



## Collective Worship Policy

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Review: Sept 2023

***Please note:*** *The Education (Assemblies) Bill, which will repeal the requirement for schools in England without a religious character to hold collective worship, is currently being considered in the House of Commons. If it becomes law, this policy will be updated accordingly.*

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## **Statement of intent**

At Geoffrey Field Junior School, we see the value in collective worship. This time will enable our pupils to explore their own beliefs and consider spiritual and moral issues, develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.

The act of daily collective worship will be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character; however, other faiths and cultures will be represented.

Collective worship provides the opportunity for Geoffrey Field Junior school to meet together in a variety of contexts and enables participating pupils and staff to consider events of the world and appreciate the rich tapestry of human experience and existence.

Geoffrey Field values learning and achieves success by providing an environment where children and adults are learning from one another in an atmosphere of low threat and high expectations.

This policy outlines how the school implements collective worship within our daily routines, including the aims of collective worship and how pupils can be withdrawn.

## 1. Legal framework

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'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- RE Policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Policy

## 2. Definition of collective worship

For the purpose of this policy, “**collective worship**” is an act which is additional to, and separate from, ordinary school activities.

To take part in collective worship implies more than a passive attendance, such that it should have the ability to elicit responses from pupils even though they may not feel able to actively identify in the act of worship on a particular occasion.

## 3. Aims of collective worship

Collective worship aims to:

- Enable pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues, as well as explore their own beliefs.
- Encourage participation and response via active involvement or through listening and participating in the worship offered.
- Provide pupils with the opportunity to plan, lead or contribute to discussions on key themes and topics, e.g. morality.
- Provide a peaceful environment to enable stillness, prayer and reflection.
- Help pupils to develop an awareness of their community and the spirit of helping others.
- Develop a spirit of community and an understanding of individuals with other beliefs.
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each individual's life stance, whether religious or not.
- Promote a common ethos and shared values.
- Reinforce positive attitudes.

## 4. Organisation and planning

Every pupil will participate in the act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn in line with [section 6](#) of this policy.

Worship will be of a broadly Christian character; however, there will be influences from other religions found in the local community.

Collective Worship will take place daily and may involve the whole school, phases, year groups or classes over the week. Collective Worship may take place in the school hall, in classrooms or occasionally outside.

<b>Collective Worship Opportunities</b>	<b>Focus</b>
Whole school assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Time for stillness and personal reflection</li> <li>● Prayer</li> <li>● Significant religious dates in the Christian calendar and other religions relevant to our school community</li> <li>● Develop sense of community and shared ethos</li> <li>● Exploration of the school values in relation to the wider world as well as school life</li> <li>● Exploration of British Values in relation to the wider world as well as school life</li> <li>● Links between school values and British values and the teachings of Christianity and other key religions for our school community</li> <li>● Use song as celebration of Christian events and as a form of worship</li> </ul>
Upper School & Lower School Assemblies  & Year Group Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow up the content of whole school assemblies with further exploration at an age appropriate level</li> </ul>
Class Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Opportunities for debate and discussion of topical spiritual and moral issues or current affairs</li> <li>● Develop a sense of the wider world</li> <li>● Time for stillness and personal reflection</li> </ul>

The content of all acts of collective worship will be considered with care, to ensure suitability and relevance to our pupils of all ages and backgrounds.

The school may invite visitors or guest speakers to speak during collective worship, in accordance with the timetabled theme.

## 5. Implementation

The school will promote rich and meaningful experiences of collective worship that are appropriate to pupils' needs, ages and interests by:

- Encouraging pupils to reflect and contemplate on their thoughts, feelings and beliefs.
- Using artefacts, secular stories, resources, music, art, drama, and guest speakers to engage pupils' interest.

- Involving pupils in different experiences of worship, e.g. song, silence, prayer, rituals and shared or written prayers.

We will take into account our pupils varying ages, abilities and needs when delivering the collective worship programme.

The school will arrange for teachers or TAs to assist pupils with SEND if the need arises, in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy. Where requested, the SENDco will support to adapt planning if and appropriate pre-teaching will be offered to pupils with SEND, to ensure that the collective worship is accessible to them.

## **6. Right to withdraw**

Parents/carers who wish to withdraw their child from Collective Worship should notify the headteacher in writing. The headteacher or another member of the Senior LEadership Team will discuss this request with the parent/carer to ensure a clear understanding of the following:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part in so that the school and child is clear whether the parent wishes their child to:
  - attend assemblies but refrain from any aspects of worship within this
  - not attend assemblies at all
- The practical implications of their withdrawal.

Alternative arrangements will be put in place for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

- The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational collective worship with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.
- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative arrangements will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum and our values based education.

## **7. Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher in agreement with the governing board.

This policy will be evaluated in accordance with feedback from the Religious Education Lead, staff, pupil and parent questionnaires and class discussions.

Any changes made to this policy and the collective worship programme will be communicated to all members of staff.