

St Columb Minor Academy

POLICY

ASSEMBLY AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Responsibility:

Principal

Governor Committee:

Teaching & Learning Committee

Date Adopted by Governors: 26 March 2015

Date to be Reviewed: 3 years

At St Columb Minor Academy we believe in fostering understanding amongst our children. We value the religious backgrounds of all of our children and seek to develop the moral and spiritual potential of every pupil. We feel that assembly and collective worship is an important aspect of school life where pupils and staff can feel part of a team within a community. We welcome parents and members of the community to take part in assemblies and collective worship and value their contributions. We recognise that legally we are obliged to have a daily act of collective worship and believe that it is important to lead the children in their worship.

Collective worship as distinct from assemblies is the only area of academy life which the law requires to take place every school day.

Legal Requirements

(for details see School Standard and Framework Act 1998 and Circular 1/94)

- All pupils must take part in a daily act of collective worship, unless they have been withdrawn from it by their parents.

- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship. At present no children have been withdrawn.
- As we are a local authority school, collective worship must be ‘wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character’, to be within the broad traditions of Christian beliefs, on the majority of occasions.
- Collective worship must be non-denominational in LA schools.

We have a four year cycle of assemblies and collective worship which we are developing and we have consulted with friends of different faiths to ensure that they feel comfortable with our programme. We actively encourage parents not to withdraw their children from collective worship and encourage parents to speak to staff if they are concerned. We believe assembly time and collective worship is too valuable with regard to community cohesion and providing insight into others beliefs to jeopardise this with children being withdrawn, but we recognise parents have a legal right to do so.

Aims of Collective Worship at our academy

- To establish, affirm and celebrate the common and shared values of the academy
- To nurture the identity and nature of the academy as a community
- To develop positive attitudes among the pupils
- To provide an opportunity for pupils to worship God (Divine Being)
- To enable pupils to explore their own beliefs, values and commitments, and with those of others.
- In short to promote the spiritual, moral social and cultural developments of pupils.

Worship is understood as an act of collective worship in an LA school and can be interpreted very openly and widely as an act which brings a school group to a point where they are able to make a shared, reflective response to a divine being, power, ideal or value of some worth, wholly or mainly within the broad traditions of Christian belief on the majority of occasions.

Collective worship is an essential element in the schools’ promotion of the spiritual and moral development of pupils as required by ERA 1988.

Approaches to Assembly and Collective Worship

Daily worship is provided through the following means

- Whole school acts of worship in assemblies (Mon, Wed, Fri)
- Key Stage act of worship in assembly (Tues)
- Class group act of worship in assembly (Thurs)

Management

Responsibility for Assemblies and collective worship in our school lies with the Headteacher.

The Headteacher

- Provides a rota for leaders of assembly and collective worship
- Provides a sequence of topics for each termly theme
- Establishes and maintains a resource base
- Liaises with the local community in terms of visitors.

Methods

There is a suitable variety of methods for collective worship to enable the experience to be as valid and relevant to the pupils as possible. There is also a ritual element associated with some of these methods to allow the pupils to benefit from the security and pattern of worshipping together.

These will include the following as is appropriate to the nature of the occasion:

- Music on entry and exit (Performers or composers are identified)
- Hymn singing
- Use of prayers, including the children's own, and the Lord's Prayer
- Readings from suitable sources, including the Bible, but also other sources of worth.

Resources

The academy maintains a resource base for assembly and collective worship. See Headteacher for access to resources.

Recording

All acts of worship are recorded in the termly Assembly and Collective Worship Files, noting the date, the leader, and the theme/contents. This record consists of the programme suitably amended to indicate any changes that took place. These records are kept in the Headteacher's office and electronically on the staff shared site.

Evaluation

This policy was written in September 2006 (reviewed Summer 2009 / Spring 2011 / Spring 2013) and was agreed by the Governing body. It will be reviewed regularly. Its implementation and effectiveness will be monitored by the Headteacher and her evaluation will be used in the review of the policy.

Muslim attitudes to singing/musical instruments

Singing is not regarded as a valuable asset by Muslim parents. It is felt that singing heightens the emotions, particularly when accompanied by musical instruments. Also, it is felt that singing is seldom useful in gaining a career.

Singing hymns is unacceptable for Muslim pupils. Both singing and musical instruments are referred to in the Qur'an as being forbidden ('haram').

Non-religious singing could be acceptable if it does not affect religious, moral or cultural values.

The issue of singing cannot be generalised. The decision will be up to individual parents.

The issue of singing/musical instruments remains the same whatever the age of the child. However, some parents may allow their children to take part in primary school as they are under the age of 11.

The school should inform the parents about the nature of assemblies, and be prepared to discuss the issues with them.

Jehovah Witnesses attitudes to assemblies

Children from families who are Jehovah's Witnesses do not observe celebrations like birthdays and Christmas because they are 'rooted in paganism'. Because of this they may exclude themselves or refrain from joining in when such celebrations form part of collective worship or assemblies in school. They are taught to be tolerant and respectful, recognising the right of others to celebrate, but, in turn, appreciate respect for their decision not to participate.

Assemblies Four Year Cycle

Summer 2013	Symbols		
Autumn 2013	Promises and gifts	Autumn 2015	Our World
Spring 2014	Good Citizen	Spring 2016	Feelings
Summer 2014	Fables, Proverbs and Sayings	Summer 2016	Freedom
Autumn 2014	Jesus' Team	Autumn 2016	Special
Spring 2015	Festivals	Spring 2017	Our Community and Family
Summer 2015	Water, Animals and Birds		