



## **R.E. AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

**SEPTEMBER 2011**

## **VISION:**

That every young person graduates from Aylesbury Vale Academy as citizens of an international community where they have the mobility borne from their outlook, qualifications, skills and experience to be successful.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:** WE ADOPT THE CHRISTIAN VALUES OF:

- Honesty
- Respect
- Compassion
- Love
- Forgiveness
- Self-discipline
- Creativity
- Hope

## **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To ensure that we provide an experience of worship that will allow students to respond reflectively.
2. Introduce students to our Christian principles and values.
3. Explore a variety of ways of worship.
4. Encourage students to develop a respect for others and appreciate the world around us.
5. Strengthen and support the Academy community giving expression to and re-affirming the values of the Academy.
6. Celebrate the gifts that each student brings to the Academy's community, recognising the uniqueness of each individual.
7. Encourage students to reflect on the puzzling questions that life poses and to respond to the wonder and mystery of the world around them.
8. Foster a concern for others within the school and wider world.
9. Foster an appreciation of the created world and an awareness of our responsibility for it.

## **MONITORING** (via Governors' Scrutiny Committee):

1. Throughout the academic year the committee will ask to see evidence of a variety of ways of worship.
2. The committee will gain evidence by attending an assembly or observing classroom teaching (without giving judgement of teaching and learning).
3. The chair of the committee will ask to see evidence of prayer, reflection and awareness of the timing of religious festivals and any specific requirements relating to them.
4. The committee will be provided with the findings of assembly and classroom activities.
5. Visit the Academy to follow lines of enquiry as a result of the committee meeting (adhering to the protocol for governor visits).

## REVIEWING

The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing its policies and the Principal is responsible for reporting on the implementation of the policy.

1. Has the policy been successfully implemented?
2. Has the policy had the intended impact in the Academy and the young people?
3. Are the current objectives to remain the same and do they support other policies and development priorities?

## NOMINATED MEMBER OF STAFF:

HEAD OF COLLEGE

## APPENDIX 1

### Operating Statement

Aylesbury Vale Academy has a commitment to teach students the world's major religions including the central tenets of Christianity, developing respect for the beliefs and moral values of others.

We aim to hold acts of collective worship on a regular basis to include a variety of elements at different times, to involve the students and in turn provide a dedicated opportunity for students to reflect and respond to the input.

We will cater for students with special needs, they will be assessed and we will ensure, where possible, they participate in all areas of worship.

## APPENDIX 2

### Effective Worship

#### Act of Worship must ...

- Have a clear message
- Have a dedicated focus – a lit candle, a vase of flowers, an artefact/picture that reflects something of the theme
- Have a clear plan to lead the students into a period of reflection – input, questions, relevance to age/stage
- Have a dedicated opportunity for the students to offer a response to the input, a prayer related to the input or an opportunity for silent reflection
- Where there is a prayer, students need to be encouraged to listen, be still and reflective and only if they wish, to join in the 'Amen' response
- Be acceptable to the whole community, staff and students

- In achieving a meaningful act of worship it is important to distinguish between worship and ritual. Rituals are means of enabling worship and include:
  - stories and readings
  - songs, hymns and music
  - dance and drama
  - prayer, meditations
  - creative silence
  - sacred/secular readings
  - artefacts and natural materials
  - students' contributions

Rituals have a range of relevance whether the person has a personal faith or none.

### **It is not appropriate to...**

- Make the students repeat a prayer if they do not wish
- Join their hands if they do not wish
- Say 'Amen' if they do not wish
- Always have prayers: intersperse Collective Worship with reflection, silence or discussion

Effective Delivery
--------------------

### **We expect staff to...**

- Lead where applicable in the agreed manner, including class assemblies
- Respond to collective worship in an appropriate manner by modelling the required and expected behaviours
- Develop links with faith groups and at times, offer them the opportunity to lead assemblies and collective worship in the agreed format for our Academy
- Be aware of the timing of religious festivals and any specific requirements relating to them

### **We expect students to:-**

- Be respectful
- Act in an appropriate manner
- Have the daily opportunity for a sense of togetherness which engenders a sense of belonging
- Have an understanding that the worship is not done for students but is an experience for all who attend

## **The Right to Withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their students from Religious Education (RE) and collective worship. If a parent asks in writing for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE or collective worship at the Academy the Academy must comply unless the request is withdrawn.

The Academy remains responsible for the supervision of any student withdrawn from RE or collective worship, unless the student is lawfully receiving RE, or taking part in collective worship elsewhere.

Parents do not need to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal. The Principal may wish to clarify with any parent wanting to withdraw:

- The religious issues about which the parent would object to their child being taught
- The practical implications of withdrawal
- The circumstances in which it would be reasonable to accommodate parents wishes
- If a parent will require any advanced notice of such issue in the future and if so, how much
- The right of withdrawal was established in the Education Act 1944, re-enacted in the Education Reform Act 1988