

Collective Worship Policy

Roselyn House School

2026 – 2027



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Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Why do we have collective worship	3
3. Government Guidance	3
4. Whose responsibility is it	4
5. Withdrawals	4
6. Determinations	4
7. When is it assembly or collective worship	4
8. What makes good collective worship	5
9. Monitoring arrangements	13
10. Links with policies	14

1. Aims

Aspects of this policy are adopted through the PSHEE, SMSC and CCC Curriculum Policy.

THIS POLICY OUTLINES THE VALUE AND PURPOSE OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE LIFE OF ROSELYN HOUSE SCHOOL AND GIVES PRACTICAL GUIDANCE TO THOSE LEADING

Our Vision

At Roselyn House School, we envision a future where every young person is empowered to thrive emotionally, socially and academically.

We strive to create a nurturing, inclusive and forward-thinking environment that unlocks potential, fosters independence, and equips students with the skills and confidence needed for lifelong success and wellbeing.

Our Mission

To move forward together, supporting each young person through a nurturing, therapeutic approach that meets individual needs.

We are dedicated to creating a positive and engaging learning environment where students feel safe, respected and inspired.

Through personalised education, accredited qualifications and real-world experiences, we help young people develop the confidence, independence and skills they need to succeed in life beyond school.

Our Values

RESPECT

Valuing ourselves, others and our environment.

EFFORT

Giving our best and embracing challenges

KINDNESS

Showing care, empathy and compassion

INCLUSION

Ensuring everyone feels welcome and valued

INDEPENDENCE

Developing skills to thrive in all walks of life

2. Why do we have collective worship in school?

It is, of course, a legal requirement but we believe that its value extends so much further.

Collective worship can both reinforce and contribute to the ethos of the school, in addition to offering a unique occasion in the school day to pause and explore life beyond the prescribed curriculum and offer a time of reflection and calm for our young people in order to provide a positive setting through which to begin the school day.

It encourages members of the whole school community, teachers, learning support mentors and learners together, to challenge assumptions and reflect upon issues which transcend normal day to day experiences, thus broadening understanding and contributing to our search for knowledge and meaning of who we are. By enabling students to acknowledge the value of diversity in terms of race, gender, culture and differing abilities, it fosters inclusion and breeds tolerance.

It provides an opportunity for the whole school to be brought together as a community and develop respect for others.

3. Government guidance circular 1/94 states:

Collective worship in schools should aim:

- To provide the opportunity for students to worship God, 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 listening to and joining in the worship offered.
- To develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

At Roselyn House School we have themed based collective worship. These themes are planned in advance and represent areas of life which are relevant to the young people or based around a particular celebration event. They have spiritual, moral, social and cultural reference. Often these are organised by senior members of staff within the school, but can involve any staff and often involve group or individual participation from the students. Students are encouraged to join in where appropriate. There is also a system of reward for participation. This encourages students to follow the school's behaviour policy, to develop in confidence and to be mindful of others. There are often challenges for students in order to gain additional reward. Friday afternoon is a celebration of student's achievement through the week and certificates are given out for students to take home. The Headteacher's Award is given for Learning Achievement throughout the week and work displayed on the Headteacher's Board.

Collective worship is planned and delivered with due regard to the Independent School Standards Regulations, the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, statutory expectations for collective worship, and the school's safeguarding duties. Any disclosures, safeguarding concerns, welfare concerns or emotional distress arising during collective worship will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026.

4. Whose responsibility is it?

At Roselyn House School the arrangements for collective worship are the responsibility of the Headteacher or designated senior leader. This role includes ensuring that collective worship is inclusive, age appropriate, sensitive to pupils' needs and linked appropriately to safeguarding, SMSC, British Values and the wider curriculum.

5. Withdrawals

In accordance with legal requirements, Parents/ Carers have the right to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship on religious grounds. Parents/ Carers should make their wishes known to the Headteacher who will ensure that any students who are withdrawn are appropriately supervised while the act of collective worship takes place. Students can be withdrawn wholly or partly from acts of collective worship only by parents/ carers. Staff at the school cannot withdraw students from acts of collective worship for other activities. However, if their behaviour is deemed as inappropriate then they will be asked to leave and supervised elsewhere by a member of staff. Pupils withdrawn from collective worship will receive appropriate supervision and alternative educational activities which do not disadvantage their learning or access to the wider curriculum.

6. Determinations

Collective worship at Roselyn House School is aimed to be appropriate to the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of the students within our school. They are determined to be fun, informative and thought provoking.

When planning collective worship, staff will take account of the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils. Themes will be selected and delivered in a sensitive way, with appropriate support available where content may cause distress, anxiety, trauma-related responses or safeguarding disclosures.

7. When is it assembly and when is it collective worship?

Assemblies can incorporate collective worship, but there is a distinction between the two. A report on sporting achievements may come under 'assembly' but using the students' sporting achievements to explore and reflect on human potential, determination, loyalty, courage could be the stimulus for a 'worshipful response' and therefore could constitute collective worship.

There are 'special' end of term assemblies to celebrate achievement and in addition following Sports Day in the Summer Term, where an engraved trophy is presented to the overall winner. There is also a Literacy trophy at the end of the year for the student has made the most progress.

School notices are often delivered at a brief grouping after lunch.

8. What makes a good act of collective worship?

At Roselyn House School we believe:

- When it involves staff and students alike.
- When everyone feels included and is engaged.
- When there is strong eye contact between the person leading the worship and the audience.
- When it is relevant, useful or informative to our students.
- When it is humorous.
- When it is thought provoking.
- When it asks you to question/ think about moral values.
- When it promotes positives.
- When it changes prejudice.
- When students are rewarded for participation.
- When students are realising the 'theme of the week.'
- When the act itself extends into discussion throughout the school day/ week.

What OFSTED has to say . . .

Characteristics of the best acts of worship included:

- A good variety of stimuli including drama, music, literature, artefacts and pictures, which captured and sustained the attention of students of all ages.
- Relevant content which promoted the spiritual growth and development of the students.
- Questioning which elicited thoughtful and extended responses.
- Opportunities for quiet reflection as well as prayer.
- And the involvement of the students in the planning and presentation of worship."

At Roselyn House School we structure our acts of worship where:

- We meet together in a variety of groupings, including form groups and class groups.
- We have a 'theme' which provides a clear focus on important issues or concepts
- such as morals, community, forgiveness, sharing, peace etc.
- We attempt to connect with our students through themes and approaches.
- We offer time for reflection at the end of the act of worship which helps provide a calm atmosphere before students are dismissed to lessons.
- We encourage students to talk about the 'theme' throughout the day/ week usually at break times so as not to distract from lessons or if it can be incorporated into Spiritual, Moral and Social planning of lessons then this is appropriate.
- We encourage students to guess the 'theme' and reward with additional points.
- We support emotional regulation by providing calm reflection opportunities and appropriate staff support where themes raise personal, emotional, mental health or safeguarding concerns.
- We always applaud the person who delivers the act of worship and thank them after.
- We take part in focus days/ weeks/ month.

Our guidelines for acts of worship are:

- **Plenty of participation**...both active and passive, by students and adults. This is a time for building up the sense of community and promoting the ethos of a school. It is clearly important therefore, that staff as well as students are in attendance.
- **Wide variety of approaches**...dramatic, readings, pictures, photographs, stories, music, dance, silence, reflections, songs, prayers, mime, visual images and artefacts that could be used as a focus for worship.
- **Variety of leaders**... every member of staff is invited to contribute to the theme of their choice and on occasions, usually within 'focus weeks' we include visitors from outside the school – local people from faith and community groups, representatives of charitable activities, involved agencies with the school, representatives from minority groups and parents/ carers.
- **Faith**...we include various 'faith' stories, teachings and perspectives and we mark special days and seasons within religious calendars.
- **Themes**...which are relevant to the everyday lives of our students which are pre planned.

Some appropriate themes suitable for development over a week or longer

Achievement	Citizenship	Exploring the	Guilt and
Adventure	Communication	past	suffering
Aggression and	Communion	Faith	Disability and
hate	Compassion	Fame	inclusion
Aims and ambitions	Conservation	Fantasy	Happiness is...
All Saints	Courage	Films I have	Hardship
Ambitions	Creation	seen	Harvest
A time for	Culture	Finding your	Haves and
everyone	Day and night	way	Have-nots
Autumn	Democracy and	Food for thought	Health
Barriers	Government	Forgiveness	Helping Hands
Beauty	Desert Island	Freedom and	Heroes and
Beginnings	Discs	responsibility	heroines
Big and small	Differences	Freedom and	Hobbies
Blindness &	Disability	slavery	Holidays and travel
sight	Discipleship	Friends/	Homes and families
Books	Discovery	Friendships	Homelessness
Bravery	Diversity	Gifts	Hope and
Bridges	Dreams	Giving up and	despair
British Values	Easter	going on	Human vices
Building	Education and	Global issues	Human virtues
relationships	learning	God and gods	Humility
Care and caring	Education and	God's world	Humour
Challenge	life	Good and evil	I believe...
Change	Enjoyment	Good news	Illusion and
Charity	Epiphany	Green issues	reality
Children	Experience	Growing	Imagination
Choice/Choices	Exploring the	Guiding light	Influences and
Christmas	future		indoctrination

Invitations	New year resolutions	Rights and responsibilities	The message
Jesus	Obedience	Roots	The natural world
Journeys	Obstacles	Sacrifice	The outsider
Joy and happiness	Old age	Saving life	The still, small voice
Joy and sorrow	Old and new	School and community	The unexpected
Justice and fair play	One world	School and opportunity	The world about us
Just thinking about it	Opportunity/ies	School and tradition	Things to avoid
Key people	Optimism and hope	Science	Treasures
Language	Parables	Seeing the light	Turning points
Laws and rules	Parents and children	Serving and service	Us and them
Leaders and leadership	Passover	Signs and symbols	Victory and defeat
Learning	Past and future	Sound of silence	Views of education
Leisure	Peace (and tranquillity)	Special books	Visits and visitors
Lent	Personal qualities	Special interests	Voices
LGBT issues	People I have met	Special people	Voices from the past
Life and death	Pilgrimage	Special places	War and peace
Life's challenge	Places of worship	Stepping stones and stumbling blocks	Wealth and poverty
Life's ups and downs	Planet earth	Stories from the lives of great leaders	Wealth, money and riches
Light	Poetry	Stories from the New Testament.	What God doesn't tolerate
Listen	Power and spirit	Stories from the Old Testament	What's it worth?
Living and loving	Praise	Strain and stress	Why are we here?
Living with tomorrow	Prayer and meditation	Strength and weakness	Windows
Love and hate	Prejudice	Success and failure	Wisdom
Memories and reflections	Preparations	Taking risks	Wise and foolish
Messages and messengers	Pride	Talk, talk, talk	Witness
Method and madness	Proverbs and sayings	Thanks	Wonder and awe
Miracles	Race	Thanksgiving	Words, words, words
Mothering	Rebirth	The apostles	Work and play
Sunday	Red letter days	The Arts	Worship
My favourite music	Relationships	The future	Youth
My favourite poem	Responsibilities	The good things in life	
Myself and others	Reward and punishment		
Neighbours	Rhyme and reason		
New life	Riches		
News			
New school year			

Breaking down a Theme

One theme can deliver a variety of foci for collective worship. It is important not to exhaust a theme, but equally important not to overlook the opportunities it may offer. The easiest way to 'break down' a theme is to brainstorm it with colleagues, selecting those aspects most suitable for promoting school issues and concerns, whilst taking account of the ages, ability and aptitudes of the students.

For example, a brainstorm on the theme of 'Love' might include:

- Sacrificial love.
- Love of neighbour.
- Agape.
- Erotic love.
- All types of family relationships.
- Relationships which include trans people.
- Love of possessions.
- Hedonism.
- Love of God.
- Unconditional Love.
- Love of Self.
- Same sex relationships.

Some aspects on this list may not be considered appropriate but others may form the basis of a week's collective worship. Future planning may therefore use the same theme again but explore a different aspect. Materials from religious and non-religious sources may be used to support the theme.

Strategies for collective worship

Any strategies used in a classroom situation can be applied in an assembly/ act of worship. It is very important to vary the strategies that we use so that our students do not become bored with the same diet and disengage. Using a variety of strategies enriches the stimulus material and so makes the opportunity for response (perhaps worshipful) more likely.

The following is not an exhaustive list of possible strategies, but it may encourage leaders to try something new. As in a lesson, a particular strategy should only be used if it actually enables students to reach the intended outcome.

Artefacts

There are rules of respect and sensitivity to observe when using artefacts, but they are excellent windows into a faith. Use them as you would in the classroom – to stimulate interest, to provoke questions, to illustrate an aspect of faith, to provide a sensory experience. An artefact may provide a focus for worship but they should not be used only as a 'display item' without students understanding what it is and its significance.

Bible / Sacred Text

Looking at the Bible or other sacred text, exploring its significance to believers, may be the focus for acts of worship or assembly. At times, it will be useful to read directly from the text, at others it may be appropriate to retell a story in your own words. It is useful to explore concepts and issues found in the Bible and other sacred text which have some relevance, relationship or impact on students' lives today.

Buzz Groups / Pairs

Allowing students to talk to each other in assembly/ collective worship gives every student the opportunity to participate. This may require patience if you have never tried it before, but once the skills and the process have been learned and practised, it is a very effective strategy. Give students only 2–3 minutes to talk about a given subject (favourite things, why they like their best friend, who they turn to in times of trouble etc.) Feedback will include obvious answers which you can supplement. Their experiences provide the bridge to their understanding of the concept you are exploring.

Current News

As you read the newspapers cut out and preserve 'gems' for the future. If you are addressing a current issue use a video clip (BBC's Newsround) or newspaper cutting. Remember:

- You should select a piece that can be easily read, understood, talked about.
- You will need time to think it through.
- Ask yourself: 'Why do I want to share this with my students?' - your aim.
- Be aware that your selection may or may not directly affect your students, and consider whether the content could cause distress, anxiety, trauma-related responses or safeguarding concerns.
- Introduce the article with a general chat about what is happening.
- Focus on the article read / show / talk about.
- Encourage reflection by asking for their impressions. For example: What would be their response in a similar situation? What do they think will / should happen next? Who else should be involved? Use question and answer technique or as you speak, display questions using presentation software or an interactive display, for the students to discuss in pairs.
- If you have given yourself enough time, you may be able to add another dimension by using a reading/ quote/ religious teaching to further explore or reflect on the issue.

Discussion Groups / Pairs

Give students 3–5 minutes and visit each group. They can discuss issues such as the world we live in, what matters to me, forgiveness means... etc. The discussion itself and/or the points raised may constitute a worship/ 'reflection time.'

Everyday Objects

Using ordinary everyday objects as visual aids can be particularly effective and it is surprising just how many opportunities there are using this particular strategy. The next

time you have an assembly planning meeting with other members of staff, bring along 10 items you've picked up around the home or classroom. Consider how you would use each item separately in different acts of worship and see what you come up with. Here are three examples and a few objects for you to think about:

- A bruised apple doesn't mean it is all bad (good and bad in everyone).
- A tube of Smarties contains lots of different coloured shells, same chocolate (one world, lots of different people essentially the same).
- Lots of different sizes and shaped candles, light them and the flame is the same (we may look different but our spirit is the same).
- Safety pin.
- Infant's dummy (soother).
- Can of drink.
- Soap.
- Orange.
- Balloon.
- Party poppers.

Gifts and Talents

A visitor, a member of staff or a student talk or is interviewed about their outstanding talent. This is not an occasion to explore how we use talents, but an opportunity to recognise positive aspects of life and humanity. Qualities such as courage, determination, perseverance, or things that are good, honourable, true, noble, loving, right, pure, just, or things which bring joy, happiness, contentment and hope – all deserve acknowledgement and praise.

Guided Imagery

‘Stilling’ and ‘Relaxation’ are the skills which need building to have success with this strategy. It is extremely effective and powerful, but there are ground rules and if you have never used this strategy with a class/group before you need to be careful and do not expect too much. It can be done in whole school assembly but students need to have developed the necessary skills for this is a classroom situation first.

Improvisation

Most students will be happy to volunteer at primary level, but this tends to lose its appeal with some students once they enter secondary school. A stock of costumes, hats, masks etc. for them to wear whilst the ‘story’ is told does enhance the activity. Students will take their ‘cue’ from your structured narrative.

Music

This is not only useful for creating atmosphere when students are entering or leaving the assembly hall or room. It can be used to great effect to explore concepts and themes. As music is very important to youth culture there is a danger that your audience may not consider your choice of music as contemporary. It is a good idea to involve the students in music choices and presentation.

Presentation Technology

Presentation technology, including interactive displays, screens and digital media, can be used to display images, music, reflection prompts, questions, video clips and key words. Staff should ensure that all materials are age appropriate, accessible, respectful of copyright and suitable for pupils’ social, emotional and mental health needs.

Posters

In small groups, posters are fine. For larger groups it is worth having a poster put onto an OHT though you must be careful with copyright. Use as you would in a classroom – including: What does the image say to you? What did the artist intend? What is being said? Why is this image important and to whom? Encourage students to consider, reflect on and think about the issues raised through the poster.

Poetry and Prayer

Use either children's own prayers or poems or some of the good examples available. Many poems are not only humorous but address issues of concern for today.

Power Point

Power point presentations can offer a less threatening 'introduction' to leading assemblies as you need to rely less on a 'live' presentation. Sequences of slides, together with reflective music, with an occasional word screened to encourage reflective thought can be enriching.

Students as leaders

Work with students as part of a presentation team, or as their director, or simply as their facilitator. Given ownership of what they are going to talk about/ present, students will often respond very positively. They may feel more confident in front of their class or own year group rather than the whole school.

Puppets

Can be as elaborate or as simple as you choose to make them, including using people, paper bags and shadow puppets.

Reflection Diary

Each student keeps a diary and writes their thoughts in it, based on a focus for reflection. This is private, only to be shared with the teacher, and therefore great care needs to be taken with confidentiality and security.

Where a reflection diary, discussion or activity gives rise to a safeguarding or welfare concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures, inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate, and complete a CPOMS record where required.

Story

Use a good story to symbolise or illustrate an issue or a point, (a modern parable) for example, to explore the nature of God. Stories can be told in so many ways and it is worth trying out a few methods – using role play, puppets, masks, straight reading from a book, or dramatic retelling using your own words. If you think some key words might not be understood – explain them before you begin the story.

Stunt

These should not be overdone or the element of surprise will be lost. Set something up that comes as a complete surprise. You may consider following this up with a simple reflection rather than an elongated elucidation. For example: cutting off the someone's tie to illustrate 'Is seeing believing?' or a member of staff "heckles" over something – dealing with conflict.

Tableau

Position students in a 'frozen' position to illustrate a scene from a story or a particular situation. If you wish characters can 'unfreeze' to tell you who they are, what is happening to them, where they are and how they are feeling.

Toys

Use children's toys to help illustrate a story or to explore a particular concept. These are particularly useful for younger children but baby toys may be equally appropriate props in the secondary school, given the right circumstances. Students easily relate to toys and they are good aids for understanding. For example, a jigsaw with a piece missing – life is not complete for some people without their religious life; teddy bears – special friends you can tell anything to, like prayer to God.

Visitors

As with any visitor, clear guidance should be given as to what is expected of them. They need to know what support they can expect from the school too, and what the constraints are. If you ask a visitor to lead one assembly in a series of five on the same theme, ensure that they know what else is being done so that they do not duplicate. Do not overdo the charity requests for fund-raising. Look at breaking down prejudice by representing a protected characteristic or minority group.

Video

Depending on your theme, select any video which will illustrate your point. Use 'sensory deprivation' (listen to the dialogue with covered screen or watch the scene without the sound) to focus on a particular aspect. Or select a clip which you can talk about / discuss. For example, there are numerous scenes in 'Toy Story' which cover many dimensions for SMSC development.

Creating the right atmosphere and attitude

Planning obviously plays an essential role in providing positive collective worship experiences but to ensure quality we must create the 'right atmosphere' and the 'right attitude.' The right atmosphere will aid students' 'feel good' factor and with a positive attitude towards assembly and collective worship students are more likely to respond in a positive way.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This document will be reviewed every year, but may be reviewed and updated more frequently if necessary. It will be reviewed by **Jack Birkenhead (Headteacher)** in consultation with the wider school community. Monitoring will include staff feedback, pupil voice, review of collective worship themes, consideration of inclusivity and accessibility, and evaluation of how effectively collective worship supports SMSC, British Values, emotional wellbeing and safeguarding practice.

10. Links with other policies

This Collective Worship Policy is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Curriculum policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- PSHE Policy
- SMSC Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- British Values Statement