



SHAPWICK SCHOOL

ASSEMBLY POLICY

Introduction

The 1988 Education Act requires that every school should provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The majority of which each term should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character². Collective worship should reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular denomination”.

Collective worship is not the same as corporate worship. Corporate worship is the worship of people who have a common understanding of what worship includes and who share the same beliefs. An Independent school is not necessarily a worshipping community as the pupils who have a faith are diverse in what they believe, in what they believe God is and what they believe worship to that god or Gods should entail.

School Aims for Collective Worship/Rationale

- What it means to be a human being
- Questions of meaning, purpose and value
- The best that human beings can be – inspirational, exemplars (people of faith or not) who have demonstrated through their actions, lives and qualities. Examples will come from religious and non-religious sources
- Personal beliefs and values

The collective worship that we deliver will recognise and value the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of our school population and will be conducted within our Equal Opportunities policy.

How collective worship will enrich the experiences of pupils/aims

- Enable pupils to reflect on and question issues such as belonging to the school community, the wider community and to humanity as a whole
- Reinforce a sense of community and cohesion through appreciating those things we have in common
- Develop a reflective approach to life
- Support pupils in the development of spiritual, cultural and moral perspectives
- Develop a sense of the individual's place in the world beyond the physical, material and the here and now
- Provide time to consider values and beliefs – both their own and those of others
- Raise awareness of difficulties experienced living a life based on values, beliefs and principles which may not be shared by everyone in the wider community
- Provide opportunity to celebrate achievement and to share times of celebration
- Support students in responding to crisis at a personal and collective level and provide them with a vocabulary to explore feelings and responses
- Support those who have particular needs or who are engaged in times of crisis

Collective worship will reinforce the sense of the school community by giving pupils the opportunity to share things of worth with each other, within a reflective space.

The pupils who have a faith will be able to use the reflection time to consider issues in light of their religious beliefs and to pray or worship internally as they feel appropriate whilst those pupils who don't have a religious belief will have the opportunity to reflect and make a personal internalised response to the same stimulus. They will also be able to enter into dialogue with those of faith, enabling both believers and non-believers to appreciate each other's stances.

The language of invitation to reflect will be open and inclusive, ensuring that no pupil or adult present feels their beliefs have been compromised and ensuring that they are able to participate and grow spiritually.

Content

- Marking the celebration of a broad range of religious and cultural festivals that reflect the diversity of faiths contained within the community
- Examples of lives of people of faith and other good human beings
- Response to key local, national and international events
- Providing an opportunity to think about their own beliefs whether religious or otherwise
- Putting things into practice e.g. supporting charities
- Providing a moment for silent reflection/prayer
- Celebration of successes of members of the school community
- Input from visiting speakers/experts

Organisation

At Shapwick

- Years 9, 10 and 11 students meet in the Hayloft each day at 9am (Monday – Saturday). The 6th Form students join assembly on Saturday
- The Assemblies are led by either the Headmaster or Deputy Head Teacher or other appointed member of staff
- On Tuesdays the Assembly is organised and led by a Tutor and his/her students

At Shapwick Prep

- The school meets for Assembly in the village Church on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. The Church is used as it is a very accessible local amenity which is available for our use.
- Tuesday Assembly is led by a Tutor (sometimes his/her pupils) with a pre-organised theme.
- On Wednesday the Tutor groups meet with their Tutors at the beginning of the day
- On Friday the 'Houses' (for competition purposes) meet in 3 separate groups

Withdrawal

There is provision in the Education Act for students to withdraw from collective worship. Upon request, and after consultation with parents, it should be assessed whether the student withdraws from assembly or remains in a non-participative way.

Church Services

- Full boarders may attend Family Service in the local church on Sundays
- A Carol Service is held in church at the end of each Autumn Term when feasible
- The school aims to meet, where practicable, the religious needs of all its students. For example taking Catholics in to Glastonbury to visit the Catholic Church, when required.

Visitors

- The local vicar takes assembly approximately once a month, which also enables the boarding students to be reminded of the 'nominated outside person' contact.
- Other visitors may contribute or lead the school assembly when invited to do so with the agreement of the Headmaster or Deputy Head Teachers.

To be reviewed on or before 01/09/12