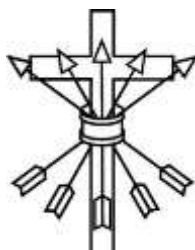


WADDESdon CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

***“I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.”
John 10:10***

Policy Statement

Daily assemblies enable our community to share in, see, and experience Christ’s promise of life in all its fullness. Our acts of worship are deliberately invitational and inclusive, the needs of the students and their families whom we serve, be they of all faiths and none.

We take seriously our commitment to nurturing the spiritual development of our young people and staff and recognize the power and importance of the questions which underpin the Church of England’s Vision for Education (2016): *Who am I? Why am I here? What do I desire? How then shall I live?*

STATUS OF POLICY:	Not statutory – expected in CE School
BASED ON LA PROCEDURE DATED:	-
COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE:	Christian Ethos Group
MOST RECENT REVIEW DATE:	Summer Term 2025
Next review	Summer 2028

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY – WARM FIRES AND OPEN DOORS

“Irrespective of their response, children and **young people should see and experience love, welcome, hope, forgiveness and the possibility of new beginnings** whenever they encounter the Church.” (Archbishops’ Council, 2010)

“By Warm Fires I mean a **vibrant and attractive sense of our Christian identity**, and by Open Doors I mean **a real welcome to anyone** and everyone to gather round the fire.”
(David Thomson, Bishop of Huntingdon, 2014 cited in *Fruits of the Spirit*, 2016)

OUR CORE VALUES

We believe that worship at Waddesdon should:

- acknowledge mind, body *and* soul;
- affirm Christian values and attitudes
- reflect the wonder of life and praise and thanks to the creator who gave us this life;
- provide the opportunity for people to think and question the purpose and meaning of life;
- connect with the spiritual needs of everyone, inclusive of all faiths or none;
- be carried out in a manner conducive with Dignity and Respect.

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Collective Worship is intended to be inclusive. The Christian Ethos Group recognises that students have widely different experiences of worship: some go to church regularly; some have no such experiences beyond school and others belong to and worship in the context of another faith. Worship in schools therefore is collective worship as distinct from corporate worship which occurs when a faith community gathers to worship together.

Worship can also be a ‘time to breathe’; a time when all can come together to find a space, silence and quietness to reflect on their own spirituality, values and place in the world. Just as breathing is vitally important to life, worship is a significant and sacred time in the life of the school; ensuring the time is valued will allow all to ‘breathe’ through worship. Students enter assembly in an attitude of quiet reflection. This is aided by the use of music and the use of images. Our acts of worship conclude with a prayer. There is an invitation for students and staff to receive the prayer in a way that has meaning for them.

The range of speakers (implicitly and explicitly Christian in their messages) provide students with a rich diet of material from the Christian tradition and from other world views. It is recognized that learning

about the major festivals of other faiths is part of the general religious and cultural education of students. It is also a way of developing a growing understanding and valuing of other faiths in the school and in the community. This is important as part of the school's development of community.

AWE AND WONDER; THINKING AND QUESTIONING

At the heart of worship is a sense of awe and wonder at the fullness of life and God's creation. This may be expressed explicitly or implicitly through the range of speakers and themes.

Worship fosters the development of the whole person by stimulating concern for the needs of others, challenging learners to reflect on their beliefs and values and to understand alternative viewpoints, cultures and beliefs. Participation also encourages a sense of worth and self-assurance in young people and develops their thinking.

SPIRITUAL NEEDS

The world of education is properly concerned with spirituality. Education seeks to develop the whole person and, as such, the spiritual dimension should be taken into account. Spiritual development is concerned with the awareness a student has of those elements in existence and experiences which may be defined in terms of inner feelings and beliefs; they affect the way pupils see themselves and throw light on the meaning and purpose of life itself.

Collective worship provides an opportunity to encourage students to develop an awareness of the moral principles of right and wrong, justice and fairness, and a concern for the fate of others and the world. It can allow them to reflect quietly and make an internal response in the light of personal beliefs and background; this may include worship of God within each participant's faith understanding. Collective worship will therefore offer the opportunity for students to explore the spiritual dimension of life through:

- Reflection on the world
- Expression of joy and sorrow
- Search for truth and meaning
- Exploration of the mysteries and paradoxes of life

And ultimately to consider the questions:

Who am I? Why am I here? What do I desire? How then shall I live?

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN PRACTICE

Within our school, worship is Christian in character reflecting the Anglican tradition. It is most explicitly expressed within the following key events:

- The annual Service of Praise and Thanksgiving is an invitation to all to give thanks for the life and work of the school. It encourages gratitude, contemplation and praise.
- Holy Communion which lies at the heart of the Christian faith and Christ's teaching. It is a profound individual and collective act of worship which is open to all.

Collective worship is a rich opportunity to provide for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In both implicit and explicit ways, collective worship will:

- Relate to the worship of God
- Have a sense of occasion
- Invite participation
- Provide an opportunity for the school community to explore their inner feelings as reflective, thinking individuals
- Foster a sense of each person's unique worth
- Provide opportunity for individuals and the community to share what is of importance to them
- Respect the integrity of all individuals, valuing everyone as a child of God
- Promote Christian values
- Promote the Christian foundation for the rules within our school
- Promote personal qualities such as thoughtfulness, fairness, respect and honesty
- Reflect on models of moral virtue in literature and the lives of contemporary people and those of the past
- Foster a sense of community and belonging
- Be varied in style and include different forms of expression such as art, music etc
- Celebrate students' talents and achievements
- Make use of symbols and imagery
- Encourage respect and care for the world by nurturing a positive attitude to both local and global environmental issues

In common with other Anglican schools, worship often reflects some of the essential features within the rich traditions of Anglican prayer and worship and includes:

- Using the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning
- The use of prayer – with opportunities for staff and students to be involved in leading these

- Reflection on Christian symbols and their use in worship
- Observing the cycle of the Anglican year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost
- Providing opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship
- Recognizing that the Anglican church has a strong commitment to ecumenism which may be expressed when members of other churches are invited to lead
- Experiencing the bond of community which encompasses gender, age, race and religious opinion. This can be expressed through the range of visitors who are invited to lead or attend school worship
- Sharing in a commitment to dialogue with other faiths, shown in the welcome offered to all students and the celebration of shared values and beliefs
- The incorporation of music as part of worship

IMPLEMENTATION

A member of the school's Leadership and Management Team is responsible for the coordination of collective worship. A rota is prepared on a half termly basis and involves leadership by school staff, visiting clergy and other speakers. One day a week assembly will be led by the Sixth Form for the whole school.

Themes for assemblies are set in discussion with the Christian Ethos Group and reflect the liturgical year as well as ensuring that other faith representatives have an opportunity to participate.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Christian Ethos Group established by the Governing Body and including staff, student, governor, parent and clergy representation regularly reviews the implementation and effectiveness of assemblies and collective worship and make recommendations for future changes to the policy.

In the most recent review (2024), the students expressed a strong preference for live music and also to hear from speakers within their community on matters of faith and other views.