

Collective Worship Policy

Ratified by the Governing Body – May 2015

Introduction

It is the policy of the Governing Body at The Wey Valley School that Collective Worship has an important role in the life of the school. Its aims are to support the curriculum, the ethos, values and aims of the school and provide an opportunity for stillness and reflection at a period of time in what is often a very busy, active day.

There is insufficient space to hold a whole school assembly every day and governors recognise and are supportive of the present arrangements.

The Legal Position

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires that collective worship must be on a daily basis for all registered students, which can take part at any time of day. There may be a single act of worship for all students or separate acts for each year group or tutor group. Furthermore, acts of worship 'must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character, ie reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief'. At The Wey Valley School we have developed a range of themes and topics through which collective worship takes place. Key themes include love, joy, trust, forgiveness, justice and the value of all human life. The themes we have chosen are clearly Christian but also universal and reflect the aims and values of our school community. We recognise that in the school we have students from a variety of faith backgrounds and that many students have no religious background at all. Great care is taken in our collective worship to ensure that all students feel valued and special and that their integrity as human beings is upheld. Parents do, of course, have the right of withdrawal from Collective Worship but the school remains responsible for the supervision of withdrawn students.

Definition of Collective Worship

Collective worship is a gathering of groups of the school community (collective) for the purpose of sharing achievements, considering a variety of spiritual, cultural, social and moral issues and encouraging a sense of belonging and participation.

School collective worship is different from worship amongst a group with belief in common (like Church worship or worship at a mosque). We do not seek to replicate this kind of corporate worship. Collective Worship in a diverse community reflects the backgrounds of the students and teachers, both religious and non-religious. The

word worship derives from the Anglo-Saxon 'weardscipe' meaning honour or "worthship". It recognises the value and meaning of important beliefs, practices and achievements in our community and the wider world.

Aims

The central aims of Collective Worship at The Wey Valley School are:

- To provide our students with a regular daily opportunity for stillness and reflection.
- To promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- To celebrate value and worth of the school community and all who belong in it, including the sharing of the gifts and talents of our students.
- To help students develop an understanding of the nature and language of worship.
- To help students develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others.
- To support the broader curriculum through the use of art, music, dance, story, drama and other visual and oral means of communications.
- To explore their own beliefs and that of others.
- To reinforce positive attitudes.
- To provide opportunities for students to develop their sense of awe and wonder.