

**ST. DAVID'S HIGH SCHOOL
SALTNEY**

**COLLECTIVE
WORSHIP**

**Reviewed by Governors
October 2023**



St. David's High School is a mixed [11-16] comprehensive with approximately 407 students, the majority of whom are from a Christian or non-religious family background.

Collective worship is the meeting together of groups or the whole school to promote and share core values for St. David's and the wider community. Collective worship must make a valuable educational contribution to the whole curriculum. It can be a time for quiet reflection, for recognition of individual or group achievements, to develop appreciation for the opinions of others, for encouragement, for participation and to experience thoughts and activities of worth. It is not corporate worship but a recognition of different standpoints and common features i.e. tolerance, wonder etc. of benefit to the community.

“Collective worship should offer pupils opportunities to explore and share beliefs; consider the importance of prayer, meditation and silence; consider the relevance of ideas and beliefs to their own lives; think about the needs of others and develop a sense of community; and appreciate the importance of religious beliefs to those who hold them.” Spiritual and Moral Development (NCC, April 1993)

Practical advice on collective worship is clearly laid out in 'Guidelines for Collective Worship' produced by Flintshire. Copies of this are held by the Senior Management Team, all House Heads and the Head of Religious Studies.

The aim is for collective worship to be 'set apart' from assembly where notices are given but it is recognised that this is not always practical. The atmosphere for collective worship can be set in various ways e.g. by times of silent reflection, by music or by visual aids as a stimulus.

The 1998 Education Reform Act states that collective worship: -

- must take place daily for all pupils;
- is the responsibility of the headteacher, in county schools, after consultation with the governing body;
- must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.

Due to practical considerations pupils meet at St. David's as year groups one morning per week. Often, the theme of the Assembly will complement the Pastoral Curriculum. The Assistant Head (Care, Guidance and Support) and the Year Heads have practical responsibility for preparing and carrying out this collective worship. Recording and evaluating acts of collective worship is encouraged.

The whole school meets two or three times per term as calendared. This is usually led by the Headteacher with the support and involvement of a variety of pupils and staff, including the Head of Religious Studies.

If a parent asks that a pupil should be wholly or partly excused from attending collective worship then the school must comply. ERA 1988 s.9(3). Legally no teacher can be forced to conduct a religious assembly although all but the head may be required to attend such parts of an assembly where collective worship is not taking place. Education Act 1944 s.30.

Our normal expectation is that all members of staff attend collective worship unless they have negotiated the use of this time for coaching etc. Any staff who have a conscientious objection to attending collective worship must put these objections in writing to the Headteacher.

Guidelines for Collective Worship

The majority of acts of collective worship are to be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character” ERA 1988 s.7(1 and 2), ERA 1993 s.138 (2 and 3) i.e. they draw from Christian values and/or make use of a variety of Christian material. Reference to other faiths is permissible.

The use of prayer/reflection is to be encouraged although it is not necessary in every act of worship. “The language used to introduce prayers and other aspects of worship, and any rituals in which children are asked to participate, must be introduced with sensitivity and care so as not to expect pupils to adopt a particular confessional approach” page 8 ‘Guidelines for Collective Worship’ produced by Clwyd.

There are copies of a school hymn book but singing with a musical accompaniment must be planned carefully to allow for the release of a musician who is also a group tutor.

Visitors are welcome but must be well prepared for the group of students they are to meet.