

# **Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust**

## **Collective Worship Policy**

**Level: 2**

**Date Adopted: Sept 17**

**History of most recent Policy changes (must be completed)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation</b>
Sept 17	Whole Document	Drafted from DBE policy	KS / AG / DBE
Jan 18	Part B	Tailored for individual schools	Foundation members, Local Board
Jan 18	Appendices	All deleted to be reproduced elsewhere	Foundation members, Local Board



*Coming together as a community in spirit and truth.<sup>1</sup>*

*Creating a time and space where grace may fall.*

## **Part A: DBAT Central Policy**

### **1) Introduction**

This policy is intended as a statement of expectation for all DBAT Academies. It is also a template that can be adapted by individual academies to be adopted as their own Collective Worship Policy. In DBAT, worship is central to the life of school and is the main platform for exploring the school's vision. It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery, exploring the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.

For Christians in Church, worship is about honouring God and responding to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a Church but is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. The family backgrounds may be very different and collective worship must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

However in a DBAT Academy the purpose of collective worship will be to lead people to a threshold where they can witness worship and join in, if they wish.

*“Worship in (CofE) schools promotes theological and Religious Literacy and liberates participants to an imagining of a different order of justice, mercy and hope”<sup>2</sup>*

Through Collective Worship pupils will be offered a space and a place for the telling of the Christian story. They will be offered an understanding of worship through being invited to participate in or observe prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible, liturgy, sacrament and experience of the musical and other imaginative riches of Christianity. Opportunities to reflect on the beauty, joy and pain of the world will be given. Pupils will be given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time will be given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark the seasonal festivals of the Christian (*and other*

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<sup>1</sup> John 3v23

<sup>2</sup> CEE Vision statement “Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good” Autumn 2016

*faiths*<sup>3</sup>) calendar. Pupils will be offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.<sup>4</sup>

## **2) Legal Framework**

There must be a daily act of collective worship in all maintained schools for all pupils, other than those in a nursery class or a nursery school. This can take place at any time in the school day and in any groupings. Collective worship in a Church of England School must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. In other words the law on collective worship that applies in a community school, “that it should be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, is not relevant. Worship in a DBAT Academy should be distinctly Christian and reflect Anglican traditions.

The local board in a DBAT school have the responsibility for ensuring that the school meets the requirements for worship detailed in the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) Evaluation Document. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating the impact of worship on the school community in consultation with the headteacher.

## **3) The Right of Withdrawal**

The 1944 and 1988 Education Acts state that parents have the right to withdraw children from collective worship and suitable arrangements should be made to accommodate these children.

In many schools in DBAT there are significant numbers of children whose families are members of another faith, or who hold a non-religious world view. Part of the distinctively Christian nature of Church of England Schools is that they should be as hospitable and inclusive to all in the community they serve. As collective worship occupies such a central place in the life of the Church school, this should be made clear on induction, and it is hoped that parents will be making a specific choice of the school knowing that the distinctive ethos will determine a Christian tradition within collective worship.

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<sup>3</sup> Collective Worship in a CofE school must be in alignment with the religious foundation of the school (Christian), however there is a responsibility for schools in all contexts to mark, respond and learn from the festivals of other faiths. This may be designated as a separate act, not to be conflated with collective worship.

<sup>4</sup> “To worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God and to devote the will to the purpose of God”.  
William Temple (1881-1894)

On occasions, a parent may make a request for their child to be withdrawn from Collective Worship. There is an expectation that parents wishing to request a withdrawal will meet with the headteacher to discuss their concerns and requirements. It may be helpful to establish:

- The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the child taking part
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- Whether the parent will require any advanced notice of such worship, and if so, how much

Where parents have withdrawn their children from collective worship and request religious worship according to their particular faith or denomination, the governors and headteacher will seek to respond positively to such requests providing:

- Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school
- That the alternative provision would be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum as set out in the Education Acts

If the parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending any religious worship at the school, then the school must comply.

*(This means that a parent may, for example, request their child does not take part in a carol service when otherwise the child takes part in daily collective worship.)*

#### **4) Aims**

*Collective worship in a Diocese of Bristol Academy aims to:*

- Have a pivotal place in the life of the school.
- Be the central vehicle by which the school's vision is unpacked and explored so that the whole school community is challenged and engaged with the teachings of Jesus and the Bible.
- Provide an experience of worship that will offer opportunities for those present to observe and/or respond to the presence, power and peace of God as understood by Christians. This will always be invitational, offering an opportunity to take part whilst allowing the freedom for those of other faiths and none to be present with integrity.
- Support pupils in the development of their understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God in Christian belief

- Provide a variety of different opportunities for reflection, understanding of diverse liturgical traditions, participation, challenge and enjoyment where all present can be actively involved and develop their own spirituality whilst contributing to the communal journey.
- Help children to become familiar with Christian language and symbolism and the cycle of the Church year so that they are offered a pattern of meanings and a framework into which they can begin to integrate experience.
- Explore a variety of ways of praying, giving children the opportunity to form their own prayers using multi-sensory foci and introduce them to some well known Christian prayers, as well as a variety of prayers of thanksgiving before mealtimes and home time.
- Offer opportunities to all children and staff to develop their skills in planning, leading and evaluating the impact of school worship with the support and shared engagement of the local church community. Pupils will be at the centre of this process taking on increasingly independent roles in planning and leading worship.
- Ensure that materials and themes for worship are carefully selected to make sure pupils understand the work of Christians and the church locally, nationally and globally and how this reflects the teachings of the Bible and the example of Jesus.

## Part B Policy for Christian Malford, Seagry and Somerfords Walter Powell CE Primary Schools

### 1) Organisation

Worship is led by members of staff, members of Draycot and Woodbridge Benefice worship teams, Open the Book teams, the School Worship councils, classes and small groups of pupils and visitors invited by the schools.

The three schools have their own timetables for worship but include days where worship is led by the local church, days led by members of staff, celebration and class worship.

Worship is planned using Christian values and spiritual development elements by the Worship lead teacher supported by Foundation Local Board members. The programme will explore aspects of the term's value with suggested Biblical texts, stories or ideas. Resources include Values for Life and Roots and Fruits. Children are supported when leading worship by trained adults or members of staff. Worship will be monitored by Heads of school, the lead Local Board member and pupils' opinions will be heard.

The settings in all three schools are made special by the use of :

*The liturgical colours of the seasons of the Church Year in candles and cloths*

*Christian signs and symbols, candles on a table as a focal point,*

*Music as children enter and leave with chosen planned songs and sometimes the Blessing Song at the end.*

*The use of simple ritual and liturgical responses*

*Children are seated in class rows supervised by members of staff*

*Special outdoor areas can be used*

*All schools worship in the local church on special planned occasions*

Worship reflects the cycle of the Church year with special services for festivals and additional worship themes. The worship pattern reflects the Anglican tradition.

Each school decides on its own timing for worship. Worship takes place every day for approximately 20 minutes.

The worship council and Heads of School provide guidance for visitors leading worship. An information leaflet for visitors can be found in individual schools.

## **2) Monitoring and Evaluation**

Worship is monitored by the Foundation Local Board members who observe a range of different worship times. The Foundation members attend Worship Council meetings to discuss worship with children and talk to staff, pupils and parents to evaluate the impact of worship. Foundation members use visit forms to communicate their findings with the Local Board.

Foundation members use the evidence to work with Worship leaders and groups of children to strengthen and develop worship over time.