

WILLIAM AUSTIN INFANT SCHOOL

Policy for Collective Worship

March 2026

Rationale

Collective Worship, which is usually in our school the time when we hold Assemblies, provides a focus for the school community and helps to reflect the ethos of the school. It reflects our commitment to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is a time when pupils can enjoy being part of a larger group, and share ideas and experiences with a wider audience and are accepted and valued as individuals. Collective Worship provides an opportunity to introduce and reflect upon our school's current 'value' as part of Values-based Education. It encourages a reflective response to life and British Values. Collective worship also will provide opportunities for the Social, Moral, Cultural and Spiritual Development (SMSCD) of pupils.

It is the intention that daily Acts of Collective Worship in our school demonstrate our responses to issues of worth which are central to our school and the wider community. Through our assemblies, we aim to recognise, celebrate and affirm those issues, through feelings of sharing and belonging. We also aim to evoke a sense of awe and wonder, and to provoke personal thought and reflection. Assemblies may be times of joy and celebration, and also times of stillness, or even sadness.

Collective Worship in our school is seen as a distinctive and worthwhile contribution to the curriculum and the life of the school. The planning of Collective Worship adheres to the Education Reform Act 1988 and current DfE guidance.

Legal Requirements: The Education Reform Act 1988

All maintained schools in England must provide a daily act of collective worship. This must reflect the traditions of this country which are, in the main, broadly Christian.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the daily act of collective worship and sixth-formers can decide for themselves whether or not to attend, without giving a reason for doing so. Schools must comply with this wish and must ensure a duty of care for pupils who are withdrawn from collective worship.

Collective worship guidance is contained in Circular 1/94. Circular 1/94 has been replaced, so far as it relates to religious education, by guidance published on 29 January 2010. However, the guidance on collective worship contained within Circular 1/94 remains current.

The main requirements of the act are as follows:-

- 1 A daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
 - This can take place at any time of the day.
 - It can be for all pupils together, or for smaller groups i.e. classes of children, (these groups need to be normal school groupings – year, class, key stage)

- It must take place on the school premises.
 - Parents have the right to withdraw their children.
 - Teachers (including the head teacher) also have the right to withdraw.
- 2 The majority of these acts of collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'
 - 3 Collective Worship can also include other faiths as long as the majority in a term are Christian in nature.
 - 4 The extent to which acts of worship in other faiths are included will depend on the family backgrounds, school make up, ages and aptitudes of the pupils (DES Circular 1/94 gives further information and advice).

Attendance and Participation in Collective Worship

At William Austin Infant School we seek to be an inclusive community however we do respect the rights for parents to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship – (technically not assemblies since these are any gathering of the school community together for whatever purpose and do not always include an act of collective worship). **This information no longer has to be in the school brochure but we do still include it.** Parents are also welcome to visit any assemblies, and to discuss any concerns they might have over the content of them with the Headteacher. The school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the Head teacher and receipt of written confirmation of the request to withdraw.

On several occasions during the school year, parents are invited to special assemblies and workshops. These may be whole - school meetings or they may be led by a Year Group or a class. On very few occasions parents are asked not to bring younger children with them, because of the nature of the content or due to lack of space, but we do like to welcome all members of the children's families as often as possible.

Staff also have the right to withdraw from collective worship, and should make the Headteacher aware should they wish to do so.

The Leading of Assemblies

Assemblies are led by the Headteacher, the Deputy Head, other members of staff, the children and on occasion by outside speakers and governors.

Planning

Themes for Collective Worship are planned in advance by the Headteacher. The themes are based on the SEAL topics (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) in the national framework that has been adopted by the school and our schools current Value (Values-based Education). They also reflect British Values, seasons, festivals and some Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural issues. They provide a framework for assemblies that are of a broadly Christian character, and reflect the age, school make up, aptitude and background of the children in the school.

Reflecting the makeup of the school, different religious (and indeed non-religious) responses, to the themes covered are explored, using the techniques and methods of the religion in question; so that the act is relevant to the child. However, the child should be encouraged to use methods of worship particular to his/her faith.

The themes for each term are displayed in the staff room and are available to parents on request. Other staff who lead assemblies may use these themes, or others of their choice.

Resources

There is a Budget for Assemblies, which provides a small sum each year for the continued development of resource materials for use in assemblies. This is used to purchase Teacher's books and Audio - Visual resources. They are stored in the Headteacher's office and are available to all members of staff.

Pattern of Assemblies for Collective Worship

Monday	Collective Worship for Year 1 to introduce the theme for the week and the Value for the month
Tuesday	Collective Worship for Year 2 in the Hall for Year to introduce the theme for the week and the Value for the month
Wednesday	Collective Worship for Year 1 in the Hall to celebrate achievements and awards of merit stickers or certificates for Star of the Week achievers and value of the month champions.
Thursday	Collective Worship for Year 2 in the Hall to celebrate achievements and awards of merit stickers or certificates for Star of the Week achievers and value of the month champions.
Friday	

When it is not possible for everyone, or multiple classes to all meet in one room the use of technologies such as 'Google Meet' can be used instead to allow collective worship and celebrations to still take place. Class assemblies and year group assemblies can also take the place of whole school assemblies when it is not possible or appropriate for so many people to be in one space altogether.

Children in Year R have simple acts of Collective Worship in their classrooms. For example, following SEAL curriculum and British Values which are covered weekly in class. Daily incidental discussions also take place, for example, during snack time or transition times of the day, which support the children's spiritual, social, cultural and moral development. Once a week resources are also used from 'Picture News' to facilitate these discussions. Towards the end of their time in Reception, children will start to have a few whole year group assemblies in preparation for their transition to year 1.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed as part of school self-evaluation and review. The policy will be revised to accommodate any changes in local or national policy. It will be reviewed as part of the regular three year cycle, with an annual review by the Governing Body.

Reviewed in March 2026

To be reviewed in March 2027