



Policy:	Collective Worship Policy
Policy Ref:	CM56
Review Date:	December 2024
Next Review:	December 2025
Authorised by:	Headteacher

Principles:

Clare Mount Specialist Sports College 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 students 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 legal requirements 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”. A statement of gratitude or recognition of what is wonderful about the world is an appropriate act of worship for our pupils.

Families who send their children to this school are in the main ‘nominally’ Christian and we do have some pupils from practising Christian families. In addition there are pupils who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our students to worship we have to consider the background that they come from and it is therefore not the practice of this school to preach to or convert students. The faith background of both the staff and the pupils’ family is respected at all times.

Aims:

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

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of the feelings of the other people in every day 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

Practice:

At Clare Mount Specialist Sports College we combine our acts of worship with assembly, helping to ensure that worship takes place within a broad educational framework. There are two assemblies each week for every student in the school. In addition form tutors lead tutor groups through readings and reflections during tutor time each afternoon in the week.

The Headteacher or other members of senior staff lead the whole school worship each week, whilst heads of year and / or form tutors may lead the year group assemblies each week. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in both planning and leadership at certain times of the year. Assemblies are sometimes discussed at School Council meetings and they are invited to submit ideas and get others involved.

The school year has been divided into termly themes, which encompass religious festivals, known national or international events, and aspects taken from the school calendar. Staff leading worship can then plan around the themes and a development of ideas can build up.

Roles 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 Head of Religious Education, in consultation with the 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 school 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 Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that parents are reminded on an annual basis of the content of this policy via the school newsletter.

Dissemination:

This policy is shared with all staff through the staff handbook. Parents are advised of the policy via the school prospectus.

Monitoring and Review:

The governors' curriculum sub-committee review this policy on an annual basis.

Compliance with policy objectives is monitored by the curriculum deputy, and heads of year on a termly basis and the programme is reviewed every term through SLT.

APPENDIX 1

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE ON PLANNING AND CONDUCTING ASSEMBLIES

In planning our assemblies, we choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupil's contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Dance/drama
- Prayer/meditation/songs/hymns/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

Song/Music

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. Music from a variety of cultures and types is used on occasions. Music should be selected carefully to match the theme.

Prayer/Reflection

The use of prayer has led to a great deal of debate. We feel that, whilst prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts, pupils should not be required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. Various forms of introduction to our prayers can be used to distance children, whilst giving them the opportunity to participate if they so desire; e.g., 'And now in a moment of stillness, listen to the words of a well known Christian prayer...' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions.

It is not always necessary to have a prayer and the use of regular moments of silence provides opportunities for some pupils to respond in a personal way if they so wish.