship:

Christian: All Saints Day, Reformation Day, St. Andrew's Day, Christmas, Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday, St. David's Day, St. Patrick's Day, St George's Day, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Ascension Day, Pentecost.

As earlier mentioned, whilst acts of worship in our school are of a Christian character, there may be times when festivals/significant days from other faith traditions represented in the school & wider community are acknowledged as taking place at particular times year, but within the context of a still Christian-themed collective worship.

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