

BRECON HIGH SCHOOL YSGOL UWCHRADD ABERHONDDU



Collective Worship Policy

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Requirements

The most recent legal statement of the requirements for collective worship (as distinct from assembly) are contained in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. These build on similar requirements in Section 346 of the Education Act 1996, the Education Reform Act 1988, and Section 25 of the 1944 Education Act, where the law on compulsory collective worship began. Section 70 of the 1998 Act states that, subject to the parental right of excusal or other special arrangements, "...each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship."

Schedule 20 to the 1998 Act gives more detailed information on the worship requirements. It notes the different practical arrangements that are allowed: "a single act of worship for all pupils or separate acts of worship for pupils in different age groups or in different school groups". A "school group" is defined as "any group in which pupils are taught or take part in other school activities".

At Brecon High School the Head teacher is responsible for collective worship provision, in consultation with the Governors. The majority of acts of collective worship in any given school term will be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character". In other acts of worship, consideration is to be given to "circumstances relating to the family backgrounds of the pupils which are relevant for determining the character of the collective worship which is appropriate in their case" and to the "ages and aptitudes" of the pupils.

A "broadly Christian" act of worship must contain some elements which relate to the traditions of Christian belief and which accord a special status to Jesus Christ (*Circular 1/94*, paragraph 63). Only on special occasions can the act of worship take place somewhere other than on the school premises, subject to the agreement of the Head.

The rights of parents to withdraw their children from the act of collective worship is set out in the Education Act (1988). Any parent who wishes to exercise this right may do so in consultation with the Headteacher. The parent is not obliged to give the reason for this request. The school still has responsibility for supervising the child.

Under Section 55 of the Education and Inspections Act, pupils in sixth form education or over the age of compulsory school age (Section 55. 9) may also withdraw themselves from collective worship.

Staff employed by the school may also withdraw from acts of collective worship.

Definitions

Collective worship should reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities and it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power. School worship is different in character from worship amongst groups with beliefs in common, hence the use of the word "collective" rather than "corporate".

Ideally the act of worship should encompass all aspects of school life and all areas of the curriculum so that all who take part may feel involved. It both reflects and nurtures the ethos of the school. In particular it develops a feeling of belonging to a community which is essential for personal development and physical growth. It is an important means of developing the spiritual and moral aspects of school life

Aims

Through the act of collective worship we aim to:

- provide an opportunity for thought, prayer, reflection and celebration in a caring atmosphere;
- create a sense of school identity and of belonging to a school community which shares common experiences;
- encompass all aspects of school life, all curriculum areas and reflect the school's ethos;
- show pupils that we are members of a wider community, both local and global;
- encourage care and concern for others in society and the natural world;
- help pupils think about a wide variety of ideas and dimensions of life, including the spiritual, ritual, wonderful, joyful, tragic, sorrowful, solemn and humorous.

Approaches

In acts of worship we should ensure that:

- pupils are actively involved in planning and delivery;
- the purpose of the act of worship is clear to all present;
- themes are developed effectively on an annual, weekly or daily basis (and shared with all staff);
- opportunities are given for prayer, reflection and quiet;
- the occasion engenders an atmosphere conducive to worship;
- there is a balance between media, music, speech and silence;
- subject matter is appropriate to the age and experience of pupils;
- visitors are welcome to attend on a variety of occasions;
- pupils and adults take away something to think about that they may take into their daily life within school and the community.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of this policy is the responsibility of the Governors and Headteacher, who aim to monitor and evaluate the success of acts of collective worship through:

- discussions with staff and pupils as to the relevance and impact of acts of worship;
- observation of and participation in acts of worship to assess pupil involvement and response and appropriateness of content and presentation;
- an open invitation to Governors to attend assembly.

This policy will be reviewed regularly.

Resources

A variety of resources exists within school to help in the planning of themes and assemblies. These are held by Miss T Gibbs. The use of resources from external sources is encouraged.

The programme for assembly themes is published and shared at the start of the year.