

# COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY

Stanley Grove Primary and Nursery Academy

*Reviewed and updated December 2025*

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

It is a **legal requirement** that all registered school-age pupils take part in an act of **collective worship each school day** unless they have been withdrawn under statutory rights. This requirement is set out in legislation (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Section 70; Education Act 1996, Section 385-386). [GOV.UK+1](#)

In schools **without a religious designation** (such as this academy), the collective worship must be “**wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character**” for the majority of the time, but must still be **appropriate** taking into account the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils. [GOV.UK](#)

See the Department for Education (DfE) Guidance on Collective Worship here:

[Collective Worship in Schools \(DfE guidance\)](#)

For academies and free schools, this requirement is reiterated in DfE guidance for religious education and collective worship:

[RE and Collective Worship in Academies and Free Schools \(DfE\)](#)

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## INCLUSIVITY AND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

We recognise that many pupils at Stanley Grove have **non-religious backgrounds or diverse faith traditions** including Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and no formal religion. Collective worship should be **inviting and inclusive**, creating space for reflection for all pupils and avoiding any attempt to **preach to or convert** pupils. Religious or cultural background of staff, pupils or parents is always respected.

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## RIGHT OF WITHDRAWAL

Parents at community, foundation or voluntary schools have the **statutory right to withdraw** their child from all or part of collective worship. Schools must comply with any request to withdraw unless it is withdrawn by the parent. Parents should make this request in writing or via a meeting with the Headteacher. [GOV.UK](#)

Staff also have the right to **withdraw** from collective worship.

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## WHAT IS COLLECTIVE WORSHIP?

Collective worship is not the same as a religious service in a place of worship. The law requires “**collective**” rather than “**corporate**” worship. Content should be broadly reflective and invitational, offering space to think about what is of worth and meaning in life. It may draw on stories, music, arts, science, literature, and reflection without requiring religious affirmation. [thegrid.org.uk](http://thegrid.org.uk)

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## BROADLY CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

When the law refers to “broadly Christian,” it means reflecting Christian traditions in a **non-denominational way**, but schools are encouraged to be responsive to pupil backgrounds when planning worship themes. [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK)

The aim is not to require pupils to **pray or address a particular deity**, but to offer opportunities for reflection that pupils of any belief or none can engage with comfortably.

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## VALUES AND AIMS

Collective worship at Stanley Grove:

- Supports spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Encourages reflection on personal values, respect and tolerance
- Recognises diversity of beliefs and life stances
- Gives pupils space to develop self-understanding, empathy, wonder and moral insight

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## OBJECTIVES

We aim through collective worship to encourage pupils to:

- Show care and concern for others
  - Celebrate shared experiences and achievements
  - Reflect on local, national and world events
  - Explore values expressed in religions, arts, society and human experience
  - Appreciate beauty and the natural world
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## PLANNING AND DELIVERY

Worship is normally provided within the context of a whole-school assembly to ensure it sits within a broad educational framework.

A variety of methods may be used:

- Pupil contributions
  - Stories, readings (sacred and secular)
  - Music, reflection, meditation
  - Dialogue and creative silence
  - Artefacts and visual focal points
  - Drama or dance
  - Visitor contributions
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## EVALUATING SUCCESS

We assess collective worship through:

- Pupil involvement and engagement
  - Growth in mutual respect and tolerance
  - Positive responses to shared experiences
  - Contribution to school ethos and wellbeing
  - Good order, appropriate challenge, and staff affirmation
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## MUSIC AND SONG

Music and song are used to create atmosphere and unify the school community. The selection reflects a broad range of cultures and traditions.

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## PRAYER AND REFLECTION

Prayer is offered as a means for pupils to focus thought but should not be **required or imposed**. Pupils may choose to participate or instead engage in silent reflection. Introductions such as “Time for reflection” may be used to allow inclusive and optional engagement.

Our **school prayer** continues to be included but children are never required to affirm it or say “Amen.”

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## VISITORS

Visitors are welcome to enrich collective worship. They must respect the school's values and ethos. Links with local faith representatives (for example Christian church leaders, community faith speakers) are maintained to support diverse perspectives.

For guidance on **faith visitors and school visits** see the updated SACRE guidance (2025):

[SACRE Guidance and Protocols on Faith Visits and Visitors \(Hertfordshire SACRE\)](#)

*Please see our visiting speakers policy also.*

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education (SACREs)** provide statutory advice on collective worship, RE and community engagement:

- Hertfordshire SACRE (example): *Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education*  
[thegrid.org.uk](http://thegrid.org.uk)
  - Many local authorities publish SACRE documents with current determinations and worship guidance — consider linking your own local SACRE page here.
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