



Testwood School Policy for Collective Worship	
Key Responsibility area:	DM/PCW/NS/3
Last Review:	April 2024
Next Review:	April 2026
Article 14	freedom of thought, belief and religion) Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents/carers to guide their child as they grow up
Article 12	(respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.
Article 3	(best interests of the child) The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
Article 6	(life, survival and development) Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
2.1	29.04.22	Revised review dates	JBa
2.2	27.04.23	Revised review dates	JBa
2.3	01.05.24	Revised review dates	JBa

*Appendices follow on from policy

A) Rationale

All maintained schools are required to provide daily collective worship for registered students (apart from those who have been withdrawn by their parents/carers). This is usually provided within a daily assembly or as part of the tutorial programme.

The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the Board of Trustees. Daily collective worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. The precise nature will depend on the family background, ages and abilities of the students.

B) Purpose

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for students to:

- 1) experience and participate regularly in an act of worship
- 2) reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian nature and on their own beliefs
- 3) develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- 4) consider spiritual and moral issues
- 5) respond to the worship offered.

C) Outcomes

To achieve these purposes Testwood School will ensure the following principles are maintained. Collective worship, whether in assembly or tutor time, will:

- 1) be acceptable to the whole community, staff and students
- 2) involve the students in the life of the community in its widest sense
- 3) establish contacts within the community

D) Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy was approved by the Trustees and will be reviewed bi-annually to assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Appendix 1

Notes: (Taken from DFE Circular (CIR001/94) Religious Education and Collective Worship.)

Organisation of collective worship

Collective worship, subject to the right of withdrawal, is intended to be appropriate for and to include all students attending a school.

The timing and organisation of daily collective worship can be flexible. It need not be held at the start of the school day. There may be a single act of worship for all students or separate acts for students in different age groups or in different school groups. For this purpose, a

'school group' means any group, or combination of groups in which students are taught or take part in other school activities; it does not mean a group reflecting particular religious beliefs, for which different provision may be made.

'Worship' is not defined in the legislation and in the absence of any such definition it should be taken to have its natural and ordinary meaning. That is, it must in some sense reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power. However, worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common.

Collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. Although they may take place as part of the same gathering, the difference between the two should be clear. Collective worship can, nevertheless, be related to the day to day life, aspirations and concerns of the school. Taking part' in collective worship implies more than simply passive attendance. It follows that an act of collective worship should be capable of eliciting a response from students, even though on a particular occasion some of the students may not feel able actively to identify with the act of worship.

Parental right of withdrawal

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

A school remains responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from collective worship, unless the child is lawfully taking part in collective worship elsewhere. Parents/carers do not need to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal. The Department recommends that to avoid misunderstanding, a head teacher may wish to clarify with any parent/carer wanting to withdraw:

- a) the religious issues about which the parent/carer would object their child being taught
- b) the practical implications of withdrawal
- c) the circumstances in which it would be reasonable to accommodate parents'/carers' wishes
- d) if a parent/carer will require any advanced notice of such issue in the future and if so, how much

Practice

Assemblies are of a spiritual and moral nature. They are educationally valid to enable students to experience awe and wonder. The Progress Leaders, the SLT and teachers will lead the assembly at a specific time each week. Where appropriate, outside speakers, other colleagues and students will lead assemblies at different times.

Teachers

Teachers cannot be required to lead or attend collective worship except where the law provides otherwise. This would normally only happen in a maintained school with a religious designation.

Further guidance

DfE publication – Collective worship in schools (31 Jan 1994)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collective-worship-in-schools>