



The Archbishop's School

Collective Worship Policy

2015



**Collective Worship
and
Spiritual Development
at
The Archbishop's School,
Canterbury**



“One of the most universal of human experiences is to stand looking up at the skies on a starry night, to be conscious of being only a very small part of something infinitely wonderful and to attempt to reach out to the One who made, sustains and cares for all this. Worship is the response of the creature to the Creator; to worship is to desire to give true worth to what is beyond our powers of appreciation. To worship is to be aware of the transcendence of God: the infinite distance between the maker and the made; and at the same time his immanence: to be part of a creation that longs to respond properly to God at work in it. Indeed there is nothing more attractive, even compelling, to outsiders than real worship in spirit and in truth.”

Jonathan Gledhill

Worship is not just singing songs, or saying Amen at the end of a prayer; worship is the development of the relationship between God and His people. Each act of worship that takes place at The Archbishop’s School should allow all taking part to connect with God in some shape or form. This handbook will hopefully explain the vision for collective worship and spiritual development at The Archbishop’s School but also give guidelines and guidance for those leading acts of worship for the pupils from the School.

Helen Netherton

(In charge of Collective Worship and Spiritual Development)



The format of Collective Worship at The Archbishop's School

Weekly

Monday, Wednesday, Friday – full school assemblies

Tuesday – Matthew, Mark and Paul House assemblies

Luke, John and Peter House form time

Thursday - Luke, John and Peter House assemblies

Matthew, Mark and Paul House form time

Annually

Autumn term - Last day of October half term – Dedication service at the Cathedral

Last but one Friday of term – Year 7 Christingle service at St. Stephen's

Last but one day of term – Christmas Eucharist

Spring Term - Easter celebration – optional, contemporary service

Last but one day of term – Easter Eucharist

Summer Term - After exams – Leavers service

Summer celebration – optional, contemporary service

Last but one day of term – End of year Eucharist



The Purpose of assemblies

The Archbishop's school prides itself on the sense of community which is shown around the school and through the pastoral system. Assemblies allow a time at the beginning of the day for the whole school to come together, for an act of worship, to build relationship as a school, as a house and with God. They aim to give pupils and staff alike the chance to:

- Express praise and thanksgiving to God
- Foster respect and deepen spiritual awareness
- Reflect on the character of God and on the teachings of Christ
- Affirm Christian values and attitudes
- Share each other's joys and challenges
- Celebrate special times in the Christian calendar

Whole school assemblies

As a Church of England foundation school an assembly is an opportunity to develop understanding of faith for each pupil and also for the school as a whole. Each full school assembly should follow the simple outline of notices, hymn, message, prayer. This outline is what makes an act of worship rather than just a lesson for the whole school. Further guidelines can be found later on.

House assemblies

House assemblies are a great opportunity to allow the pupils to be more involved both in the leading and organizing of assemblies but also by participating in teacher led assemblies as well. House assemblies should be based on the school's theme and thought for the week, and there should be some form of prayer within the assembly. There is obviously considerably more flexibility within these assemblies and this should be taken advantage of.



Guidelines for Acts of Worship

An acceptable act of worship should do some or all of the following

- Have a clear message/focus
- Stimulate pupils to think/meditate/reflect to see everyday things in a new way
- Introduce pupils to things otherwise beyond their experience
- Inform the emotions as well as the mind
- Contain some sort of prayer

An acceptable act of worship should ideally contain the following elements:

- Music and sometimes silence to create atmosphere
- Audio/visual focus/stimulus
- Ideas on how the worship can be personalized by the school
- Opportunities for pupils to share their enthusiasms, talents and beliefs

If stories are to be used:

- The message behind the story needs to be clear (don't use a Bible story for the sake of it)
- They shouldn't conflict with broad Christian Principles

An acceptable act of worship should not merely be:

- A reinforcement of moral teaching in school (hymn, prayer and telling off)
- An RE lesson or religious sermon



Monitoring of Collective Worship

Role of H. Netherton

- To organize acts of worship
- To develop themes and thoughts for the week
- To arrange for guests to come in to lead services/speak in assemblies
- To monitor all acts of worship – both full school and house
 - House assemblies are to be observed once a term
 - Feedback will be given to any person taking an assembly
- To meet with pupils and receive feedback for development of collective worship
 - A survey will be taken once every two years
 - A group will be formed of pupils from across the school who wish to participate in the development of collective worship
 - Certain pupils will be asked for feedback following different outside speakers