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Plashet School Policy

For

Collective Worship

Revised and applicable from 5th February 2015

Written by Sarah Heath, Deputy Headteacher in consultation with Claire Clinton,
Newham RE Advisor

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Irene Papadopoulos". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chair of Governors

1. The Legal Requirements

The Collective Worship Policy at Plashet School pays due regard to statutory requirements, and has taken account of the guidance offered by the LA through its SACRE.

It is a legal requirement to have collective worship in schools. This is set out in the School Standards and Frameworks Act 1998 that states:

“Each pupil in attendance at a community, foundation or voluntary school shall on each school day take part in an act of collective worship”.

The law and available guidance offers schools considerable flexibility on what constitutes acts of collective worship (Schedule 20 of the 1998 Act). However, if the intake of the school is such that worship of a wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character is considered to be inappropriate for the school as a whole, or for a substantial number of its students, the school may apply to the London Borough of Newham SACRE for a determination. This request seeks a waiver of the requirement for collective worship to be of a Christian character.

Plashet School have been granted a determination by London Borough of Newham (LBN) SACRE. This was first granted in May 1990 and subsequently renewed in March 1996, March 2001, May 2007 and March 2013. LBN SACRE are satisfied the alternative arrangements in place for collective worship fulfil the requirements of the law. The determination was therefore granted on the basis of the number of students in the school from non-Christian backgrounds.

2. Definition of Collective Worship at Plashet School

The following extract from DfES circular 1/94 helps set our policy and programme in context:

“Collective worship... Aims to provide the opportunity for students to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or, through active listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit..., and reinforce positive attitudes.”

Collective Worship is a time when the whole school, or groups within the school meet together in order to consider and reflect on common concerns, issues and interests. It offers all students an opportunity to worship through engaging in relevant, meaningful and thoughtful experiences. It is designed to allow opportunities for the students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through use of relevant religious and moral teaching, cultural stories, poetry, current affairs, music, digital media and dilemma based learning.

We recognise the importance of collective worship and believe that all our students should be provided with equal opportunities to have involvement in either a non-confessional assembly or a confessional act of worship that is personal to the faith of individual students and their families. To conduct acts of collective worship of a wholly or mainly ‘broadly

Christian character' would deprive our students the opportunity to effectively engage with their own faith in a way that is appropriate to them. We offer an alternative form of collective worship which is meaningful to all of our students and which allows them to reflect on their personal values and beliefs while developing our school community to recognise the importance of the pluralistic nature of our community and our shared spiritual and moral values.

It is important to draw to a distinction between:

Collective Worship and Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE)

At Plashet School, collective worship and PRE are separate parts of school provision for which different legislative requirements apply. Time used for PRE counts towards a school's total curriculum time whilst this is not the case for collective worship. However, experiences gained as an outcome of collective worship can contribute to learning in PRE in particular and to the spiritual development of students.

Corporate Worship and Collective Worship

Plashet School is a community school and therefore does not hold any particular religious character. Therefore 'worship' at Plashet School is not corporate worship (i.e. that kind of worship found within a religious community – a 'corpus' or body of believers – whose members meet voluntarily and for reasons of shared commitment). Collective worship at Plashet School is the kind of worship which UK legislation requires schools to provide, and is therefore always consistent with educational aims.

3. Aims of Collective Worship

3.1 Collective Worship contributes significantly to the ethos of Plashet School and it is our aim that it is a time when the school community can:

- Consider and reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
- Explore their own and shared beliefs.
- Reflect on and develop a sense of spirituality, humanity and stewardship.
- Reflect upon the value, purpose and meaning of life.
- Reinforce shared moral values.
- Develop community spirit and shared values.
- Reinforce positive attitudes.
- Respond to the worship offered.
- Reflect on personal values and beliefs and
- Reflect on and apply personal beliefs to their lives and actions.

3.2 The Contribution of Collective Worship to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of Students

Collective worship at Plashet School contributes to the spiritual development of students by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Reflect on and develop a sense of spirituality, humanity and stewardship
- Reflect upon the value, purpose and meaning of life
- Explore their own and shared beliefs (religious & secular)
- Experience times of quiet inactivity and deep thought

Collective worship at Plashet School contributes to the moral development of students by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Reflect on matters concerning right and wrong
- Learn about religious and other teachings concerning right and wrong and apply these to their own beliefs (religious & secular)
- Reinforce shared moral values

Collective worship at Plashet School contributes to the social development of students by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Gather with others for a common purpose
- Develop community spirit and shared values
- Share times of joy and times of sadness with others
- Learn how to behave appropriately within a specific social setting

Collective worship at Plashet School contributes to the cultural development of students by providing them with an opportunity to:

- Learn about the festivals of different cultures and beliefs
- Listen to folk tales and stories from different religions and cultures
- Understand diversity with their own faith group
- Hear music from a range of times, places and cultures

4. The Contribution of Collective Worship to the Curriculum

Collective Worship at Plashet School time is distinct from curriculum time. However, Collective Worship does feature in aspects of the wider school curriculum. This includes reflection time delivered through tutor time, year group assemblies, Citizenship, Personal, Social, Health Education (CPSHE) and Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE). To ensure Collective Worship provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development it is planned around a wide variety of reflective themes and topics, uses diverse stimuli and resources and provides students with the opportunity to 'respond' independently, collectively and at their own level.

5. The Management of Collective Worship at Plashet School

Management and organisation of collective worship is the responsibility of a named person within the school (usually a member of the Leadership Team). They have responsibility for ensuring that schedules and themes for the delivery of collective worship are produced on a termly basis and for ensuring that collective worship across all aspects of the school make an outstanding contribution to the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of our students.

The school line management system ensures all staff take responsibility for ensuring aspects of collective worship are delivered in other relevant aspects of the curriculum. This includes reflection time delivered through tutor time, year group assemblies, Citizenship, Personal, Social, Health Education (CPSHE) and Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE).

6. The Organisation of Collective Worship at Plashet School

Collective worship at Plashet School integrates a theme for the week approach with two non- confessional / confessional discrete acts of worship (known as religious assemblies). The theme for the week is also addressed through tutor time and Year Group assemblies. The theme for the week is deliberately designed to stimulate students thinking and encourage reflection on human and social purpose before the school day begins.

Discrete Religious Assemblies operate on a Thursday and Friday morning from 9am until 9.15am. Although it is recognised that these days and times are subject to change and will be shortened or lengthened when it is appropriate.

Acts of Collective worship will operate as follows:

- South Building: Multi-faith assembly (non-confessional)
- North Building: Multi-faith assembly (non-confessional)
- South Building: Muslim assembly (confessional)
- North Building: Muslim assembly (confessional)
- Christian assembly (South Building only) (confessional)
- Hindu assembly (North Building only) (confessional)
- Sikh assembly (South Building only) (confessional)

Confessional faith acts of collective worship are planned and delivered by a variety of school staff and faith speakers (See: The Use and Role of Visitors to the School - Section 7). Non Confessional Acts of Collective worship are multi-faith or secular in their nature and are planned and delivered by a trained rota of teachers within the school, including the leadership team and the PRE department.

7. The Use and Role of Visitors to the School

Faith speakers and visitors make an important contribution to religious assemblies and the student's spiritual and cultural development. Therefore, representatives from faith communities will participate on a regular basis in leading some of our confessional religious assemblies. To ensure a best and consistent model for planning and delivery of religious assemblies, regular faith speakers are inducted regarding safeguarding procedures and expected to participate in Collective Worship/Assembly training. Safeguarding training is a statutory requirement and is therefore required by Plashet School for any person working or volunteering in the school on a regular basis. All acts of confessional worship are supervised by additional teachers as indicated on the assembly duty rota. No speaker is ever left alone with the students. All visitors including faith speakers to the school are expected to comply with all school procedures. The DBS information of regular faith speakers is recorded on the School Central Register and two references of suitability are held.

8. Collective Worship and Inclusivity

The content of all acts of Collective Worship is considered carefully, to ensure relevance and suitability for the ages, aptitudes and backgrounds of all students. A variety of teaching and learning styles and active and interactive methods are employed in acts of Collective Worship. Methods successfully employed in the classroom are used effectively to deliver acts of Collective Worship. A variety of resources are also used. Those leading religious assemblies choose the style/method and resources which are appropriate to the content, the age, aptitude and the background of the students. The content and process will be sufficiently stimulating in order to evoke a response in the individual. This may not be visual, but opportunity must be given to express this response through reflection and/or prayer.

9. The Right to Withdraw

Parents/Carers have the right to withdraw their child from any act or acts of Collective Worship. Parents are notified of this via Year 6 parent's information and the school website. Those wishing to make such a request are encouraged to discuss this with their daughters Year Coordinator prior to making a formal statement of withdrawal.

This discussion will include:

- (a) The particular concerns of the parent
- (b) Practical arrangements for the withdrawal

Year Coordinators will arrange for the parent to make a formal statement of withdrawal in writing addressed to the Headteacher. It is the responsibility of the Year coordinator to ensure any withdrawn students are engaged in suitable learning activities for the duration of the religious assemblies.

10. Evaluation and Monitoring of Collective Worship

Quality control of appropriateness of topic, religious teaching and relevance to the students is a group responsibility involving the Headteacher, the Leadership Team, Year Coordinators and Assistant Year Coordinators and duty staff. Any concerns are referred to the member of the leadership team with responsibility for Collective Worship. This member of the leadership team will undertake an investigation and make a decision regarding the concern. If necessary they will work with and monitor the speaker to resolve the concern/plan and ensure effective delivery.

A full and comprehensive evaluation of the model for collective worship will be carried out in the year preceding renewal of the determination. This will include an opportunity for consultation with all stakeholders. The school will then take into account this consultation when reviewing the determination application.