



**Title of Policy: Collective Worship Policy
(including our approach to SMSC)**

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| Member of leadership team with lead responsibility for oversight and update of policy | HOW |
| Approved at SLT | November 2015 |
| Approved at Governing Body | December 2015 |
| Policy review cycle | Bi-annually |
| Policy review date | December 2017 |

Principles

At The Polesworth School the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and intellectual development of our students both supports and strengthens what we do in every aspect of school life. Our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of each student as an individual, is reflected in our daily approach to each other, as detailed in our 'Ensuring Excellence' and 'workingtogether@thepolesworthschool' documents. We value the time set aside in the school day for 'Character Education' and the space it provides for our students to develop a reflective approach to life. Through the use of family groups, students are also given the opportunity to explore and express their reflections openly in a supportive environment, responding to and considering the ideas of others.

The Polesworth School is committed to providing opportunities for students to reflect upon, understand and promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our learners. All of our students participate in a twenty minute assembly every week. In assemblies, we ensure a positive atmosphere is created, varying the style and format as appropriate. They may include films, YouTube clips, music, quizzes and even interactive challenges. Themes also vary weekly as we address a range of topical issues. Assemblies are further supported by teaching, not only through Personal Tutor Time, Enhanced Learning Days and RS lessons but also throughout our wider curriculum and extra-curricular programme of activities.

The legal requirement that all registered school age students must take part in a daily act of worship which is "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character" and which is "appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils" is an issue which we take seriously. Families who send their children to this school are in the main 'nominally' Christian, but we do have students from practising Christian families. In addition, there are a small number of children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. We recognise that in asking our students to worship, we have to consider the background from which they come and it is therefore not the practice of The Polesworth School to try to instil specific religious beliefs in them. However, our fundamental objective is to provide all our students with an understanding of and respect of all faiths and to support them in the development of their own religious beliefs. The faith background of both the staff and the students' families are respected at all times. To this end, we consider our Personal Tutor Time as central in helping students to refine their sense of morality and to develop their own sense of character.

Aims:

Through our wider curriculum we provide a caring and supportive environment for students to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness.

To promote Spiritual Education we encourage our students to:

- Deepen their sense of awe and wonder about the world around them;
- Develop and communicate their values and beliefs;
- Respond freely to religious and/or spiritual stimulus;
- Reflect on world events and other experiences and search for meaning;
- Develop their knowledge of the central beliefs, ideas and practices of major world religions and philosophies;
- Have an openness of mind and heart;
- Develop a set of personal beliefs by which to live.

To promote Moral Education we encourage our students to:

- Understand the differences between right and wrong;
- Respect other people and their property;
- Make responsible and reasoned judgements on moral issues;
- Have guidelines for their own moral behaviour;
- Appreciate their own independence, self-reliance and personal freedom;
- Understand their responsibilities, as well as their rights;
- Develop a sense of empathy with other people in everyday situations and an appreciation of their beliefs.

To promote Social Education we encourage our students to:

- Develop the skills and personal qualities necessary to live and function effectively as individuals in society and to participate effectively in a collaborative way, through mixed age and same age contexts;
- Increase their knowledge and understanding of society's institutions, structures and characteristics, its principles, and of life as a citizen, parent, and member of the community;
- Become increasingly aware of themselves as individuals and groups within the school and wider community;
- Acknowledge diversity and affirm each person's life stance, whether it be religious or not;
- Grow in confidence when making a presentation to the group or whole school;
- Secure a full working understanding of democracy;

To promote Cultural Education we encourage our students to:

- Develop their understanding of beliefs, values, customs which taken together form the basis of identity and cohesion in societies and groups;
- Gain personal experiences of other cultures through a range of international trips and visits to partner schools in Ghana and India and through our students hosting international students in their own homes when they visit from our partner schools;
- Explore the languages which other people use to express themselves and gain an insight into their traditions.

These aims are achieved through:

- Explicit school aims which include common core values shared by students, parents, staff and the Governing Body which reflect an ethos which fosters spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Assemblies and Personal Tutor Time. These opportunities allow students to reflect and explore their own thoughts and feelings which promote a positive corporate identity of aspiration and achievement;
- Polesworth's Enhanced Learning Day programme which explores social, ethical and moral issues such as the family, citizenship, law, human rights, crime, drugs, alcohol and sex and relationship education;
- Curricular opportunities for understanding specific issues within curriculum areas such as via cross curricular schemes of work;
- Compulsory Religious Studies which play a part in addressing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- Extra-curricular activities such as international visits, work experience, community service and charity fund raising;
- The support of extra-curricular faith groups, such as Christian Unions, which the school will facilitate by providing time and resources;
- The joining together of students, staff, parents and the wider local community to celebrate key Christian events, such as carol concerts.
- The creation of an environment which re-enforces our determination to celebrate student success and provide positive role models for students. Prefect profiles, university destination boards and House displays, along with the self-help information and external agency support guides, available in student services, all serve to exemplify the caring nature of the school.

Intended Outcomes of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

- Our 'workingtogether@thepolesworthschool' and 'Ensuring Excellence' documents underpin all aspects of our spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Assemblies and Personal Tutor Time satisfy legal requirements, involve a variety of staff and students in a variety of ways and promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Within The Polesworth School students demonstrate appropriate standards of behaviour and dress
- Within the school students and staff demonstrate appropriate attitudes towards one another, characterised by fairness, tolerance, multi racial awareness, mutual respect as well as respect for the physical environment
- Students take increasing responsibility for themselves and others through their relationships and participation in school life.
- Students have opportunities to be involved in charity work, fund raising, community service, work experience.
- The school's Enhanced Learning Day programme is well delivered and closely monitored. They clearly focus on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Our students demonstrate an understanding of ethical and moral issues during these days.
- All students receive compulsory Religious Education as legally required which is mapped to spiritual, moral, social and cultural outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Head of School is responsible (under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998) for arranging the daily collective worship after consulting with the governing body.
- The Deputy Headteacher: Students provided with a regular opportunity during Welfare meetings for Heads of House to give feedback from their teams about assemblies.
- A Director of Learning is responsible for planning the Assembly calendar on a termly basis.
- The Head of School of Character is responsible for mapping Personal Tutor Time and Enhanced Learning Day sessions against SMSC intended outcomes.
- All teaching staff are required to attend assemblies unless they have formally withdrawn from them by putting their request in writing and meeting with the Head of School.
- Parents have the 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 at the school the school will comply

unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to exercise this right should consult the Head of School.

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

Appendix 1 Additional Guidance on Planning and Conducting Assemblies

In planning our assemblies, we choose from a range of methods, including:

- Pupils' contributions
- Sacred and secular stories/readings
- Video/DVD/meditation/songs/music
- Artefacts/natural materials
- Visual aids/focal points
- Dialogue/creative silence
- Visitors

Song/Music

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

Prayer/Reflection

The use of prayer has led to a great deal of debate. We feel that, whilst prayer is a good way of enabling students to focus their thoughts, they should not be required to say or affirm prayers which they do not believe. Various forms of introduction to prayer can be used to distance children, whilst giving them 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...' In this way we are able to use prayers from many different traditions.

It is not always necessary to have a prayer and the use of regular moments of silence provides opportunities for some students to respond in a personal way if they so wish.

Appendix 2

| Festivals and events throughout the year which may be explored N.B. Muslim Festivals fall on different days each year following the cycle of the moon. For further information about festivals and their different dates use the Shap calendar. | | | |
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| Term | Major Christian festivals | Festivals of other faiths | Other anniversaries |
| Autumn | September 29 Michaelmass Michael and All Angels Late Sept/Early Oct Harvest | September Hindu-Janamashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi Jewish-Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur, Sukkot Islam-The prophets journey to Jerusalem and ascension | September |
| Autumn | October Week of prayer for world peace | October Buddhist-Kathina Day Islam-Ramadan starts Hindu-Navaratri, Durga Puja Jewish- Simchat Torah | October 6 William Tyndale, Translator of the Scriptures, Reformation Martyr, 1536 12 Elizabeth Fry, Prison Reformer, 1845 12 Edith Cavell, Nurse, 1915 24 United Nations Day 31 Martin Luther, Reformer, 1546 Black History Month |
| Autumn | November 1 All Saints' Day 11 Remembrance Day | November Hindu- Divali Sikh- Divali Birthday of Guru Nanak Martyrdom of Guru Tegh-Bahadur | November 5 Guy Fawkes 6 William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, Teacher of the Faith, 1944 25 Isaac Watts, Hymn writer, 1748 |
| Autumn | December 1 Advent starts 24 Christmas Eve 25 Christmas Day | December Buddhist-Bohdi day Jewish- Hannukah | December 31 Hogmanay |
| Spring | January 6 The Epiphany | January 26 Hindu-Saraswati puja 5 Sikh-Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Chinese New year | January 13 George Fox, Founder of the Society of Friends (the Quakers), 1691 15 Martin Luther King Day 27 National Holocaust Day |
| Spring | February 2 The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Candlemas) Ash Wednesday/Lent | February Islam-Eid-ul-Adha Al-Hijra Jewish-Tu B'Shevat | February 14 Valentine, Martyr at Rome, c.269 17 Janani Luwum, Archbishop of Uganda, Martyr, 1977 |

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| Spring | March Lent Mothering Sunday- middle Sunday of Lent (The date of Easter is not fixed and can take place in March or April according to the year) | March Baha’I-Naw-Ruz Jewish-Purim Hindu-Birthday of Ramakrishna Holi Sikh-Holla Mahalla | March 21 First day of Spring Oscar Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, Martyr, 1980 |
| Spring | April Palm Sunday Maundy Thursday Good Friday Easter Day | April Jewish- Pesach, Sikh-Baisakhi Hindu-Hanuman Jayanti Ch’ing Ming, Chinese Festival of Pure Brightness | April 1 All Fools Day 25 Shakespeare’s birthday 27 Christina Rossetti, Poet, 1894 |
| Summer | May Christian Aid week Ascension Day Pentecost | May Baha’i-declaration of the Bab Islam-Prophet Muhammad’s, birthday Jewish-Shavuot | May 1 May day 24 John and Charles Wesley Evangelists, Hymn Writers, 1791 and 1788 30 Josephine Butler, Social Reformer, 1906 30 Joan of Arc, Visionary, 1431 |
| | June Corpus Christi | June Buddhist-Wesak Sikh-Martyrdom of Guru Arjan | June 12 Anne Frank day 21 Midsummer solstice |
| Summer | July | July Baha’I-martyrdom of the Bab Rastafarian-birthday of Haile Selassie | July 6 Thomas More, Scholar, and John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, Reformation Martyrs, 1535 14 John Keble, Priest, Tractarian, Poet, 1866 15 Swithun, Bishop of Winchester, c.862 30 William Wilberforce, Social Reformer, 1833 |
| Holidays | August | August Hindu-29 Raksha Bandhan Sikh- anniversary of the Guru Granth Sahib | August 11 Clare of Assisi, Founder of the Minoreesses (Poor Clares), 1253 13 Florence Nightingale, Nurse, Social Reformer, 1910 20 William and Catherine Booth, Founders of the Salvation Army, 1912 and 1890 30 John Bunyan, Spiritual Writer, 1688 |

Appendix 3 - Assembly Themes

Assembly themes are predominantly linked to the school's values and ethos, as agreed by students and staff members and as outlined in our workingtogether@thepolesworthschool document, shown below.



Appendix 3 - Other Possible Assembly Themes

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| Achievement | Freedom | Praise |
| Advent | Friendship | Prayer |
| Age | Future | Prejudice |
| Aims | Gifts and Talents | Promises |
| Ambition | Giving and Receiving | Prophets |
| Anger | God | Proverbs |
| Animals | Good and Evil | Radicalisation/'Prevent' |
| Art | Greed | Ramadan |
| Authority | Green Living | Reflection |
| Autumn/Harvest | Happiness | Refugees |
| Awareness | Harvest | Relationships |
| Awe and Wonder | Hearing | Remembrance |
| Barriers | Heroes | Respect |
| Beginnings | Hobbies | Rewards |
| Beliefs | Holidays | Risks |
| Birth | Holocaust | Roots |
| Blindness and Sight | Homelessness | Rules |
| Books | Honesty | School |
| Bridges | Hope | Seasons |
| British values | Humility | Secrets |
| Bullying | Ideals | Selflessness |
| Candles | Imagination | Sharing |
| Caring | Influences | Sins |
| Celebration | Injustices | Slavery |
| Challenges | Inspiration | Sorry |
| Change | Jealousy | Spirituality |
| Character traits | Jesus | Strength and Weakness |
| Charity | Journeys | Surprises |
| Children | Justice | Symbols |
| Choices | Kindness | Team work |
| Christmas | Language | Temptations |
| Co operation | Laws | Ten Commandments |
| Commitment | Leaders | Thanks |
| Communication | Lent | The Gurus |
| Community | Light | The Past |
| Conflict | Listening | The Unknown |
| Courage | Loneliness | Thoughtfulness |
| Creation | Loving | Time |
| Customs | Loyalty | Tolerance |
| Death | Memories | Trials |
| Diaries | Miracles | Trust |
| Disabilities | Mistakes | Truth |
| Disasters | Music | Turning Points |
| Discovery | Natural World | Ultimate Questions |
| Divali | Naughtiness | Understanding |
| Easter | Neighbourhood | United Nations |
| Education | New life | Values |
| Endings | New Year | Victims |
| Environment | Old and New | Victories |
| Expectations | One World | Virtues |
| Explorers | Opportunities | War |
| Failure | Ourselves | Water |
| Faith | Outsiders | Wealth |
| Families | Parables | Why are we here? |
| Famous People | Parents | Wisdom |
| Fantasy | Patience | Wonder |
| Fear | Peace | Words |
| Feelings | People | Work |
| Festivals | Pilgrimages | Worship |
| Followers | Poetry | Xenophobia |
| Food and Fasting | Possessions | Youth and Old Age |
| Forgiveness | Poverty | Zero Tolerance |