

# St David's Church in Wales Primary School



## Collective Worship Policy

## **1. Statutory requirements for Collective Worship**

The place of collective worship has been firmly established in the 1988 Education Reform Act. Collective Worship in St David's C/W Primary School will be wholly or mainly of a Christian character in accordance with the School's Trust Deed.

## **2. Aims of Collective Worship**

- i. To provide an opportunity for children to worship and praise God.
- ii. To provide a time for reflection, celebration and hope.
- iii. To provide the opportunity for children to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs.
- iv. To encourage participation and response through active involvement in the worship or through listening to, watching and joining in the worship offered.
- v. To develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.
- vi. To encourage respect and understanding of those with different beliefs and religious practices.
- vii. To teach children how to worship.

## **3. Our understanding of Collective Worship**

We understand Collective Worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Collective Worship involves members of the school coming together and participating in this special activity. We encourage everyone to take an active part in worship. Our worship is based on Christian doctrine and beliefs of the Church in Wales.

While the majority of acts of worship in our school are Christian, in order to foster awareness, understanding and acceptance of other denominations and faiths, we also facilitate acts of worship that reflect other religious traditions that are represented in the school and the wider community. We adhere to the WASACRE guidance document (see Appendix 1)

[http://www.wasacre.org.uk/publications/GUIDANCE%20ON%20COLLECTIVE%20WORSHIP\\_FINAL\\_JUNE\\_2012\\_ENGLISH.pdf](http://www.wasacre.org.uk/publications/GUIDANCE%20ON%20COLLECTIVE%20WORSHIP_FINAL_JUNE_2012_ENGLISH.pdf)

## **4. Organisation of collective worship**

We hold a daily act of worship in our school. It is led by staff, clergy, visitors and by the pupils. The nature of worship varies from whole school to class groupings.

We conduct worship in a dignified and respectful way. Children see worship time as a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. Children are required to be quiet and thoughtful at the appropriate times and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns.

We create an appropriate atmosphere using music, candles, incense, and other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

We take the themes of our worship from the traditions of the Christian faith and we reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Christian Values for Life play a significant part in our worship. Sometimes the themes of our worship reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum and enhance the attitudes and values we hold as a school community.

We plan our worship for the school year as part of a series of themes or values; each value is a focus for a half term. Our worship reflects and celebrates the talents, achievements and learning of the children. The planning of the year's worship is the responsibility of the Collective Worship Coordinator and an overview of the year's worship is planned. There is however flexibility in planning to allow for the needs of the school and any issues which arise which need to be a focus of our worship e.g. natural disasters. Daily planning sheets are also used and all worship sessions are evaluated by pupils, staff or clergy.

Our weekly Whole School Celebration Worship offers an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school and to give thanks to God. We ensure these achievements relate to our school aims and this plays an important part in promoting the ethos of our school. St David's school is a successful school and we celebrate the successes of the children in our worship. There is also a monthly Celebration Worship which is led by our Parish Priest and to which a School Governor is invited. Here extra-curricular activities and personal achievement in school and the community are celebrated.

We regularly invite parents, governors and the local parishioners, to join us in worship at school and in our local churches. Eucharists are held in the school each term, each class leads special Parish Family Services and the KS2 pupils lead a Christmas Service. These take place at the following venues:

St. Michael and All Angels, Colwinston  
St. Tydfils and Llysworney  
The Church of the Holy Trinity, Llandow  
Holy Cross, Cowbridge

A Family Service may include singing, Bible readings, poetry recitation, drama or dance and various musical activities. Themes for the service are chosen by the pupils and class teacher.

Pupils also participate in Harvest, Christmas Carol Service, Mothering Sunday and Leavers' Services. The Year 6 pupils also join their peers at Llandaff Cathedral and a Cowbridge Church, which alternates each year.

Children are taking an increasing role in these acts of worship.

Over the course of a term, collective worship should include:

- The teachings of Jesus and other Bible stories
- Moral stories from other sources and world religions
- Reflecting upon Christian symbols and their use in worship
- Observing the cycle of the Anglican year
- Prayer in Welsh and English
- Songs in Welsh and English
- Children's drama and presentations
- Eucharist
- Reflection

A variety of people will lead acts of Worship, including the Head teacher, the staff team, Parish Priest and visitors.

A typical week will be:

Monday – Whole School Worship led by the Headteacher- linked to the Value.

Tuesday – Whole School Worship led by Deputy Headteacher or Creative Coordinator- where this will mainly be through song; or planned and led by a Pupil Committee such as Eco School, School Council, Healthy Schools, Digital leaders, Fairtrade and JRSOs.

Wednesday – Whole School Worship led by Parish Reader or visiting Priest and KS2 pupils.

Thursday – Class Worship held in class reflective areas and planned and led by pupils.

Friday - Whole School Celebration Worship led by Headteacher

Each class has a reflective area and there are areas for worship and reflection in the school grounds.

## **5. Whole school worship format**

Our Wednesday worship follows a slightly different format to the one detailed below.

- Gathering and welcome:
- Welsh greeting and children respond in Welsh and welcome visitors similarly
- Candle lighting to signify the beginning of worship with the words:  
"Jesus is the light of the world,

I want to be like Jesus.”

This can also be recited in Welsh.

- Hymn with the main theme of the worship
- Discussion/story/ Bible reading/drama etc.
- Reflection
- Prayers to link with theme or children’s own prayers.
- The Lord’s Prayer
- At least once a week we will say the School Prayer together
- Extinguishing of candle

## **6. Right of withdrawal**

We expect all children to attend worship. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who withdraw from collective worship.

## **7. Role of the Coordinator - Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

The coordinator for Collective Worship, together with our Parish Reader (Chair of Governors) will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. It will be regularly reviewed to reflect Statutory and Trust Deed requirements. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

Other roles:

Plan, together with our Parish Reader and colleagues, to present quality worship in the school. Ensure worship relates to the life and particular needs of the school, has a strong spiritual dimension, is inclusive and educational.

, in discussion with whole staff. Ensure a variety of topics are available which include a Welsh Dimension and use of the Welsh language.

Plan the worship themes for the school year

Ensure there is a variety of approaches to Collective Worship in the school. Include material from major world faiths.

Advise colleagues on the most appropriate approach to take when planning worship sessions.

Maintain a selection of quality resources for Collective Worship which are easily accessible to staff.

Give guidance on recording and evaluation of worship.

Keep up with new legislation and guidelines for worship.

Plan School Inset for Collective Worship when required.

Review and monitor Worship evaluations and Pupil Questionnaire responses about Worship via annual surveys: School’s own for each key stage and the Attitude Survey for Years 3-6.

The Collective Worship Co-ordinator is also available to give advice and support to staff and visitors where planning and delivering collective worship is concerned. This includes arranging appropriate Inset courses for the staff as a whole and individual members of staff.

## 8. Resources

Resources will be allocated both to individual classes and also stored centrally in the school library area and hall. Additional support materials and resources will be considered, according to whole school needs and funds available.

Collective Worship budget will be allocated following consultation between the Headteacher, the Collective Worship Coordinator and Governing Body. The available budget will be clearly linked to the School Evaluation report and the School Improvement Plan.

## 9. Bilingualism and Curriculum Cymraeg

The school will develop a positive attitude to the development of incidental Welsh through Collective Worship. Both children and staff, teaching and non-teaching, will be encouraged to use Welsh throughout Collective Worship.

All pupils will be made aware of a distinctive Welsh perspective when looking at the wider world. Pupils will be given opportunities, where appropriate, in Collective Worship to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales.

### Monitoring and Review

Author	Collective Worship Coordinator
Created on	July 2011
Last updated on	July 2017
Adopted by Governing Body on	TBA
Scheduled review date	July 2019
Head teacher's signature and date	
Chair of Governor's signature and date	

# APPENDIX 1

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## **GUIDANCE ON COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

### **WALES ASSOCIATION OF SACRES**

June 2012

#### **INTRODUCTION**

School acts of collective worship are educationally meaningful when they provide opportunities to engage with the needs of all learners, whatever their faith or belief background. Good collective worship promotes spiritual development, contributes to personal development, benefits the whole school community, links the school community and the wider local community, and enhances awareness of global citizenship.

Some factors underpinning effective collective worship include:

- developing a coherent school policy and approach to collective worship, with active engagement from senior management;
- creating collective 'ownership' of the school's programme of collective worship on the part of staff, learners and governors;
- ensuring that there are clear expectations among staff concerning their contributions to collective worship;
- offering opportunities for learners to actively engage in collective worship;
- making collective worship an integral part of the school day by reflecting in planning its relevance to and connections with all aspects of school life;
- providing continuing professional development opportunities for staff which will allow critical reflection on and enhancement of collective worship provision in the school.

In order to develop educationally meaningful and effective collective worship, it is important to appreciate the benefits of collective worship and to be familiar with the legal requirements relating to collective worship.

#### **APPRECIATING THE BENEFITS OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP**

It would be useful for schools to discuss how collective worship promotes spiritual development, contributes to personal development, benefits the whole school community, links the school community and the wider local community, and enhances awareness of global citizenship.

##### **(a) Collective worship promotes spiritual development**

Schools have a duty to promote the spiritual development of learners. Effective collective worship enables a school to contribute to this statutory requirement. It is important to understand that spiritual development or spirituality is **not** the same as being religious, but it is about the process of developing learners' appreciation of the spiritual dimensions of life and the wider issues of meaning, purpose and fulfilment. Staff and learners should appreciate that acts of collective worship:

- provide a special time separate from ordinary school activities;
- support learner-centred experiences, and enable learners to develop a sense of their position within the universal picture;
- develop learners' ability to reflect on their own feelings, values and attitudes;

- develop learners' awareness of the inner life and the spiritual dimension of each person;
- explore and encourage responses to fundamental questions about the meaning of life, change and death.

**(b) Collective worship contributes to personal development** Schools have a duty to promote the personal development of learners. Effective collective worship enables a school to contribute to this statutory requirement. Staff and learners should appreciate that acts of collective worship:

- contribute to health and wholeness, and emotional intelligence;
- encourage reflection on inner feelings and beliefs;
- develop beliefs and values, both personal and communal;
- encourage an understanding of the beliefs and values of others;
- increase self esteem and purpose in life;
- nurture the human ability to make moral choices for good or evil, through thinking about 'moral codes, relationships, responsibility, respect for diversity, temptation, the power of self, sacrifice and love'

**(c) Collective worship benefits the whole school community**

Effective collective worship provides benefits for the whole school community. Staff and learners should appreciate that acts of collective worship:

- encourage shared values, meaning and purpose;
- contribute to the experience of belonging to a community;
- provide opportunities to celebrate the school's achievements and the contribution of individuals to those achievements;
- develop understanding and appreciation of the beliefs and values of others within the school community;
- provide opportunities to reflect on and to share in the 'happy' and 'sad' events and experiences which effect the school community;
- contribute to a school ethos which supports the educational attainment of all learners, regardless of background, through developing self esteem and a sense of purpose in life.

**(d) Collective worship links the school community and the wider local community**

Schools are expected to consider how they support and promote community cohesion, and it should be recognised that collective worship offers a valuable contribution at both school level and wider community level. Effective collective worship makes links between the school community and the wider local community. Staff and learners should appreciate that acts of collective worship:

- draw on a range of carefully selected and appropriate representatives within the local community to contribute to collective worship;
- contribute to the experience of belonging to a wider local community;
- provide opportunities to celebrate the local community's achievements and the contribution of groups and individuals to those achievements;
- develop understanding and appreciation of the beliefs and values of others within the local community;
- support shared understanding of how individual learners and a school may contribute positively to the wider community;
- provide opportunities to reflect on and to share in the 'happy' and 'sad' events and experiences which effect the local community.

### **(e) Collective worship enhances awareness of global citizenship**

Effective collective worship enhances awareness of global citizenship. Staff and learners should appreciate that acts of collective worship:

- draw on a range of carefully selected material to promote global awareness;
- contribute to the experience of belonging to a global community;
- provide opportunities to celebrate global events and human achievements;
- develop an understanding of global diversity and inequality;
- offer opportunities to reflect on and share in global crises and human suffering.

The whole school has much to gain from educationally meaningful and effective acts of collective worship, and members of the school (and local community) have much to offer through presentations and contributions to acts of collective worship. In practice, schools should consider how these benefits may be incorporated into their programme for collective worship and be collectively 'owned' by the whole school community.

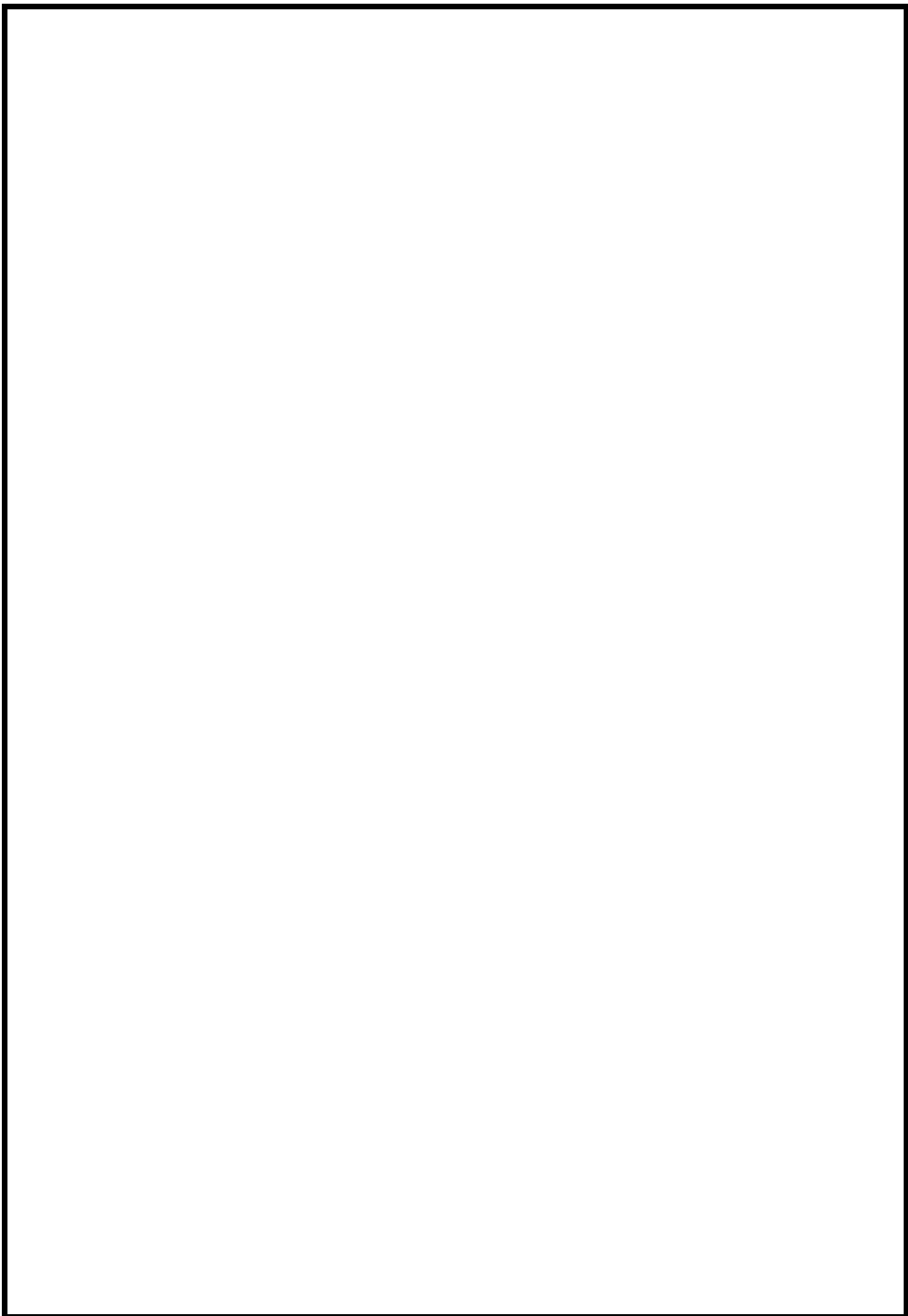
### **COLLECTIVE WORSHIP AND THE LAW**

The law distinguishes between 'schools with a religious character' and other schools which do not have a religious character (School Standards and Framework Act 1998). 'Schools with a religious character' are those linked with one or more Christian denominations or a major world faith by virtue of their foundation or by a specific legally binding decision to become such a school. The DfES maintains a list of such schools in Wales.

#### **(a) What the law really says about worship in state-maintained schools WITHOUT a religious character**

- There is a statutory requirement for schools to provide a **daily** act of collective worship for all learners;
- This requirement is for **every learner** to have opportunity to participate in an act of collective worship **every day**;
- There is provision for learners to be withdrawn from acts of collective worship, at the request of parents;
- There is also provision for teachers to withdraw from conducting acts of collective worship;
- The majority of acts of collective worship in a school term and year should be 'wholly, mainly of a broadly Christian character', and in maintained schools, not solely of any one denomination;
- The majority of acts of collective worship should have elements in them which relate to traditions of Christian belief;
- Worship in a school context should be 'collective' rather than 'corporate';<sup>4</sup>
- Acts of collective worship should not be passively received – a response is required;
- For maintained schools, acts of collective worship must take place on the school premises;
- Schools have the right to a 'Determination' – that is, to be released from the requirements for acts of worship to be wholly, mainly of a broadly Christian character, if the school composition might require this (applications are to be made to the local SACRE);
- Acts of worship are distinct from an 'assembly' – which, in law, is actually any gathering of the school **apart from** collective worship;
- Since January 2009, post-16 learners may request withdrawal from collective worship for themselves.





## **(b) What the law really says about state-maintained schools WITH a religious character**

- There is a statutory requirement for schools to provide a **daily** act of collective worship for all learners;
- This requirement is for **every learner** to have opportunity to participate in an act of collective worship **every day**;
- There is provision for learners to be withdrawn from acts of collective worship, at the request of parents;
- There is also provision for teachers to withdraw from conducting acts of collective worship, however, there are some limitations to this right in Voluntary Aided schools;
- The acts of worship will reflect the religious character of the school;
- The acts of worship are likely to include material drawn from the worshipping practice and traditions of the specific faith or denomination with which the school is associated;
- Worship should be 'collective' not 'corporate';
- Acts of worship should not be passively received – a response is required;
- Schools may use a local place of worship for some of its acts of worship where this is appropriate;
- Schools do not have the right to a determination;
- Acts of worship are distinct from an 'assembly' – which, in law, is actually any gathering of the school **apart from** collective worship;
- Since January 2009, post 16 learners may request withdrawal from collective worship for themselves.<sup>6</sup>

## **(c) What the law does not say**

There is often confusion about collective worship, and it is important to know that the law does **not** require:

- the **whole school** to be together for collective worship [*The requirement is for any gathering of learners the school chooses, other than groupings based on religious affiliation*]
- acts of collective worship to be **at the start of school** in the morning [*The timing of collective worship in the school day is for each school to determine*]
- a stated **length of time** for acts of collective worship [*The length of acts of collective worship is a school matter, but should not reduce the expected hours of the curriculum day*].

## **POTENTIAL ACTIONS**

Schools which are serious about providing educationally meaningful and effective collective worship will:

- establish clear principles, policies and programmes to underpin acts of collective worship;
- create a collective sense of 'ownership' of collective worship;
- identify funding to provide training for staff or establish a professional learning community perhaps through a local consortium.

*Case studies exemplifying good practice and additional useful resources are available on the WASACRE website: [www.wasacre.org.uk](http://www.wasacre.org.uk)*