



Committed to Excellence, Equality and Enjoyment

Wykeham Primary School

Collective Worship Policy

NON-STATUTORY POLICY	
Written/Updated:	May 2025
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Wykeham Primary School Collective Worship Policy

Wykeham Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as we believe that this is of paramount importance. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We uphold the rights of everyone to equality under the law. This includes the protected characteristics as recognised by the Government: age, gender reassignment, being married or in a civil partnership, being pregnant or on maternity leave, disability, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We believe that our core school values of respect, responsibility, tolerance and co-operation and the British values are not mutually exclusive. We focus on ensuring our work is effective in securing these values; challenging children, staff and parents who express opinions contrary to the British values with regard to our duty to prevent extremism and radicalisation.

Wykeham Primary School has the highest regard for the safety of the children in our care and will carry out its duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at all times.

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988, provision is made for both Religious Education (RE) and collective worship within schools. Although these two elements may complement one another, they are distinct activities. Collective worship is not synonymous with assembly, which refers to the physical gathering of members of the school community. Rather, it is the act of shared reflection that occurs within or during such gatherings.

The Governing Body of Wykeham Primary School ensures that an act of collective reflection is held on a daily basis. Owing to the school's approved determination by the Brent Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), the nature of collective worship reflects the diverse beliefs, practices, and customs of religions and faiths from around the world.

We are committed to ensuring that every act of collective worship or reflection is appropriate to the age, abilities, and cultural backgrounds of our pupils.

2. Aims and Intent of Collective Worship

Our approach to collective worship recognises the school community as a diverse collective. Accordingly, acts of collective worship are designed to be inclusive and respectful of that diversity. Specifically:

- The term "collective" in the context of school worship refers to the assembly of individuals for shared reflection, rather than the endorsement or practice of any particular religious' doctrine or faith.

- Collective worship does not presuppose a uniformity of belief, nor does it seek to elicit identical responses. Rather, it acknowledges and respects a range of beliefs and perspectives, encouraging personal engagement and reflection.

Collective worship provides a regular opportunity for members of the school community to pause from daily activity, come together, and reflect upon the values and beliefs that unite us. It serves as a source of inspiration and contemplation for all, whether of religious faith or none. In this way, we strive to uphold and protect the integrity of every individual within the school.

Specifically, collective worship at Wykeham Primary School seeks to:

- Offer a regular time for all to pause, reflect, and engage with matters of personal and communal significance;
- Foster a sense of community, belonging, and mutual respect;
- Inspire awe and appreciation for the natural world and human experience;
- Cultivate a sense of shared identity and collective responsibility;
- Provide moments for silence and stillness, encouraging mindfulness;
- Celebrate achievements and moments of joy;
- Offer solace and unity in times of sadness or difficulty;
- Emphasise and reinforce the school's core values, such as honesty, effort, fairness, self-respect, and respect for others;
- Commemorate key points in the calendar, including religious festivals, cultural celebrations, and school events.

Collective worship contributes significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC), and intellectual development. It encourages them to consider the purpose and meaning of life and to reflect on ethical matters and personal responsibility.

3. Promotion of Modern British Values

The regular gathering of the school community to reflect on shared values, ethos, and aspirations serves as a vital opportunity to consider what it means to be a citizen of contemporary Britain. Through both the explicit curriculum and the implicit messages embedded in daily school life, we actively promote the fundamental British values of:

- Democracy
- Rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect
- Tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs

These values are addressed directly within school assemblies and are further reinforced throughout the academic year in various ways.

The Governing Body holds a statutory responsibility to ensure that these values are embedded in the life of the school and are promoted consistently and meaningfully.

4. Implementation

At Wykeham Primary School, a daily act of collective worship or reflection is held in accordance with statutory requirements. Owing to the size of our pupil population and the

breadth of age groups represented, acts of collective worship are organised through a range of assemblies, ensuring appropriateness and inclusivity.

Assemblies are conducted in various formats across the week, as outlined in the schedule below:

Monday	Separate assemblies for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the hall.
Tuesday	Collective Worship conducted within individual classrooms.
Wednesday	Separate music assemblies for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the hall.
Thursday	Collective Worship conducted within individual classrooms.
Friday	Whole-school assembly featuring presentations by classes or year groups. Parents/carers are invited to attend.

Whilst the specific themes and content of assemblies may vary in response to current events - whether local, national, or international - or to the leadership of specific individuals or classes, the structure and guiding principles remain consistent.

5. Elements of Collective Worship

Acts of collective worship at Wykeham Primary School incorporate a range of thoughtful and carefully chosen elements that contribute to a meaningful and inclusive experience. These elements are designed to be accessible and respectful of the diverse beliefs and backgrounds represented within our school community.

Music and Song

Music plays a central role in setting a reflective tone and fostering a calm, thoughtful atmosphere. It may be:

- Played at the beginning and end of assemblies, marking the transition into and out of the collective worship space.
- Used as a reflective prompt to support contemplation of a theme.
- Performed or sung collectively to promote unity and communal spirit.

At Wykeham Primary School, we are mindful to avoid the use of overtly religious songs that reference specific deities, figures, or religious narratives. Instead, songs are selected that uplift, inspire, and promote shared school values.

Singing is valued not only for its musical benefits, but also for its ability to promote a sense of belonging. It encourages children to listen attentively, appreciate one another's contributions, and engage with themes such as kindness, perseverance, and respect.

Reflection Techniques

Reflection is a key component of our collective worship practice. While prayer is traditionally associated with worship, we adopt a broader, more inclusive approach, using

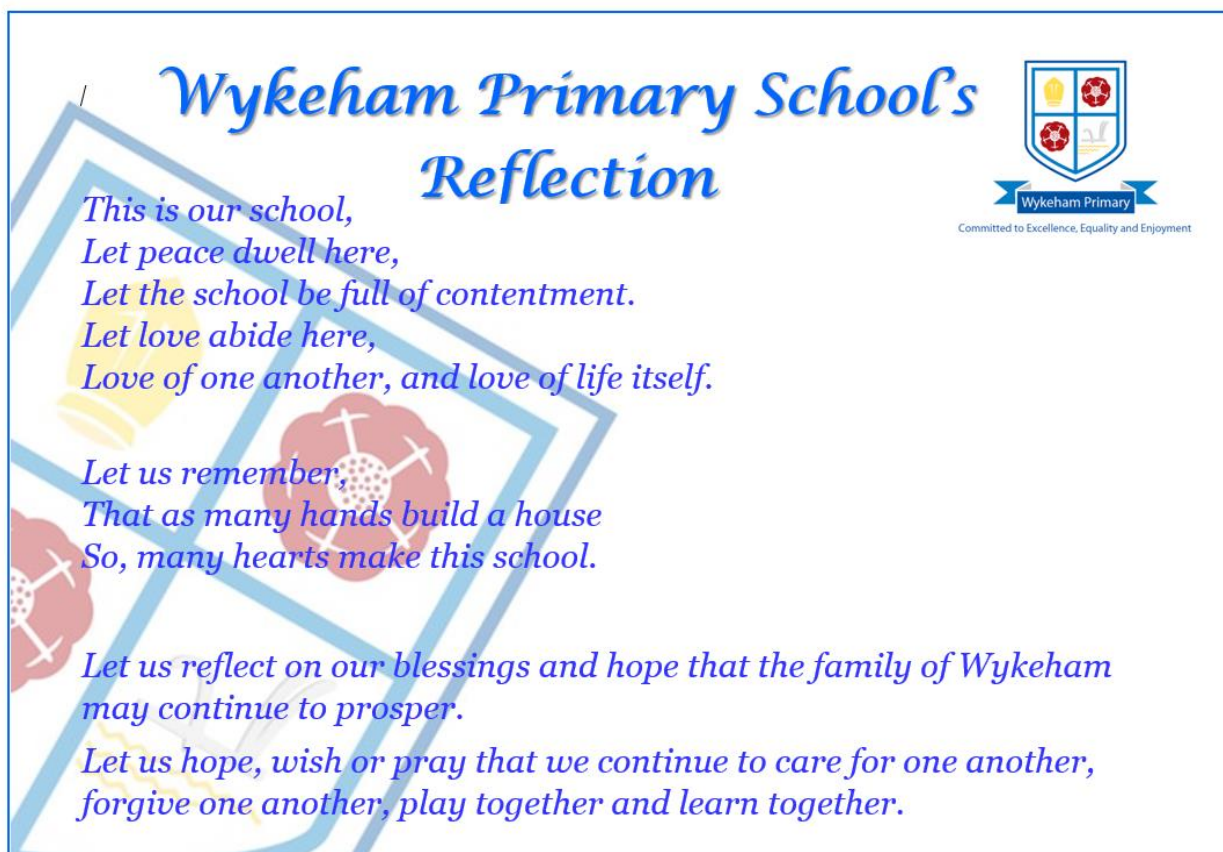
the term 'reflection' to ensure sensitivity to a wide range of faith traditions and secular worldviews.

At Wykeham Primary School, we are conscious of the diverse ways in which people pray across religious traditions. Therefore, we do not prescribe specific physical postures such as placing hands together or closing eyes. Instead, we invite pupils to assume a position that supports calm concentration and stillness -typically by bowing their heads in a moment of quiet reflection.

We initiate this reflective period with the phrase **"Now it's our quiet time."** At this point, children and staff are encouraged to quietly focus, listen, and contemplate the message being shared. These messages often relate to universal themes such as kindness, respect for others, compassion, and environmental stewardship - principles that resonate across faiths and with those of no religious belief.

Wykeham Primary School's Reflection

To conclude our acts of collective worship, we use a dedicated school reflection, which is consistently shared across various assemblies. This provides a unifying and familiar element that reinforces our shared values and school ethos.

A graphic titled "Wykeham Primary School's Reflection" in a blue, stylized font. The background features a large, light blue geometric shape resembling a stylized 'W' or a series of overlapping triangles. In the center, there is a red flower-like shape with a white cross inside. To the right, there is a small crest with a shield containing a yellow lightbulb, a red flower, and a white cross, with a banner below it that says "Wykeham Primary" and "Committed to Excellence, Equality and Enjoyment". The text of the reflection is written in a blue, cursive font and is arranged in three sections, each preceded by a small icon: a yellow lightbulb, a red flower, and a white cross.

*This is our school,
Let peace dwell here,
Let the school be full of contentment.
Let love abide here,
Love of one another, and love of life itself.*

*Let us remember,
That as many hands build a house
So, many hearts make this school.*

*Let us reflect on our blessings and hope that the family of Wykeham
may continue to prosper.*

*Let us hope, wish or pray that we continue to care for one another,
forgive one another, play together and learn together.*

6. Withdrawal from Collective Worship

Right of Withdrawal

In accordance with statutory legislation, parents/carers retain the right to withdraw their children from acts of collective worship. This may be exercised in the following ways:

- **Total Withdrawal:** whereby a pupil is excused from all acts of collective worship.

- **Partial Withdrawal:** whereby a pupil is excused from specific types of collective worship or from particular elements within an act of collective worship.

At Wykeham Primary School, we regard collective worship as a valuable and inclusive part of school life that serves to unify and support the development of shared values. While parents/carers are not required to provide justification for exercising this right, the Headteacher will, as a matter of courtesy and clarity, seek an informal discussion with the family. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Ensure there is no misunderstanding regarding the general nature of collective worship at the school;
- Clarify any misconceptions about the specific practices adopted by the school;
- Explore the possibility of a **partial withdrawal**, where appropriate, as an alternative to full withdrawal.

All requests to withdraw will be handled with sensitivity and respect, and appropriate arrangements will be made for pupils during the time of collective worship.

Our assemblies are conducted in a manner that is sensitive and inclusive to ensure that all children feel comfortable to attend the assembly.

7. Impact of Collective Worship

Collective worship at Wykeham Primary School contributes meaningfully to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development and promotes what is commonly referred to as **cultural capital** - the knowledge, behaviours, and skills that pupils may draw upon to succeed in wider society, in future education and employment, and in life.

Through the various components of collective worship, pupils are encouraged to:

- Reflect on values and express their own principles and beliefs;
- Engage with key themes relating to kindness, mutual respect, social justice, and environmental stewardship;
- Participate in and learn about a broad range of festivals and commemorations, both religious and secular, including local, national, and international observances such as *UN World Refugee Day*, *World Religion Day*, *Fairtrade Fortnight*, *Saint Days*, and *Climate Awareness Events*.

The use of "Quiet Time" within assemblies fosters an atmosphere of calm and respect, providing all members of the school community—regardless of faith background—with a moment to pause, reflect, and engage meaningfully with the assembly's message. Pupils are free to reflect in accordance with their own traditions and beliefs.

Overall, collective worship at Wykeham Primary School plays an essential role in embedding the school's core values, enhancing community cohesion, and preparing pupils for life in a diverse and evolving society.

8. Rights of Teachers and School Staff

While attendance at school assemblies is a standard expectation for teaching staff, this obligation is subject to individual freedoms as provided by the **Education Act 1944**. Members of staff who, for reasons of conscience or belief, wish to withdraw from collective

worship or from the collective worship element of assemblies are advised to discuss the matter with the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity. All such discussions will be treated with respect, discretion, and in accordance with statutory guidance.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Core Leadership Team (CLT) in consultation with the Governing Body, to ensure that it remains aligned with current legislation, best practice, and the evolving needs of the school community.