



# Religious Education & Collective Worship Policy

## 1. Rationale

Samuel Whitbread Academy's Religious Education and Collective Worship Policy aims to provide a caring community in which young people can learn to respect themselves and others, and take responsibility for their own actions.

Samuel Whitbread Academy (SWA) believe that Collective Worship is a worthwhile educational activity, which adds value to academy life. Collective Worship contributes to the spiritual and moral development of students. It provides a focus for the academy community and helps to reflect the tone and ethos of the academy.

## 2. Policy

### Legal Requirements

The Education Reform Act of 1988 requires that an act of daily Collective Worship be provided for all students. It will not be of any distinctive denomination. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship.

### Aims

Fundamental to SWA's values and practice is the principle of enabling students to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of the potential influence of life experiences, beliefs, values and faith traditions on individuals, communities, societies and culture. It also aims to enhance the students' own spiritual, moral, cultural and social development by:

- Developing awareness of the fundamental questions raised by human experiences, and of how religious teachings can relate to them.
- Responding to such questions with reference to the teachings and practices of religions, and to their own understanding and experience; considering and explaining what might be learned from the religions they study in the light of their own beliefs and experiences.
- Reflecting on their own beliefs, values, perceptions and experiences in the light of their study of religion.
- Developing positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs that are different from their own.

The aim of Collective Worship is to provide the opportunity for students to:

- Worship God
- Reflect on values that are of a religious nature and on their own beliefs
- Develop a community spirit, a common ethos and shared values
- Consider spiritual and moral issues
- Respond to the worship offered

In order to develop satisfactory and meaningful Collective Worship, the following are required:

- Provision for a daily act of collective reflection for all students if they request it.
- Participation of students as fully as possible.
- A rich and varied assembly experience using a wide variety of forms of presentation.
- Opportunities to lead various assemblies.

## **Assemblies**

### Themes

A flexible approach is adopted to allow response to current academy, local, national or world events. All leaders are given the freedom to respond to appropriate stimuli although they are encouraged to maintain the 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character'.

### Music

Music can play an important part of an assembly. It may take the form of modern music, classical or a performance. Whichever is chosen creates an atmosphere for the child/staff to complement the theme of the assembly.

### Withdrawal from Assembly

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw a child from Collective Worship and arrangements will be made for adequate supervision. Teachers are expected to attend assembly but may exercise their freedom under the 1944 Act to withdraw from those parts of the assembly where worship is taking place.

## **Religious Education**

Every student has a statutory entitlement to Religious Education. In SWA, Religious Education is taught according to the Agreed Syllabus for Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton<sup>1</sup>, following one of the nationally accredited courses as well as incorporating the academy's own existing practice. This syllabus and the schemes taught at SWA are in line with The Education Act 1996.

The aim of Religious Education (as delivered within the curriculum) is to:

- Enable students to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principle religions represented in Great Britain and their associated beliefs, experiences and practices.
- Enable students to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of some of the influence of life experiences, beliefs and values and faith traditions on individuals, communities and culture.

Religious Education is a timetabled subject. It is open to parents to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship. This should be done in writing and addressed to the Principal of the academy. This information will be shared with the Governing Body.

### **3. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will be regularly monitored and evaluated by all stakeholders. All staff will support this policy.

Monitoring of teaching and learning is carried out through:

- Lesson observations
- Collecting samples of students' books
- Learning Walks

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.beds-re-resources.org.uk/>

#### **4. Implementation and Review**

This policy will be made known to all staff, parents/carers and governors, and published on the academy website. Copies are also available upon request from the academy office. This policy will be reviewed two yearly or as required.

#### **Links to other policies**

Due to the diverse nature of Collective Worship and Religious Education, this policy should be read in conjunction with the SWA's Drugs & Alcohol Policy<sup>2</sup>.

#### **5. Author and Date**

Drafted by HoD RS (R. Jackman), approved by BEST Academy Principals – October 2014

Updated by Associate Principal (K. Bridge) – June 2016

Updated by HoD RS (S. Tawade) – November 2018

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.samuelwhitbread.org.uk/policies/>