

St Agnes Academy



Collective Worship Policy

Version and issue date	V1 July 2023
Approved 10 th July 23	Local Governing Body
Scheduled review date	March 2025
Statutory or Optional policy	Best practice
Appendices	No

Meeting your communication needs:

We want to ensure that your needs are met, if you would like this information in Braille, large print, any other format or interpreted in a language other than English, please contact the school, telephone: 01326 211910 or email: stagnes@kernowlearning.co.uk

St Agnes Primary school serves a town located in an almost totally and mostly nominally Christian area of Southwest England. However, pupils are influenced by developments in a wider world through family and personal contacts, the media and their education. The school offers a wide-ranging education to prepare pupils for life not only in their own community but in a wider world.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of collective worship are:

- to provide an opportunity for children to worship God;
- to enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos, with shared values, and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to teach children how to worship.

Collective Worship

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective Worship involves all members of the academy coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly. In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that Collective Worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', we normally base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and the traditions of the Christian Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the faiths and beliefs of all members of the academy. While most acts of worship in our academy are Christian, we also hold assemblies that reflect the traditions of other religions that are represented in the academy and the wider community.

Organisation of Collective Worship

We hold a daily act of Collective Worship. This forms part of each assembly, which can be either a whole-school assembly, year group assembly or a class assembly. We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time, and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen carefully to the teachings, and to participate in prayer and hymns. Children are told that they don't have to pray but should be silent and respectful during the prayer. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music to focus the attention of the children. The assemblies are normally conducted by the headteacher or other members of staff, but are sometimes led by another representative of a local religious group. Our local 'Open the Book' team attend on a termly basis. Teams of volunteers from our local churches of different denominations attend to deliver Open the Book stories, giving the children the opportunity to see, hear, and take part in the major stories from the bible. This is part of a national scheme organised by the Bible Society, and Open the Book aligns to the criteria used by OFSTED when inspecting collective acts of worship. The educationally sensitive scripts are used successfully in schools with a wide

ethnic & religious background and there is no coercive content. The time for reflection is suitable for children of all faiths and none.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the school and British values, and we observe the festivals and mark the events of the Christian calendar. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies are related to topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum. We plan our assemblies well in advance of the day they take place. Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in the assemblies by sharing their learning with the other children, and by raising issues that they have discussed in their classes. Assemblies provide an opportunity to reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They also play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued, and all achievements are recognised.

Right of withdrawal

We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can formally request permission for their child to be excused from religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during that part of the assembly. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The headteacher keeps a record of all children who have been withdrawn from Collective Worship.

Monitoring and review:

The Governors monitor the policy and practice of Collective Worship. This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.