

SPALDING HIGH SCHOOL



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

DATE AGREED: January 2020

REVIEW FREQUENCY: Biennial

Executive Summary:

This policy sets out the statutory regulations and government/Local Authority advice regarding acts of collective worship in schools. As a maintained community school, SHS follows the Lincolnshire County Council agreed practices and regulations alongside statutory guidance laid down by law.

Chair of Governors

Date

Headmistress

Date

SECTION 1: Statement of Intent

The act of collective worship plays a central role in the life and work of Spalding High School. It provides us with valuable opportunities to reaffirm our values, beliefs and ethos. It offers important opportunities to strengthen our sense of community, belonging and inclusiveness and to reinforce the respect and care we have for each other. Through collective worship we make a significant contribution to the religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as the shared British values of those present.

SHS recognises that it has a statutory duty under the School Standards and Framework Act (1998) & DFE Circular 1/94 to provide collective worship for our students (apart from those who have been withdrawn by their parents). Such worship is usually provided within assemblies which are of a broadly Christian character. The precise nature of these assemblies varies depending upon the group setting of the students (i.e. key stage, year group, house etc.).

Aims

Our collective worship aims to provide opportunity for our students to:

- Reflect on values that are of a broadly Christian nature and on their own beliefs.
- Develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values.
- Consider spiritual and moral issues.
- Respond to the worship offered.

To support these aims many assemblies will include a hymn and/or a prayer or moment of reflection. However, variation is permissible, indeed desirable, to avoid formulaic repetition. Themes for the presentation will also vary; some will have a self-evidently Christian content, whilst others will be of a more broadly humanistic nature or from other major world religions or from the moral, cultural and social characteristics identified by our community and represented in the School's word cloud.

Withdrawal from assemblies

Parents wishing to excuse their child from attending assembly on religious grounds or as conscientious objectors must do so in writing to the Headmistress, ideally at the start of the school year. Staff also have the right not to attend or lead an act of collective worship on the same grounds. Staff should do so in writing to the Headmistress at the start of the school year.

Collective Worship Planning

The annual Assembly Rota for both the Hall and year group venues are prepared well in advance of the new school year so that staff and students are aware of the structure and allocations to staff and form groups. Each term a more detailed rota is issued which also provides a weekly calendar of events (historic, cultural and religious), celebrations, British Values and (social & moral) themes (from the word cloud). **All** those leading assemblies are encouraged to adhere to the calendar of themes to ensure that consistent messages/values are shared with all students. However, these should be viewed in the broadest sense to avoid repetition and are not to be viewed as absolute content. Students, Prefects, the School Council and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors regularly plan and lead assemblies.

We ensure that over time the following opportunities are provided:

- Emphasising common themes and ensuring the inclusiveness of the school community is reinforced. Moral tales/teachings and contemporary situations may also be drawn upon where appropriate.
- Marking of appropriate festivals and other significant days, historic events and people.
- Opportunity for students to sing traditional Christian hymns and to pray and that others listen to it respectfully.
- Use of the Bible and other sacred texts as a source for stories and teachings.

Routines for acts of collective worship

- We aim to create an atmosphere of quiet, stillness and calm. To aid this, appropriate music is often played for entry and exit from the hall/gym/drama studio and students are closely supervised by staff.
- The usual format consists of an input from the leader, an appropriate hymn or song, followed by a time of prayer and/or reflection. Leaders are encouraged to actively engage students.
- From time to time visitors may be invited to lead or participate in one of our whole school or other acts of collective worship. The appropriateness of those invited to deliver assemblies is always assessed by the SLT.
- The assembly, including the act of collective worship, usually takes 15 minutes altogether.

Assembly Rota

Space generally precludes the whole school meeting regularly for an act of worship or assembly, indeed we have no space large enough to accommodate more than one third of the school on a day to day basis. This means that assemblies have to be held by key stage, year group or house. Each year group has two assemblies per week. One with a key stage in the Hall and another as a year group.

- **Whole School Gym Assemblies**

Whole school gym assemblies are held at certain key points of the school year, generally the start and end of key terms. It takes a significant amount of time to assemble 1000 students into the gym and as such the assembly takes much longer than the 15 minutes allocated to morning registration. To minimise the impact on teaching, learning and loss of lesson time, whole school assemblies are seen as very special acts to mark particular points of the school year.

- **Prizegivings, Year 11 and Year 13 Leavers' Assemblies**

These events are valued and established traditions at Spalding High School. Each has a strong element of collective worship and thanksgiving.

- **Achievement Assemblies**

Once each long term we hold Achievement Assemblies to recognise and celebrate success across academic, sporting, creative and artistic fields. As a School, we feel that it is very important to our community to celebrate and take pride in each other's achievements as much as our own.

- **Church services**

The School holds an annual act of worship in our local church, St Mary & St Nicholas, Spalding (subject to available access) for the whole school in session. This is held to mark our Christmas Service. In September 2020 we will hold our first Founders' Day Service to celebrate the School's centenary. From this date we will mark significant milestone anniversaries (every 25 years) with a Founders' Day service at our parish church.

With reference and credit to: SACRE Model Policy April 2008 & DFE Circular 1/94