



Non scholae sed vitae discimus
'For Life, not school we learn'

Collective Worship Policy

Committee with Responsibility for this policy is the Achievement Committee	
Policy to be approved by the Headteacher	
Policy last reviewed by Achievement Committee	
Policy adopted by the Headteacher	03/05/2018
Policy due for review	02/2021

Villiers High School -Collective Worship Policy

PRINCIPLES

The place of Religious Education and Collective Worship in the school curriculum is guaranteed by successive Education Acts. It states that the primary aim is to educate in order to promote “the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and society”.

These Acts places upon schools an obligation to ensure that due consideration is given to the representation and promotion of Christianity. This is due to the influence of Christianity as a dynamic and determining factor in shaping the history, culture and social fabric of society within Great Britain and Europe.

However, consideration has to be taken of the cultural, social and religious mix of the community within which the school finds itself when promoting moments and occasions for the school community to focus on collective acts of worship. Therefore, Villiers High School receives permission from the Ealing SACRE to give greater prominence to the three great world religions (Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism), which are represented in the school to a greater degree than the Christian representation.

PRACTICE

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. At Villiers High School we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. There is one assembly each week for every pupil in the school.

Assemblies are arranged on a basic three week schedule. One week, the assembly is led by the Head-teacher or other senior staff. The next week, it is led by the Heads of Year and in the third week, by Form Tutors. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in both planning and taking part in these assemblies.

In addition form tutors lead tutor groups through ‘Thought for the Day’ readings and reflections during tutor time on the 4 remaining mornings per week.

The school year has been divided into weekly themes and values which are of importance to all the pupils who are in the school. These encompass religious festivals, known national or international events, and aspects taken from the school calendar. Staff leading worship can then plan around the themes and a development of ideas can be built.

Pupils also attend weekly Religious Education lessons as part of their curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to explore their own religious beliefs and acknowledge the common ground which unites them with others of different religious traditions. This promotes a greater awareness and the appreciation of others, cemented by careful thoughtfulness and reflection.

AIMS:

Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for children. Major themes for consideration are:

- Promoting the values of Justice, Equality, Peace, Tolerance, Difference and Diversity.
- The need to work together in the creation of stable communities and promote healthy co-existence in a multi-cultural society.
- To encourage and promote self-esteem within pupils and their peers in order to create a sense of stability within school, home and community.
- The need to develop empathy for those outside the community, developing tolerant citizens unafraid to recognise diversity and difference.
- To promote dialogue and communication to establish a healthy and diverse community.
- The moral and spiritual development of pupils to create a climate of moral sensitivity.
- The need to encourage and promote moral discourse. Pupils become articulate in moral decision making through a process of rational reflection and the avoidance of prejudice.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The headteacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body.
- The assistant headteacher is responsible for planning the calendar of themes and “Thought for the Day” activities on a termly basis. This is discussed by the Pastoral Leadership Group, which also provides an opportunity for Heads of Year to give feedback from Year Teams about assemblies.
- All Form Tutors follow the ‘Thought for the Day’ programme in tutor time.
- Parents of a pupil have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship at the school the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the headteacher.
- The Education and Inspection Act 2006 makes provision for pupils in post-16 education to exercise the right to withdraw themselves from the daily act of collective worship, but not from assembly.
- The deputy headteacher is responsible for ensuring that parents are reminded on an annual basis of the content of this policy via the school website.

APPENDIX 1

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON PLANNING AND CONDUCTING COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

In planning our assemblies, we choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupil’s contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/reflection/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors (Note 1)

SONG/MUSIC Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. Music from a variety of cultures and types is used on occasions. Music should be selected carefully to match the theme.

PRAYER/REFLECTION Whilst prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. Various forms of introduction to prayers can be used to distance children, whilst giving them the opportunity to participate if they so desire; e.g., 'And now in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well-known Christian/Hindu/Muslim prayer/poem/reading...' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions. It is not always necessary to have a prayer and the use of regular moments of silence and reflection provides opportunities for some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish.