



National  
Autistic  
Society



Vanguard  
School

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Version	Date	Distribution
2.0	23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2019	NASAT Vanguard Project Group
2.1	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	NASAT Vanguard Project Group

## 1. Introduction

NAS Vanguard School collective worship policy reflects and reinforces many of the school's aims within its inclusive ethos. Common strands are exemplified as follows:

- tolerance and mutual understanding
- care and support
- respect and responsibility
- reflective self development
- SMSC education

## 2. Collective Worship Aims

In keeping with these aims, collective worship at NAS Vanguard School will:

- contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- provide a worthwhile educational experience which takes account of pupils' age, aptitude, religious and family background
- provide opportunities for staff, pupils and members of the local community to contribute to the wider life of the school beyond taught lessons
- provide opportunities for worship, reverence, celebration and reflection
- enable pupils to reflect on a broadly Christian basis in terms of values and beliefs
- provide an experience that does not offend the integrity of the non-religious or those of different faiths
- provide students with something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to

The planned educational outcomes of collective worship include:

- whole-school celebration
- sharing and experiencing differences
- building a sense of group identity
- encouraging a sense of personal and social responsibility
- a break from the busy nature of life for reflective stillness and quiet
- learning how to behave in a large social group
- exploring feelings and emotions
- learning how to speak in front of an audience

- learning how to respond in a large group setting
- making visible the school's leadership in terms of ethics and moral purpose

### 3. Legal Aspects

The Education Act 1996 requires the Headteacher ; and Governing Body of every state-funded school to provide a daily act of collective worship.

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their pupils from acts of worship. Teachers have the same right of withdrawal. We will make it clear that parents and pupils do not have to justify their decision to exercise the right to withdraw, also that they may withdraw from the whole or from part, and we will assist parents and carers by devising age-appropriate supervised alternative provision for those students who are opted out.

This may consist of agreed withdrawal to an alternative and convenient location in keeping with the requirements of Section 71(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998; opportunities for supervised reading of an appropriate nature; plus, any alternative appropriate work provided by the parent/carer.

In state-funded schools collective worship is to be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'. As such, in any one term most acts of collective worship will reflect the broad traditions of Christian belief and teaching.

An act of worship which reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief need not contain only Christian material. It must, however, contain some elements which relate specifically to the traditions of Christian belief.

All collective worship is intended to ensure pupils from other faiths or of no faith can take part, will be enriched by containing elements or examples from other faiths. It is deemed to be good practice to consider concentrating on the religious values faiths have in common, thereby enlarging pupils' understanding of their own or their parents' faith and giving others an insight into religious belief. There are religious and human values that many religions and life stances (e.g. Humanism) have in common, e.g. justice, love, peace, charity, sacrifice, morality, saying sorry. Worship with a theme such as 'forgiveness' or 'honesty' or 'charity' is broadly Christian even if specific Christian material is not used. . The assemblies generally follow themes that are aligned to the delivery of the personal and social development programme SEAL.

Many Christian beliefs are shared by other world religions e.g. God as creator, humankind as stewards of the world, goodness overcoming evil. For example, the Jewish festival of Hanukkah celebrates freedom from oppression and the power of God. In collective worship, material based on this celebration would allow those who believe in justice to share, and be broadly Christian too.

Just over half the acts of collective worship need to be broadly Christian. Therefore the remaining assemblies can be broadly of the character of other world religions and this can reflect the faiths of the student population.

Specific Christian beliefs should not be ignored, e.g. Jesus as the son of God. The major Christian festivals will give the school an opportunity to reflect on these specific Christian beliefs. Schools may make use of Christian visitors to contribute to this element of the law.

By using these principles, it is possible to provide collective worship of a broadly Christian character in a school where a large majority of students have a faith other than Christianity or have no faith.

The school will maintain a multi-faith calendar of events which recognises significant times within the school year where other religious festivals and events can be identified and celebrated. Also, topical or other relevant issues may be picked up and used as appropriate. The content of all of these assemblies would be varied but would reflect a significant Christian character within any one term.

Collective worship makes an important contribution to developing pupils' understanding of fundamental British values as defined by Ofsted. Effective SMSC development can support pupils in better understanding and applying these fundamental British values.

#### **4. Organisation of collective worship**

The programme of acts of collective worship is delegated by the Principal and overseen by a member of SLT. It will reflect the needs of the age-range and pupil profile in our school.

#### **5. Involvement of Visitors**

Visitors will be present in school from time to time, including religious leaders as part of the school's inclusive approach. All visitors will be given a copy of this policy and it will be explained to them that the policy must be followed.

Visitors should not speak about raising money for any particular cause(s).

## **6. Staff Involvement in Collective Worship**

All staff may be involved on a regular or sporadic basis with the school's CW programme. A termly programme will be in place for planning and leading collective worship which will include but not be limited to teachers.

## **7. Review**

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually by Governors and the Headteacher.