


# The Aylesbury Vale Academy Trust



The Aylesbury Vale Academy

## Collective Worship Policy

<b>Policy Reference:</b>	AVA.112
<b>Description:</b>	This document provides a framework to show how the academy meets the requirement for a daily act of collective worship
<b>Status:</b>	Non-statutory Policy
<b>Policy Audience:</b>	Governors, Staff, Students & Parents/Carers
<b>Academy Contact:</b>	Executive Director
<b>Other related AVA policies and procedures:</b>	
<b>Governor Committee:</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Approved by the Governing body on:</b>	
<b>Latest date for next review:</b>	20.03.2025
<b>Version and schedule of amendments:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	20.03.2025

In reviewing this policy, the Governing Board has had regard to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged by this policy

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### 1. Foreword

At AVA we are proud of our non-selective, fully inclusive status and believe that children and young people, regardless of their background, ability or circumstances can thrive and succeed here. Our aim is to serve the common good by enabling the children, young people, and our wider AVA community to flourish through their experience of education and the opportunities we create. We strive to provide an education which prepares students with the best possible chances for their future, supporting them to discover their role in society, empowering them to make constructive life choices and enabling them to make a meaningful contribution in society.

As a community we have a Christian Vision that guides and influence us. Our vision is rooted in a keen sense of moral purpose that exists to make outcomes better for the families we serve. Service to all is a critical expression of our Christian Vision which is grounded in the belief that

The ultimate worth of each person is grounded in being created in the image of God and in God's love and compassion for each.

*Church of England Vision for Education Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*

AVA's Christian Vision is observed in everything we do as a school and is seen in our core values of RESPECT, ASPIRATION and RESILIENCE.

### 2. Introduction

Collective worship is central to the life of our school, it offers everyone in our school an opportunity for reflection. Through worship, staff and pupils have an opportunity to go beyond the everyday. We create the opportunity to explore the place of faith in each of our lives, and in the communities in which we live. This helps to develop an appreciation of what it means to be human: to understand ourselves and to make sense of the world around us and of how we relate to one another.

### 3. The law on collective worship

It is a legal requirement that the school provides a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. The regulations are set out in The Education Act 1944 as amended by The Education Reform Act 1988. Circular 1/94 provides further guidance. The Law States that:

- 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 the worship or through listening to and joining in the worship offered.
- To develop a community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes.

- Collective worship is intended to be appropriate for, and to include, all students attending a school, regardless of their own personal faith. Collective worship in schools differs from the corporate worship of believers in a particular faith.

#### **4. The aim of collective worship at Aylesbury Vale Academy**

Collective worship at AVA encourages both staff and pupils to consider spiritual and moral issues, to explore their own beliefs and to develop as a community. All are encouraged to consider our shared values and receive inspiration.

At AVA our worship is invitational and aims to:

- nurture reflection, stillness, meditation and prayer;
- provide students with (age appropriate) opportunities to explore the spiritual dimension of their lives;
- provide a sense of occasion that is separate from the rest of the school day.

Our school is a community that celebrates religious, cultural and ethnic diversity and encourages dialogue and understanding. We believe that we can all learn from each other and that collective worship is an educational entitlement for all. As a Church of England School, we reflect that Christianity is an inclusive faith which mirrors the attitude of Christ in the Gospels. Thus, we welcome students and staff of all faiths to our worship.

At AVA Our worship is inclusive and aims to:

- recognise and celebrate the diversity of cultures, lifestyles and faiths which exist in our school and local community;
- have an atmosphere in which everyone feels valued and safe;
- be appropriate for every student to attend.

#### **5. Right to withdraw from collective worship**

Our policy sets out clearly our aspiration that collective worship will be a valuable and valued experience for all members of our school community whatever their backgrounds and beliefs. It is invitational and reflective in nature.

Parents have a right to withdraw their children from all or any acts of worship and staff (and students in the sixth form) are also free to withdraw from involvement in this aspect of school life.

We request that those who wish to exercise this right inform the Academy Principal or Primary Headteacher in writing so that school records are accurate. We also appreciate opportunities to speak with parents and staff who have concerns about collective worship, always keen to develop our understanding of sensitivities and to overcome difficulties where possible.

Those students who are withdrawn from worship are cared for by a member of the school's staff; parents may provide suitable activities for students who are withdrawn.

#### **6. Provision of collective worship - planning and monitoring:**

The Academy Principal is responsible for the provision of collective worship, supported by and after consultation with the governing body. The following arrangements exist to co-ordinate, monitor and evaluate collective worship:

1. Delegated senior leaders from both Primary and Secondary Phases oversee collective worship and the theme for each week. This is reflected in the published Academy calendar.

2. Guidance for the leading of collective worship is communicated in both Primary and Secondary Phases.
3. Delegated senior leaders observe collective worship (from a range of formats) each term to ensure consistency with the Academy values.
4. Teacher, student and parental views are collected annually to evaluate the quality and impact of collective worship and to identify ways in which it might be improved.

## 7. Provision of collective worship - Themes

Whenever worship takes place, it is planned to promote participants' thinking beyond the time given to worship itself. The themes of worship are chosen to both express and explore our vision and the way in which this vision is experienced in school through our values.

We follow the seasons of the Church of England year and within these significant festivals and other special days are observed. These always include Harvest, Christmas and Easter; other days such as Pentecost and Candlemas may also be celebrated. Other important days in the calendar such as Remembrance, celebrations of achievement and leavers' services also feature in collective worship.

## 8. Provision of collective Worship – British Values

Aylesbury Vale Academy alongside other schools has a duty to 'actively promote' the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

- British law protects freedom to choose and hold other faiths and beliefs and this should never be the cause of prejudice or intolerance from others. Collective worship at AVA embodies the attitude of **tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs**. Learning about different ways of life encourages openness and helps pupils to value and celebrate diversity.
- Collective Worship at AVA promotes positive attitudes towards diversity and **mutual respect**. It enables pupils to explore what happens when people are not treated respectfully due to their faith or beliefs.
- At AVA collective worship offer students time where they can carefully think through issues of **democracy** for themselves. Students can consider **the rule of law**: and how rules affect their own lives and lives of believers
- Finally, collective worship offers a time for pupils to consider questions about identity and belonging. Students have opportunity to think about their own freedoms, but also think about constraints and responsibilities placed on all of us by our cultures, faiths and beliefs.

## 9. Provision of collective worship - organisation:

Collective worship takes place in a variety of groupings, in the school halls, in classrooms and on occasions outside. Assemblies may also be delivered virtually to pupils in form rooms, or at home, via the school website or Microsoft Teams. This ensures students have continuity and the social, moral, spiritual and cultural needs of the child are met in every situation.

## 10. Provision of collective worship – leading acts of worship:

Members of the school staff, students and visitors are involved in leading acts of worship during the school year. All those leading collective worship are given guidance on the academy's context, our worship policy and the school's vision. They are supported and monitored as part of the school's systems for the evaluation of the impact of worship. Leaders from the range of Christian denominations and other faiths are encouraged to lead worship at the Academy as they help us to increase pupil awareness and promote respect.