



Collective Worship Policy

1 Aims and purpose

1.1 The Swallowtail Federation comprises of three Church of England voluntary controlled schools. All acts of worship are in accordance with each school's Trust Deed and reflect the Anglican status of the schools. Worship is therefore an important part of the school day as it gives us the opportunity to come together as school communities to:

- offer well planned opportunities to worship God;
- enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- enable children to learn about Jesus and Holy Spirit;
- enable children to explore their own beliefs and respect the beliefs of others in an environment where each individual's integrity is respected;
- encourage participation and response;
- develop a sense of community spirit;
- promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes which underpin the Christian values and ethos of our Federation;
- enable children to experience shared elements of Christian worship and reflect some of the practices of our local churches;
- show appreciation of God given gifts, talents and achievements.

2 Collective worship

2.1 We understand worship to be a special occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective worship involves all members of each school coming together and participating in worship. We expect all children to take an active part in the collective worship but make it clear in the School Brochures that parents have the right to withdraw their children. (see note 4.1 below) School staff are encouraged to join the children but are under no obligation to do so.

2.2 The 1988 Education Reform Act states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. As Church schools, our worship must be wholly Christian in nature. Therefore, we base our collective worship on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our collective worship in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the schools and ensure that worship is appropriate to the age, aptitude and background of the children.

3 Organisation of collective worship

3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship which includes the whole school.

3.2 We conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way. We regard collective worship as a special time, and expect children to behave in an

appropriate way. This often includes a time of calm reflection when we ask them to listen carefully and to participate fully, including in prayer or drama (or to respect those around them who are praying) and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music, a cross and a candle or other objects to focus the attention of the children.

- 3.3** Collective worship may be conducted by one of the executive headteachers, heads of school, teachers, other members of staff and a variety of local visitors including church clergy, lay ministers and readers.
- 3.4** We take the themes of our collective worship from the Values for Life programme as well as incorporating the festivals of the Christian calendar in our three year rolling plan. This overview is planned by one of the executive head teachers on a termly basis. Those leading worship are encouraged to relate their worship to the current theme. The themes chosen are broad enough to allow those leading worship to approach the theme from their own perspective, giving children the opportunity to reflect on the current theme from a variety of viewpoints. On occasions it is recognised that leaders may feel that they need to respond to local or national events. Sometimes the themes of our collective worship are related to topics that we teach as part of the schools' curriculum. We plan our collective worship well in advance of the day they take place.
- 3.5** Our collective worship reflects the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the collective worship by showing their work, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Collective worship provides an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school, playing an important part in promoting the ethos of the schools, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised.
- 3.6** Each term there may be particular collective worship times that parents are invited to attend. We encourage their attendance, as this promotes community spirit, and shows the school and the homes working together in support of the children's achievements. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate and celebrate the Christian distinctiveness of the schools.
- 3.7** Resources for collective worship are located in each school. There is a wide selection of books, artefacts and music to support staff in the delivery of collective worship.
- 3.8** We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability and therefore make collective worship accessible to all.

4 Right of withdrawal

- 4.1** We expect all children to attend collective worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the schools will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the collective worship. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.
- 4.2** The Head Teacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from collective worship and this is reported on to governors annually.

5 Contribution to spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development

- 5.1** Although SMSC development is fostered across the curriculum, collective worship provides opportunities for children to reflect on the meaning of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions made by other people, value their own culture and the culture of others.

6 Monitoring, evaluation and review

- 6.1** Collective worship is evaluated by the staff who deliver it and the executive headteacher uses these records to plan subsequent worship cycles.
- 6.2** Foundation governors routinely monitor worship as part of their role to ensure that the legal requirements are met by attending a worship session, looking at plans and evaluations and by speaking to the children as part of their annual monitoring programme.
- 6.3** The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all those who plan and lead collective worship, but the executive headteachers retain statutory accountability for ensuring that all acts of collective worship meet the requirements of the law and the expectations of the governing body.
- 6.4** This policy will be reviewed every three years.

**Originally agreed by Staff and Governing Body – September 2013
Reviewed December 2017**