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# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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## PREFACE

Chiltern Hills Academy is a learning environment at the heart of its community. We encourage every person in our community to:

### **Create, Aspire and Excel to 'Live life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)**

We achieve this through our dedication to the seven Christian values of love, hope, self-discipline, compassion, forgiveness, respect and honesty.

We are a community in which staff, students and parents work collaboratively to develop a learning environment and organisation which is spiritual, safe, innovative, creative and exciting. All members of the Academy are motivated and inspired by the vision to give their best and to play a full part in the life of the school and in their own developing lives.

The Governors at Chiltern Hills Academy are committed to achieving the vision and values. They oversee and monitor this policy to ensure that this is being achieved.

This policy, and its associated procedures and protocols, is based on these key principles.

## DEFINITION

At the Chiltern Hills Academy collective worship offers an opportunity to reflect upon what is valuable, precious and worthwhile in our lives. This reaffirms the ethos of the Academy in line with the vision and Christian values. It also allows times for celebration of student achievements, world events and Christian and non-Christian religious festivals.

In common with other Anglican schools, worship will reflect some of the essential features within the rich traditions of Anglican prayer and worship and will include:

- Using the Bible as a source book for inspiration and learning
- The use of prayer – with opportunities for staff and students to be involved in leading these
- Reflecting on Christian symbols and their use in worship
- Observing the cycle of the Anglican year: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost
- Providing opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence within the context of Christian worship

## THIS POLICY WILL HELP THE SCHOOL TO FULFIL ITS VISION BY:

- Encouraging students to be open to new ideas
- Providing a caring and reflective environment based on Christian values
- Encouraging British values such as mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs
- Supporting and strengthening what we aim to do in every aspect of school life.
- Supporting the value we place on the development of the whole child, i.e. spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual growth.
- Offering the space young people need to develop a reflective approach to life
- Offering the space for young people to express their reflections in a way that is appropriate in a church school setting.
- Enabling students to feel safe and affirmed.

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## CHILTERN HILLS ACADEMY

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## AIMS

At the Academy collective worship aims to:

- Respect the beliefs of individual students and staff
- Be an educational experience
- Be relevant to student needs and their development
- Encourage student participation
- Allow for spiritual reflection and response
- Foster a sense of community, commitment and caring.

## THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY WILL BE TO:

Through collective worship we aim to provide a caring and supportive environment for young people to:

- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community
- Grow in understanding of other people and their beliefs and values
- Explore the language which people use to express their beliefs and values
- 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 stimuli
- Acknowledge and celebrate diversity and learn from each person's life stance

## TO FULFIL THIS POLICY THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM AND GOVERNORS WILL ENSURE THAT:

All students are encouraged to take part in acts of worship. Helping them to recognise the value of their participation and in the planning of collective worship and active involvement. Acts of worship are wholly or mainly of a Christian character for the majority of the time and allow for an appropriate response without coercion. Acts of worship are appropriate, with regard to the age, aptitude and background of the young people involved. The faith background of both the staff and the young people is respected at all times.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP PROCEDURES

Collective worship is led by the Academic Leader during the Week 1 timetable cycle and by the Principal or senior members of staff during Week 2 cycle. The Chaplain supports the planning of collective worship and leads collective worship on special occasions e.g. Remembrance, Christmas, Easter.

In addition form tutors and their groups engage in 'Thought for CHA' reflections during tutor time each morning.

Students are encouraged to take an active part in both planning and leading collective worship.

The school year has been divided into fortnightly themes, which encompass religious festivals, national or international events and themes and to develop the values of each individual. The school arranges a prayer meeting/service on a termly basis which is open to all staff, students and parents.

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## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the collective worship. A Vice Principal is responsible for planning the calendar of themes and 'Thought for CHA' activities on a termly basis. Every fortnight the Thought for CHA will be published with the bulletin. These will be written by the "Thought for CHA" group (comprising staff and students).

Each tutor group will spend form periods each week (designated by the appropriate Academic Year Leader) discussing the Thought for the CHA. The TFCHA material provided electronically is intended as a stimulus for discussion, reflection and spiritual development.

## COLLECTIVE WORSHIP PLANNING

In planning a range of resources are drawn upon, including:

Students' contributions	Sacred and secular stories/readings
Drama/dance	Prayer/meditation/songs/ music
Artefacts/natural materials	Visual aids/focal points
Dialogue/creative silence	Visitors
Current events	Contemporary issues in the media

Song/music is a very powerful means of creating the right atmosphere and unifies and uplifts the school community. When appropriate, music from a variety of cultures and types is used and selected carefully to match the theme.

## PRAYER / REFLECTION

Whilst prayer is a good way of enabling children to focus their thoughts, students are not required to say or affirm prayers in which they do not believe. Various forms of introduction to prayers are used to give young people 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...' We invite but do not coerce students or staff to participate. We address our prayers to Jesus and God reflecting the practices of the Church of England,

We conduct collective worship in a dignified and respectful way. The use of regular moments of silence and reflection is encouraged, providing opportunities for the young people to respond.

## RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

Parents of a student 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 the school will comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Principal. The parent does not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1988 Education Act.

The Education and Inspection Act 2006 makes provision for students in post-16 education to exercise the right to withdraw themselves from the daily act of collective worship, but not from an assembly.

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The staff are always happy to spend time with parents describing our approach to collective worship and sharing the experiences of this opportunity.

## **RESOURCES**

For staff and student use in the Reflection room there is a range of books and resources to support in the planning of collective worship. The chaplain is also available to give advice and ideas through email.

## **MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed when there are changes in the law or at least every two years, to assess implementation and effectiveness.

This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy.

Monitoring the effectiveness of this policy will be undertaken through student and staff feedback and governor visits to form time and collective worship.