

# BISHOP WORDSWORTH'S SCHOOL

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

### A Statutory Policy

#### Notes:

1. *'Parent(s)' includes guardian(s) or any person who has parental responsibility for the boy or who has care of him.*
2. *'Is to', 'are to' and 'must' are obligatory. 'Should' is not obligatory but is best practice and is to be adhered to unless non-compliance can be justified.*

### STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

1. The 1988 Education Reform Act and DfES Circular 3/89, 'Religious Education and Collective Worship', require schools to provide a daily act of collective worship for every student (unless that student is withdrawn by her/his parents under the provision of the Act). This worship is to be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.

2. Bishop Wordsworth's School (the School) was founded by Bishop John Wordsworth in 1890 for the 'purposes of education in connection with the Church of England' and is a Church of England Academy. In keeping with the ecumenical spirit of its Founder, the School's worship is ecumenical in character, drawing on the diverse traditions within the Christian Church. The ethos statement at Annex A makes this explicit.

### AIMS

3. Collective Worship in the School aims to model the Christian understanding that every person is valued and loved by God and to provide all those taking part, both pupils and staff who choose to come, with an experience of worship as coming into the presence of the One who has ultimate worth and meaning for human life and human society.

4. The aim is to encourage those taking part to reflect on the values by which they live, and to support them in their search for meaning and truth. The aim is also to provide an opportunity to make sense of and celebrate what it means to be fully human and, in line with recent DfE initiatives, to acknowledge the global diversity of belief and faith traditions and to reflect on the importance of values such as respect, tolerance and understanding.

5. While worship is to be of a broadly Christian and Anglican character, it is to be inclusive, designed and led in such a way that people of all religious faiths or none will feel that they and their beliefs are respected.

6. Collective Worship is to aim to provide as high a quality of experience as possible. The diversity of experience, venues and participants in Collective Worship at the School should be viewed holistically, but within this overall picture there should be opportunities for:

- a. Pupils to participate (including leading aspects of or whole assemblies).
- b. Hearing/seeing things that transcend everyday life.
- c. Making connections with the outside world in its broadest context.
- d. A level of challenge – to cultural norms, received wisdom or values, stereotypical views.

e. The development or growth of a spiritual dimension to life.

## **ORGANISATION AND RESOURCES**

7. Collective Worship is led by the Head, Deputy Head, Heads of School, the Chaplain, and other members of staff and students who are willing to do so under the terms of the legislation governing Church schools.

8. Services are held in the Cathedral at the beginning of the school day six times a year including an annual School Eucharist, and these contribute an important formational element to our identity as a Church School. The Founder's Day Service and the Carol Service are also held in the Cathedral. Students, staff, Governors, parents, Old Wordsworthians and invited guests take part in these services.

9. The School Chapel is used for Collective Worship each morning for a different year group from Years 7-11. The Eucharist is celebrated fortnightly in the School Chapel and all pupils, staff, parents and Governors are welcome to attend. Every alternate week there is time for quiet reflection or other activity in the Chapel led by the Chaplain.

10. The Sports Hall is used weekly for a whole School assembly, termly for House assemblies and, in conjunction with other venues from time to time, is used for Collective Worship at the beginning of the day by one of the Lower School, Middle School or Sixth Form. In addition there are whole School assemblies led by the Head and/or the School Chaplain at the beginning and end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer Terms of each school year. Pupils are actively encouraged to participate in and contribute to Cathedral Services, Chapel and House Assemblies (and in other areas too), with a view to encouraging a sense of community and ownership.

11. Themes for Worship are to be chosen to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and to meet the following criteria:

- a. To place people in the presence of God.
- b. To provide an interesting and varied programme of Collective Worship.
- c. To assist pupils to see the relevance of faith and worship in the whole of life by the following:
  - (1) Acquainting them with key passages from the works of Christian writers and those of other faiths.
  - (2) Encouraging them to reflect upon spiritual and moral values by presenting issues which relate to their development.
  - (3) Fostering a sense of belonging to the School as a community.
  - (4) Promoting an awareness of causes and social concerns in the contemporary world for which the School might, where practicable, provide some active support.
  - (5) Promoting an ethos which values imagination, inspiration, contemplation and a clear understanding of right and wrong.

12. Materials relating to each Weekly Theme are to be produced by the School Chaplain; these are to be made available to staff (especially tutors) so that they can encourage their tutees to use an opportunity for reflection each week. The weekly theme materials are issued to tutors in paper format and are available on the School's ICT network and via the website, as well as being displayed around the School site on electronic boards and via the Twitter feeds.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND COMPLAINTS**

13. It is hoped that all pupils are able to join in acts of Collective Worship, and all members of the school community are also strongly encouraged to join as this contributes greatly to the ethos and corporate spirit of the School. However, those parents who wish to withdraw their children from these activities are entitled to do so and are required to advise the Head by letter.

14. Arrangements have been made with the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education for the hearing of complaints about the provision of Collective Worship. Further details may be obtained from the School Office.

## **BUDGET**

15. There is an annual budgetary allocation to support Collective Worship in the School. In addition, applications are made to various grant-making trusts including the Bishop Wordsworth Educational Trust and the Sarum St Michael Charity.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

16. A Collective Worship/Ethos section in the regular student and parent questionnaires provides a means of identifying, monitoring and evaluating the effect of Collective Worship throughout the School.

17. The Link Governor responsible for the evaluation of Collective Worship, together with other Governors, attends acts of Collective Worship from time to time. This Policy is to be reviewed annually and agreed by Governors.

18. This Policy replaces the previous policy adopted by Governors on 23 Jan 96. It was adopted by Governors on: (dates in parenthesis indicates no change) 20.11.01, 19.11.02, 4 05.04, 3.05.05, 9.05.06, 5.06.07, (15.07.08) 14.07.09, (24.06.10), (13.06.11), 14.06.12, (13.06.13), (12.06.14) 02.07.15, 28.06.16, (20.06.17), 26.06.18, 26.06.18

Annex:

A. Ethos Statement.

**ANNEX A**  
**TO COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

**ETHOS STATEMENT**

Recognising its historic foundation, the School will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish, cathedral, and diocesan level.

The School aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to its pupils.