

West Monmouth School

Ysgol Gorllewin Mynwy



Collective Worship Policy

Polisi Addoli ar y Cyd

Date Approved by Governors:

Date Reviewed by Governors:



A Policy for Collective Worship



This policy is based on the Estyn 'Supplementary guidance: collective worship in non-denominational schools', September 2013.

The Education Reform Act 1988, Welsh Office Circular 10/94 requires that all schools in Wales provide:

'A daily act of collective worship for their pupils which is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.' (Estyn, 2008)

At West Monmouth School we not only strive to do this, but we also aim for our acts of collective worship to meet the following requirement:

'It must in some sense reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities & it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being.' (Welsh Office Circular 10/94)

We also understand that the aim of collective worship at West Monmouth School, is to:

'Collective worship should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider the spiritual, moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through watching and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.' (Estyn, 2013)

In line with the Estyn supplementary guidance, we implement the following in relation to collective worship:

- Collective worship takes place on a daily basis – four times a week this is as part of registration in form classes, once a week this is as part of a year group assembly, on occasions it is as part of a phase group or whole school assembly.
- Collective worship takes into account the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the pupils involved.
- Collective worship aims to make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Our resources, in line with Welsh Assembly guidance, aim to help pupils to:

- Have an opportunity to worship God
- Consider spiritual & moral issues, giving pupils the opportunity to develop these aspects of their characters
- Explore & share their own beliefs
- Participate in (as appropriate) & respond to collective worship
- Develop a school community spirit which promotes a common ethos & shared values
- Develop culturally & socially as part of the wider community
- Collectively share differing emotions
- Reinforce & develop positive attitudes

(Adapted from Welsh Office Circular 10/94)

Programme of collective worship at West Monmouth School

- A copy of our programme of collective worship is emailed to all staff at the start of each term, it is then also re-emailed to staff the week pre-ceding each theme. The programme is organised around the concept of ‘A thought for the week’.
- On a weekly rolling programme this includes, a theme, a thought in the form of a quotation (often from a famous thinker, religious leader, etc), a Bible verse, resource suggestions both for year group assemblies & morning registration sessions & details of how the themes link to other curriculum & whole school areas. The programme is ‘mainly of a broadly Christian nature’ (Estyn Supplementary Guidance, 2014)
- On occasion, it may be necessary to deviate from the collective worship themes, for example following world events, crises within the school or local community, etc.

For example...

Remembrance Day 3 rd November – 7 th November	‘Give thanks with a grateful heart.’ (The Bible, 1 Thessalonians)	<p align="center">**See ppt slides for visual display for form classes**</p> <p>This theme links with the SEAL themes: SEAL theme 2: Learning to be together</p> <p>This theme links with the Global Citizenship element of ESDGC.</p> <p>Community links – past pupils from the school and community members visit the school for the Armistice Day service.</p>
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The collective worship resources used at West Monmouth School

- In addition to the programme above, form teaches are also provided with a PowerPoint display to deliver collective worship four times a week as part of registration. Heads of Learning deliver weekly year group assemblies – they provide their own resources for assemblies, based on the theme and the thought for the week. However, the following websites & publications are useful for Heads of Learning:
 - The Collective Worship website: <http://www.collectiveworship.com>
 - The Assemblies Website - produced by the Welsh National Centre for Religious Education: <http://www.assemblies.org.uk>
 - Book: Howarth, J. & Walton, M. (1995). *Moments of Reflection*. Oxford, UK: Heinemann Educational Publishers (*Copies of this are with Linda Collier in the W20*)
 - The Youth Bible - copies of the ‘Youth Bible’ are available for staff to use for Bible readings (*Copies of this are with Linda Collier in the W20*). This is also available on the internet at www.biblegateway.com - the Bible translation, New Living Translation, is pupil-friendly.

How should the collective worship resources be used?

- Form tutors need to set aside a period of time in morning registration for ‘Thought for the Week’ – the suggestion is between 5-10 minutes. However, it is quality rather than length of time which is important.
- Staff have a good knowledge of their form class & year group & the legal requirements for collective worship state that it should take account of pupils’ family backgrounds, ages & aptitudes (*Estyn, 2008*). Therefore, staff are best placed to decide upon the length of time and exact delivery of collective worship to their form classes and year groups.

Implementation of the Collective Worship Policy at West Monmouth School

What are the expectations for all staff when delivering collective worship at West Monmouth School?

Daily basis

- Takes place every day (either in assembly or form groups) for at least 5 minutes.

Time of reflection

- 1-2 minutes of quiet reflection is included

Displayed

Displayed in classrooms on ‘Thought for Week’ posters

Assembly

- Takes place once a week
- Covers the ‘Thought for the Week’
- Includes time of reflection or prayer
- Includes aspects of Christianity

When does collective worship take place at West Monmouth School?

- Collective worship takes place every day, either during morning assembly in year groups or during morning registration in form groups.
- It should also be understood, that simply because pupils are in an assembly this does not necessarily mean they have had an act of collective worship (i.e. a rewards assembly can be included in an act of collective worship but does not in itself constitute collective worship).

Who takes part in & who delivers collective worship at West Monmouth School?

- Pupils – Collective worship is provided on a daily basis for all registered pupils.
- Staff – Collective worship is delivered by Head of Learning and/or members of SLT in year group assemblies & by form tutors in registration periods.

Some points to consider when planning collective worship

- Pupils must be given opportunities to reflect on the material shared with them – following each act of collective worship pupils must be given opportunity for a time of reflection, this can be in the form of a prayer, quiet consideration of the theme etc.
- All acts of collective worship should include one or more of the following components:
 - A time of reflection – e.g. reading, video, drama, question, quotation, music, etc.
 - A prayer – prayers can either be said aloud or pupils can pray/reflect in silence
 - A song or hymn
 - A reading – e.g. an extract from the Bible or another religious writing or a ‘Thought for the Day’.
- In the collective worship sessions during morning registration, it is important to:
 - Establish a regular time during morning registration for the session to take place.
 - Ensure the sessions have a clear focus.
 - Ensure the material provided is being used.
 - Ensure the sessions have a clear beginning & end and that they are separate from any administration that needs to be done during registration.
 - Ensure that pupils are given a period to reflect on the theme for the day at the end of the act of collective worship.

How can a pupil be withdrawn from collective worship at West Monmouth School?

- Parents can make a written request to the school that their child is excused from a specific act of collective worship or from collective worship in general.
- If such a request is made, the pupil shall be excused from collective worship permanently or until the request is withdrawn by parents.
- As a school, we will always agree to such requests & will not expect parents to provide reasons for removing their child.
- We will supervise those children who have been excused from collective worship.
- It is a parents' right to withdraw their child from collective worship, it is not the child's right to withdraw themselves.
- The legal reference regarding withdrawal from collective worship can be found in the Education Act 1996, Part V, Chapter III, section 389 & also in the Schools Standards & Framework Act 1998, Part II, Chapter VI, section 71. Reference can also be found to this in the Estyn 'Supplementary guidance: collective worship in non-denominational schools', September 2013.

Additional points for consideration

What does the term 'of a broadly Christian character' mean when delivering collective worship in West Monmouth School?

- Staff delivering collective worship (particularly form tutors) have good knowledge of the pupils they are working with. Therefore, when delivering collective worship, staff should try to be sensitive to the beliefs, family & cultural backgrounds of pupils & also to any themes that pupils may find difficult or upsetting.

In what other ways is the 'Thought for the Week' communicated to pupils and the wider school community?

- All staff have a 'Thought for the Week' A4 laminated board in their classrooms, the 'Thought for the Week' is written on these each week.
- The 'Thought for the Week' is also shared with the school community by being displayed on the desktops of all networked computers, with the wider community and parents on the school website and also via Twitter.

What does not constitute collective worship?

- Discussion can form part of collective worship & may be particularly useful in morning registration sessions – however, a discussion in itself does not constitute collective worship and collective worship does not have to include a discussion.
- Pupils should not simply be present in a passive way during collective worship. Pupils must be prepared for the act of collective worship and then must be encouraged, by the person leading the collective worship, to listen to, watch and reflect on the act of collective worship.
- Although administration, discipline, rewards etc. may be an important part of a year group assembly or registration, these things do not constitute collective worship & should be distinct from it.

How will the policy be monitored, evaluated & reviewed?

- This policy will be monitored annually & its effectiveness assessed through discussions with & feedback from staff & observations of collective acts of worship being undertaken.
- All comments, suggestions & improvements would be welcomed & can be sent to the collective worship coordinator, Ruth Frost.

How can visitors be used as part of collective worship?

- Visitors from local faith communities can provide useful contributions to acts of collective worship. However, visitors need to be informed of the logistics of collective worship at West Monmouth School & staff need to ensure that visitors adhere to the school's ethos.
- When a visitor is contributing to collective worship in West Monmouth School staff must ensure that the visitor is given:
 - Basic information – e.g. the time & date to attend, directions to school, parking, the procedures for signing in & out, the length of time that they are required to speak for, etc.
 - Information about the theme that they are covering & where that theme fits into the themes for the term.
 - Information about the pupils that they will be addressing – e.g. age group, maturity level, level of understanding, etc.

How should pupils respond during collective worship?

- Pupils do not have to bow their heads, close their eyes or say 'amen' during prayers. Prayers can be left open-ended to allow pupils to reflect or pray silently.
- Times of collective worship should give pupils the opportunity to worship, but should not encourage them to do something which is against the teachings of a particular religion they may follow.
- Pupils cannot be forced to take part in the singing of hymns. However, they should be given the opportunity to worship in this way.
- Above all, pupils should be encouraged to be quiet and still during the period of reflection and to behave respectfully during collective worship.

References

- Estyn (September 2013) '*Supplementary guidance: collective worship in non-denominational schools*'.
- Estyn (June 2008) *Supplementary guidance on inspecting collective worship in non-denominational schools*.
- The Education Reform Act 1988, Welsh Office Circular 10-94
- TeacherNet website, A to Z of School Leadership:
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/c/collectiveworshipolicy> (accessed October 2009)
- Collective Worship website: <http://www.collectiveworship.com/PracticalTips/> (accessed December 2009)
- Howarth, J. & Walton, M. (1995). *Moments of Reflection*. Oxford, UK: Heinemann Educational Publishers