



Collective Worship Policy

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Introduction

Collective worship in schools should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes. Collective worship at Ridgeway School broadly reflects the values and character of Christian collective worship along with other faiths; this is appropriate for our pupils.

Every pupil in a special school should attend collective worship (unless withdrawn by their parents or carers) so far as it is practicable. (*1988 Education Reform Act, School Collective Worship*).

The purpose of this policy

This policy is in place to clearly articulate what collective worship at Ridgeway School aims to achieve and what it looks like.

Aims of collective worship

The aims of collective worship at Ridgeway School are:

- To enable pupils to share our values
- To develop our community spirit
- To enable pupils to interact with spiritual and moral issues
- To experience shared joy
- To recognise and celebrate the achievements of others
- To celebrate special times
- To encourage quiet reflection

What does collective worship look like?

Collective worship at Ridgeway takes place in two main forms:

- **In class.** This will look very different in different classes, depending on the needs of the individual pupils. Teachers will provide appropriate stimuli to support pupils to reflect on different beliefs, including their own. Teachers will reinforce positive attitudes within this context and will utilise specialist teaching strategies and communication supports as appropriate for the individual pupils.
- **In assembly:**
 - For Early Years through to Key Stage 3, this will take place weekly, encouraging pupils to come together as a community to engage in shared joy, celebration and reflection, rooted in our shared values and the 'Golden Rules'. This assembly is delivered virtually and in person, due to limitations on shared spaces, and enabling pupils with sensory needs to be able to access assembly without being overwhelmed by the busy environment. Participation and response is still encouraged.



- o For Key Stage 4, this will take place weekly as an in-person event, encouraging pupils to develop unity as a key stage group and to celebrate the achievements of themselves and others, and to share and reflect on moral issues.
- o College students still access assemblies, although these are less frequent and tend to focus on a key topic, for example there might be a relevant guest attending to speak. There is still a focus on developing a common ethos and sense of community.

Roles and responsibilities

Assemblies are led by members of the extended leadership team, who should be well-prepared.

Teachers are expected to make informed decisions about what collective worship looks like within their classes.

Staff are expected to support acts of collective worship by modelling good listening behaviour and participation.

Parents / carers have a right to withdraw their child from collective worship on the grounds of religious conscience.

Legal framework & statutory guidance

Linked national guidance:

1988 Education Reform Act, School Collective Worship

Equalities & inclusion

All pupils at Ridgeway School have learning disabilities; many pupils have autism. These diagnoses might mean that abstract concepts are not accessible for them, so collective worship needs to be presented in a way that is meaningful and accessible to pupils' individual needs.

Whilst legislation expects collective worship to be 'of a broadly Christian character', we endeavour to make our collective worship reflective of the character of a variety of faiths, as we offer time to focus on things that are special to us as individuals and as a community and reinforce the work we do with our pupils in developing their social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing.

Safeguarding implications

Collective worship helps to encourage respectful relationships with others and to build a sense of community, both of which contribute towards a strong culture of safeguarding at Ridgeway.