



**Kings Langley School**

Unlocking Potential for Life

# Collective Worship Policy

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## Rational

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of “ensuring the happiness of every individual in our community”, to promote a climate which enables all students to flourish, regardless of ability or special needs, and supports our desired outcomes of developing "strong character"

## Character Development: Commitment to Equality and Diversity

This school is founded on a set of fundamental values designed to enable all students and adults connected with our community to flourish and succeed, regardless of background or circumstances. We are determined to be open to people, places, methods and ideas—and as such, equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do. Our continued dedication to social justice and equality of opportunity is embodied in everything we do.

We are creating an **inclusive** school community where:

- People are treated with dignity and respect
- Inequalities are challenged
- We anticipate, and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential
- We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference brings great strength.
- We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics and circumstances, such as age; disability; caring or dependency responsibilities; gender or gender identity; marriage and civil partnership status; political opinion; pregnancy and maternity; race, colour, caste, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sexual orientation; socio-economic background; trade union membership status or other distinctions, represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for self-fulfilment.
- We recognise that patterns of under achievement at any level and differences in outcomes can be challenged through positive intervention activities designed to bridge gaps.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
- We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision.

## Principles

Kings Langley School believes that collective worship both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually is reflected in our worship. We value this special time in the school day for the space it gives children to develop a reflective approach to life and the ability to express their reflections in traditionally religious ways or any other appropriate manner.

It is a legal requirement that all registered school age pupils take part in an act of worship each day. These acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”.



Families who send their children to this school are in the main from a range of faith backgrounds, some children are from practising Christian families, in addition, there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our children to worship, we also have to consider the background that our children come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert the children. The faith background of both the staff and the child's family is respected at all times.

### **Rationale:**

The partnership between home and school is enhanced by the role of the school when the educational mission of the Christian Churches and other faiths finds a particular and important expression through collective reflection and prayer.

Through a pattern of daily reflection, assemblies, PSHE lessons, charitable works, our focus on characteristics (stickability, self-regulation and empathy) and related elements of citizenship our community grows in its sense of collective responsibility, understanding of the needs of others and the development of a fair and just society. Arts Specialist Status has enabled our students to explore cultural and religious differences and develop a genuine understanding of what shapes and impacts individuals and religious beliefs.

The school's mission statement and published aims cannot be realised unless our students are afforded opportunities to reflect and discuss openly a range of moral and spiritual issues – religious or otherwise.

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of "ensuring the happiness of every individual in our community", to promote a climate which enables all students to flourish, regardless of ability or special needs, and supports our desired outcomes of developing "strong character".

### **Aims and Purpose:**

The purpose of collective worship for our students, teaching and support staff is: -

- To worship God
- To reflect on the values of the Christian Gospels, the writings and teachings of other faiths and of current and pertinent moral teachings
- To develop a sense of community based on our shared ethos
- To gain a deeper understanding of the School's Mission Statement
- To consider spiritual and moral issues in society and our response to them
- To develop a sense of spirituality which challenges some secular and materialistic standards prevalent in modern society

Aims:

Through our collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for children to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of other people in everyday situations and beliefs
- Explore the language which people use to express their feelings
- Deepen their sense of wonder about the world around them



- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not

### Guidelines:

Statutory requirements:

Collective Worship must take place:

- For every child not withdrawn by their parents (post 16 students can withdraw themselves) every day
- Be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.
- take account of the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils
- Take place on the school premises, except on occasions, with agreement of governors.

Therefore, at Kings Langley School our collective worship reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief without being distinctive of any particular Christian denomination. The universal and Christian values of justice, love and respect form a firm moral foundation to build upon at the school.

The management of "Collective Worship" will involve: -

Collective Worship at Kings Langley School is defined as any gathering of members of the community to reflect and pray. It includes Form Reflections and discussions during morning registration, prayers said or studied in RS lessons and School/Year/Key Stage assemblies and other celebrations (such as The Christmas Carol concert) which take place throughout the School Year. Students are encouraged to participate actively in class worship, for example, leading prayer or a discussion theme for the day. A suitable resource pack is made available for Form Tutors.

It is the responsibility of the Pastoral Head/Key Stage Leader to ensure that the assembly has a Collective Act of Worship which may well tie in to the general theme of the Assembly, the Liturgical Year or topics on the PSHE programme. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for preparing and leading the Worship.

The school encourages students to participate actively in our local community's Churches Together programme – a programme which includes debate and reflection with students in other schools and with members of local churches.

The school actively supports celebrations from all faiths and sets aside reasonable resources to facilitate this. For example, we celebrate Eid with members of our local Muslim Community, seeing this as an ideal opportunity for our students to strengthen their understanding and appreciation of other faiths and cultures.

Teachers and students have the right to withdraw from collective worship and should indicate this to the Headteacher in writing at the start of the school year.



## Collective Worship and the Curriculum:

Collective worship time is distinct from curriculum time given to any subject including religious education. However, in Kings Langley School, we aim to enable collective worship and aspects of children's classroom learning to be mutually supportive.

Collective worship provides opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in line with school policy. To achieve this, it addresses a wide variety of themes and topics, uses diverse stimuli and resources and provides pupils with opportunities to 'respond' at their own level.

## Role 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 Deputy 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 registration programme in tutor time.

All Teaching Staff are required to attend assemblies unless they have formally withdrawn from them by putting their request in writing and meeting with the Headteacher.

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, letters and newsletters along with inviting small groups of parents to join focus group events to improve and adapt our curriculum to local contexts and needs.

## Withdrawal

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational and reflective in nature and never coercive or indoctrinatory. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship and staff (and students in the sixth form) are also free to withdraw from involvement in this aspect of school life. We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the Head Teacher in writing so that school records are accurate. We also appreciate opportunities to speak with parents and staff who have concerns about collective worship, always keen to develop our understanding of sensitivities and to overcome difficulties where possible. Those pupils who are withdrawn from worship are cared for by a member of the school's staff; parents may provide suitable activities for children so withdrawn.