



ST IVO SCHOOL

Collective Worship Policy

Approved: February 2017, Governors Student Welfare and Community Engagement Committee

Next review due: February 2018

Background

The 1988 Education Reform Act requires that every school should provide a daily act of collective worship for all students (apart from those who have been **withdrawn by their parents**). The head teacher is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the collective worship after consulting with the governing body.

St Ivo School Aims for Collective Worship / Rationale

When meaningful, collective worship creates a positive ethos where students are able to reflect on what it means to be a human being, with questions of meaning, purpose and value. Using this forum, students have opportunities to consider spiritual and moral issues, explore their own beliefs and values, develop their own spirituality and reinforce positive attitudes.

The collective worship that we deliver at St Ivo recognises and value the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of our school population and is conducted within our Equal Opportunities policy. Some gatherings normally take the form of a school Assembly. St Ivo does not engage students in corporate worship. Both students and teaching staff are able to opt out of certain aspects of collective worship. Parents or staff should contact the Deputy Head (Curriculum) if they wish to pursue this. Any students withdrawn will be given suitable alternative activities to do.

Organisation

St Ivo does not meet the statutory requirement that every school day shall include an act of collective worship on the part of all students. The school does not take this 'non compliance' lightly and there are compelling reasons why St Ivo has chosen this path. Practicalities, space and logistics mean that students cannot assemble in large groups on every day of the week. It is also impossible to fit the whole school into one space. As the main school hall can only accommodate a year group of 300 at a time, it is simply not possible to provide a daily act of worship for all students without having a negative and disproportionate impact on learning. Instead each year group meets once per week – Years 7-11 in the main school hall and Years 12 and 13 in the dining room.

St Ivo strongly believes that the quality of experience is more important than its daily occurrence and therefore believes providing one high quality Act of Collective Worship a week for each year group, complemented by other activities, is in the best interest of the students. This allows sufficient time and sense of occasion for all those who participate to do so in an active and meaningful way.

Collective worship and associated activities enrich the experiences of students by

- enabling students to reflect on and question issues such as belonging to the school community, the wider community and to humanity as a whole
- reinforcing a sense of community and cohesion through appreciating those things we have in common
- developing a reflective approach to life
- support students in the development of spiritual, moral social and cultural perspectives (SMSC)

- developing a sense of the individual's place in the world beyond the physical, material and the here and now
- providing time to consider values and beliefs – both their own and those of others
- raising awareness of difficulties experienced living a life based on values, beliefs and principles which may not be shared by everyone in the wider community
- providing opportunity to celebrate achievement and to share times of celebration
- supporting students in responding to a crisis at a personal and collective level and provide them with a vocabulary to explore feelings and responses
- supporting those who have particular needs or who are engaged in times of crisis

Those students who have a faith are able to use the reflection time to consider issues in the light of their religious beliefs and to pray or worship internally as they feel appropriate whilst those students who do not have a religious belief will have the opportunity to reflect and make a personal internalised response to the same stimulus. At times they are also able to enter into dialogue with those of faith, enabling both believers and non-believers to appreciate each other's stances. The school also have a dedicated Faith Room for use by students and staff of any religion. It is also used for quiet contemplation.

The language of invitation to reflect is open and inclusive, ensuring that no student or adult feels their beliefs have been compromised and ensuring that they are able to participate and grow spiritually.

Content of the programme includes

- marking the celebration of a broad range of religious and cultural festivals that reflect the diversity of faiths contained within St Ives
- reflection on the lives of people of note who promote humanity
- response to key local, national and international events
- providing an opportunity to think about their own beliefs whether religious or otherwise
- consideration of questions you would not think about elsewhere, not necessarily with easy/definitive answers
- promoting community spirit e.g., supporting charities
- providing a moment of silent reflection
- celebration of successes of members of the school, local or national community
- performances or presentations from members of the school community
- input from visiting speakers/experts

Planning and Monitoring

- Year Assemblies are led by the Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year
- a schedule for each term will typically include input from the year team, the senior leadership team (SLT), visiting speakers and students themselves
- the content, as stated above, reflects the year group of students, their own interests (such as chosen charities to support), their curriculum, and current affairs
- a member of SLT is linked to each year team. Their role includes help and support of the whole team as well as monitoring standards.

Evaluating the programme

Through their discussions over the year, the SLT link will consider:

- the structure and content of assemblies and of tutor time, including areas of SMSC
- the link between assembly and tutor time and with PHSE content and experiences and how they contribute to development of students
- the effectiveness of the policy

A yearly report for each year group will be produced for discussion at an SLT meeting.