

<b>Sebert Wood Community School</b> <b>COLLECTIVE WORSHIP &amp; ASSEMBLY POLICY</b>	
Date reviewed: October 2020 (interim)	
Date of next review: July 2021 (interim)	
Approval by Whole Governing Body	
Signature of Chair of Governors:	

## Introduction

Sebert Wood School is a Community school. Worship is therefore an important part of the school day as it gives us the opportunity to come together as a community. It is attended by all students, staff and any visitors in school are very welcome to join in. We recognise that Collective Worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our students Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development.

## The Law on Collective Worship

The Education Reform Act of 1988 sets out the law regarding collective worship and Circular 1/94 provides further guidance. The law states that collective worship in schools should aim to:

- provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God
- consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs
- encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of the worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered
- develop a community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes. *(Paragraph 50)*

Collective worship in maintained schools must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, though not distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.

Collective worship, subject to the right of withdrawal, is intended to be appropriate for and to include all pupils attending a school. *(Paragraph 54)*

Collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. Although they may take place as part of the same gathering, the difference between the two should be clear. Collective worship can, nevertheless, be related to the day to day life, aspirations and concerns of the school. *(Paragraph 58)*

The timing and organisation of daily collective worship can be flexible. It need not be held at the start of the school day. There may be a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups. For this purpose, a 'school group' means any group, or combination of groups in which pupils are taught or take part in other school activities; it does not mean a group reflecting particular religious beliefs, for which different provision may be made. *(Paragraphs 68-74)*

The parental right to withdraw a child from attending collective worship should be freely exercisable and a school must give effect to any such request. Parents are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal. *(Paragraph 85)*

## The Definition of Collective Worship

The word worship comes from the Anglo Saxon word 'weorthscipe' and can be defined as either 'the adoration of God or a Supreme Being' or 'to honour, value and praise someone or something of worth'. In the context of worship in school, the aim is to provide experiences which deepen the inner senses and engender feelings of self-worth and the uniqueness of the individual. Giving pupils a purpose and meaning to life, awe and wonder of the natural world, reverence and respect and a sense of belonging to the community. Our aim is to create an atmosphere in which genuine worship may take place and where pupils' own beliefs are valued and each one has the opportunity to respond in their own way.

Children are encouraged to reflect on the ways in which worship affects the values, attitudes and spiritual dimensions of themselves, the learning community and society. It should be a celebration and a time for reflecting on things that have worth and meaning to the community.

### **The Act of Collective Worship at Sebert Wood School**

The 'collective' part can take on different meanings depending on the setting. Due to the size of our school it is not possible for the whole school to gather, so we meet in classes, year groups or Key Stages. The 1988 Education Act defines a school group as any group or combination of groups in which pupils are taught or take part in other school activities: this is not a group reflecting particular religious beliefs. The main point being that all members should be involved in some way in a daily act of worship, unless withdrawn by parents for reasons of conscience.

The aim is to give pupils the message that this is an important time of the school day. No pupil should be kept out of the worship time for interventions, extra reading or tidying up, as this is a shared time when the community affirms its worth and togetherness by exploring its shared humanity.

The content of the worship should elicit some response from the pupils. The school continues to monitor the contribution of collective worship to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development in the school. The celebration of success and worth is important and should be an integral part of school life.

As with many schools we use the term 'assembly' when they are referring to the 'act of collective worship'. However, we are aware of differences between the two activities. We **assemble** for a common purpose such as shared notices/information, listening to a visiting speaker from a community group or charity, giving out rewards and certificates, but this must be seen as separate from our statutory Acts of Collective Worship, as defined within this policy. This policy is distinct from the Religious Education policy as Collective Worship and the teaching of religious education must be seen as separate.

Collective worship is intended to be appropriate for, and to include, all pupils attending a school, regardless of their own personal faith. Collective worship in schools differs from the corporate worship of believers of a particular faith.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from collective worship on the grounds of religious conscience. The child should attend the 'assembly' part of the proceedings, i.e. the general school notices and information, but can then withdraw from the worship. Parents might wish to provide some material from their own faith for the child to study. Teachers also have the right of withdrawal on grounds of religious conscience, but not on grounds of needing some free time.

### **Rights of Withdrawal**

At Sebert Wood School we seek to be an inclusive community however we respect the right of parents to withdraw their children for Collective Worship. This school expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the head teacher/worship co-ordinator followed by written confirmation of withdrawal.

The school has a system of suitable supervision for students withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship. However, no additional work is set or followed in this time.

All teachers, including the head teacher, have the right of withdrawal from the Act of Collective Worship, but the head teacher, should he or she wish exercise this right, maintains statutory accountability for Acts of Collective Worship in Sebert Wood School. This right of withdrawal doesn't extend to assemblies.

### **Organisation**

Under current Covid-19 mitigation measures we are not gathering in larger groups. All Collective Worship occurs within the classroom bubbles. The themes for collective worship are followed by class teachers and some materials have been provided by the Collective Worship Leader. Interim theme plans are contained in the Appendix

## **Planning**

We use a thematic approach to planning our acts of collective worship. The format will vary depending on circumstances. We aim to incorporate a variety of festivals across the year. The current thematic plans are in the appendix to this policy. We will also incorporate the school's Key Values into assembly time. This pattern is flexible and on occasions it is recognised that teachers may feel that they need to respond to local or national events.

Each person leading worship is asked to plan his or her act of worship in as much detail as they would any learning activity. A variety of resources and links to suitable websites is provided by the worship coordinator and staff are encouraged to share useful resources with their colleagues. A worship-planning group will meet once a term led by the worship co-ordinator. These meetings are an opportunity to review and evaluate the last terms Acts of Collective Worship and to plan themes for the next term. We seek to encourage pupils to voice their views on collective worship and to be a part of the evaluation process. The school council regularly seeks the views of their classmates and reports these findings to the school council.

*The school's worship coordinator is: Amanda Bradburn*

*The governor with responsibility for monitoring collective worship is: Marie MacInnes*

**APPENDIX 1 - ASSEMBLIES – AUTUMN TERM 2020 – under COVID mitigation measures**

**FIRST HALF OF TERM**

<b>School Value</b>		<b>Assembly themes</b>	
<b>Ideas / Thoughts</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Ideas / Thoughts</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Readiness</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	
Readiness for school Readiness for learning How do we know someone is ready? What do we need to be ready for certain things? “Be Prepared” Being ready in a time of change – growth mindset How do people of faith get ready?		The Bible teaches that life is a gift from God and it is our responsibility to use our talents and abilities in the best way we can. Our responsibility to the world that God made	
		<b>How other religions celebrate Harvest</b>	
		E.g. Ashanti, Sukkot, Pongol/Onam School Harvest Festival – (awareness of world issues)	

**SECOND HALF OF TERM**

<b>Respect</b>		<b>Service</b>	
Exploring what respect means at home, school, the community, etc. People we respect – why? What does respect look like – how can we tell someone is being respectful? What do people of faith mean by respect? Showing respect to people’s beliefs even if we don’t agree?		Jesus exemplified in His person, ministry and relationship with God, what it was to be called the ‘Servant King’. Christians believe that their calling is to follow Jesus’ example according to their gifts or abilities.	
		<b>Advent Celebrations around the world</b>	
		How people the world over prepare for Jesus’ birth and celebrate Advent.	
		<b>Jesus Christmas Party</b>	
		The traditional story of the birth of Jesus according to the Gospels of <b>Matthew and Luke.</b>	

<b>Spring</b>	
Wisdom	
	Resilience
Perseverance	
Shrove Tuesday - Worldwide	
Holy Week	
	Readiness

<b>Summer</b>	
Creativity	
	Resilience
St George’s Day	
Pentecost	
Friendship	
	Readiness

**Class Based Assemblies**  
**Key Stage 2** – there are IWB with a page per assembly to stimulate thoughts and discussions during registration.  
 There is also an IWB with a few pictures about Readiness and Respect. Some of these may also be useful for KS1. Some are YouTube videos, so take care with adverts and follow-on videos.

**APPENDIX 2**



**COLLECTIVE WORSHIP THEMES – under normal circumstances**  
(Three year rolling programme)



<b>Term</b>	<b>Year 1 –2022</b>	<b>Year 2 – 2020</b>	<b>Year 3 – 2021</b>
<b>Autumn 1</b>	<b>Thankfulness</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Peace</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>Christians believe that God loves and cares for them in many different ways in all aspects of their life. They know that their response to this provision should be one of thankfulness and praise.</i>	<i>The Bible teaches that life is a gift from God and it is our responsibility to use our talents and abilities in the best way we can.</i>	<i>Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” (Matthew 5:9) Peace-making actions can range from helping to resolve conflict to creating space for stillness. Peace, in the sense of total well-being, is God’s intention for the whole of creation, and is a promise that awaits ultimate fulfilment.</i>
<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Harvest for the World</b>	<b>How other religions celebrate Harvest</b>	<b>Harvest Festival</b>
	<i>School Harvest Festival</i>	<i>E.g. Ashanti, Sukkot, Pongol/Onam School Harvest Festival – (awareness of world issues)</i>	<i>How traditional harvest Festivals are celebrated in different areas of the UK – School Harvest Festival (awareness of world issues)</i>
<b>Autumn 2</b>	<b>Truthfulness</b>	<b>Service</b>	<b>Courage</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>Christians believe that truth is revealed in the Bible and supremely in the person and life of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus’ teachings we are given an insight into the nature of God and the way in which He means us to live.</i>	<i>Jesus exemplified in His person, ministry and relationship with God, what it was to be called the ‘Servant King’. Christians believe that their calling is to follow Jesus’ example according to their gifts or abilities.</i>	<i>Basic to Christian faith is the claim that God is always present in every situation. This belief has led to great acts of courage that have included facing danger and opposition, overcoming fear, making a stand for what is right and encouraging others to persevere. Through prayer people have found the strength to help them to be courageous.</i>
<b>Advent</b>	<b>The Advent Ring/Wreath</b>	<b>Advent Celebrations around the world</b>	<b>Advent Calendars</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>The festival of Advent, which takes place on the four Sundays before Christmas Day is the time of preparation and waiting for Jesus’ coming. Christmas is celebrated by the Anglican Church as the day of Jesus Christ’s birth – the meaning of the five candles in the Advent ring relative to the four Sundays of Advent and Christmas Day.</i>	<i>How people the world over prepare for Jesus’ birth and celebrate Advent.</i>	<i>Traditions of Advent – advent calendars – the Christmas story – Isaiah...Elizabeth...Mary... How the message was revealed...</i>
<b>Christmas</b>	<b>The Christmas Story - Christingle</b>	<b>Jesus Christmas Party</b>	<b>Christmas Stories Around the World</b>
<b>Christmas</b>	<i>The traditional story of the birth of Jesus according to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke – link to the Christingle</i>	<i>The traditional story of the birth of Jesus according to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.</i>	<i>The traditional stories of the birth of Jesus according to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke- Worldwide celebrations</i>

Term	Year 1 – 2023	Year 2 – 2021	Year 3 – 2022
<b>Spring 1</b>	<b>Hope</b>	<b>Wisdom</b>	<b>Trust</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>Christians see their hope in God's promise, 'that love and goodness have, and will ultimately, overcome evil'. This hope is manifested in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.</i>	<i>Christians believe that true wisdom comes from God. As a believer grows in faith so wisdom will increase. In the Bible wisdom is seen both as a gift <b>from</b> God and as a characteristic <b>of</b> God. In His parables Jesus taught that placing trust in God and recognising what is of value in life brings fulfilment.</i>	<i>Trust is the basis of all stable relationships, including a person's relationship with God. It is rooted in truth, and will grow through consistent experiences of reliability and integrity. God's commitment to humanity is seen in His willingness to trust ordinary people with the carrying out of His purposes.</i>
<b>Epiphany/ Candlemas</b>	<b>The festival of Epiphany – 6<sup>th</sup> January</b> <i>Following the Christmas season, the Anglican Church celebrates epiphany on January 6. The festival commemorates the visitation of the three wise men to the baby Jesus.</i>	<b>Babushka</b> <i>Traditional tale of Babushka and the Three Kings</i>	<b>Candlemas – 2<sup>nd</sup> February</b> <i>The church celebrates Candlemas on February 2, which marks the end of Epiphany. The feast commemorates the presentation of Jesus in the temple.</i>
<b>Spring 2</b>	<b>Helping Others</b>	<b>Perseverance</b>	<b>Forgiveness</b>
<b>Shrove Tuesday/lent</b>	<b>Pancake Day</b>	<b>Shrove Tuesday - Worldwide</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday and Lent</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>Traditionally the congregation went to church to be "shriven," which was to confess their sins and be forgiven. More recently, people have taken to cooking and consuming pancakes on the day.</i>	<i>How this Christian festival is celebrated around the world, looking at customs and traditions in other branches of the Christian church.</i>	<i>Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. Traditionally, ash was created by burning the previous year's Palm crosses; Lent lasts for 40 days and is a time of preparation for Easter.</i>
Christian Aspects	<i>Christians believe that Jesus was both servant and King. He demonstrated this through His life, death and resurrection. Jesus taught His disciples what it means to be truly humble. They serve God by showing humility through attitudes and actions.</i>	<i>Jesus frequently encourages His disciples to 'endure patiently' the difficulties and obstacles they encountered and to persevere in the face of adversity. He himself trusted God even when His enemies tried to stop His work and plotted His death.</i>	<i>Forgiveness is the means by which damaged relationships are restored. It is an act of will, motivated by love. For Christians, Jesus' death on the cross is the ultimate revelation of God's forgiving love, as a source of inspiration to forgive others.</i>
<b>Easter</b>	<b>Holy Week</b>	<b>Holy Week</b>	<b>Holy Week</b>

<b>Term</b>	<b>Year 1 – 2023</b>	<b>Year 2 – 2021</b>	<b>Year 3 – 2022</b>
<b>Summer 1</b>	<b>Justice / Fairness</b>	<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Generosity</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>The justice revealed in the Bible is always revealed in the context of love. It includes the call to take responsibility for one another, especially the poor and oppressed, and to see that no-one is excluded from the essentials of life.</i>	<i>Seen from a Christian perspective all of life is a 'gift', entrusted by a loving creator God to humankind for a purpose. This purpose is glimpsed as the creative spirit within each person learns to value and explore, celebrate and enjoy this world in all its mystery and diversity. With this gift comes a mutual responsibility to ensure the creation is not spoiled, but rather sustained and shared by all.</i>	<i>God's generosity is best described as 'grace', love freely given without limit or conditions. This generosity once experienced and acknowledged by an individual, can in turn release a generous spirit towards others.</i>
<b>St George's Day</b>	<b>St George's Day</b>	<b>St George's Day</b>	<b>St George's Day</b>
<b>Ascension, Pentecost and Trinity</b>	<b>Ascension</b>	<b>Pentecost</b>	<b>Trinity</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>Ascension Day is celebrated on the 40th day following Easter and always takes place on a Thursday. It marks the Ascension of Jesus into heaven.</i>	<i>The church celebrates Pentecost on the 50th day after Easter. It commemorates the gift of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, and also marks the birth of the church.</i>	<i>The Christian festival of Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday after Pentecost. In this act of worship, pupils are introduced to the Christian belief that there is one God who is known in three ways: God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - the Holy Trinity.</i>
<b>Summer 2</b>	<b>Compassion</b>	<b>Friendship</b>	<b>Respect and Reverence</b>
Christian Aspects	<i>Christians believe that their attitudes and actions must reflect the kindness, mercy and compassion of Jesus and the love of God.</i>	<i>Christians believe they can call God their friend because of the relationship made possible through Jesus.</i>	<i>The nature of God, as revealed in the Bible, presents all people with a choice. Those whose response is one of respect are acknowledging God's greatness, authority and involvement in the world. This will extend to respect for the created order, including humanity made in the image of God. Reverence takes this response a step further and will include aspects of worship such as awe and wonder, surrender and sacrifice.</i>