



# Collective Worship Policy



**Approved by Staff: November 2020**

**Date for Review: November 2023**

## 1 Aims and purpose

The aim and purpose of collective worship is to:

- teach self-reflection and refresh the spirit within
- teach children how to worship and enable them to participate in worship
- show reverence to religious beliefs and traditions
- express praise and gratitude to God
- reflect on the character of God and teachings of different religions
- encourage children to explore their own beliefs
- affirm religious practices, values and attitudes
- share each other's joys and challenges
- celebrate special religious times
- enable children to consider and respond to spiritual and moral issues
- promote a common ethos and shared values, reinforce positive attitudes and develop a sense of community spirit
- reflect the pupils' achievements and learning
- acknowledge and reward pupils for their achievements, both in and out of school.

## 2 School Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement has clear links to Sikh and school values and sound educational practice. They promote positive learning behaviours.

### **School Mission Statement**

**At Akaal Primary School we strive to:**

- **Love learning**
- **Have high expectations**
- **Embrace challenge**
- **Promote independence**
- **Develop responsibility**
- **Show respect**
- **Believe in ourselves**
- **Live by values**  
... that will remain a life-long legacy

## 3 Characteristics

The characteristics of Collective Worship are that it should be:

- a spiritual experience to
  - a. refresh the spirit with time to reflect and be still
  - b. consider life's big questions
  - c. provide space to breath and reflect
- an educational experience to
  - a. learn new information, concepts and feelings

- b. broaden and deepen understanding
  - c. challenge but not indoctrinate
- an inclusive experience to
  - a. relate to pupil's personal experiences, concerns and needs
  - b. affirm diversity of faith
  - c. foster shared values, ethos and purpose.

#### **4 Legal requirements**

Akaal Primary School, like other schools, is required to provide daily act of collective worship under its funding agreement. Collective worship can be as a whole school, part of the school, a class or a group. Our daily act of collective worship will be from a broadly Sikh perspective, in much the same way as collective worship in a community school is broadly Christian.

Collective worship involves all members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly unless a parent has made an application to withdraw their child from collective worship. Children who have alternative learning provision will be required to attend assembly at least once a week.

As a designated Sikh Faith school, the collective worship is organised in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Sikh religion. At Akaal Primary School we include some elements from worship in other faiths in assemblies, and show reverence to the individual faiths and beliefs of all members of the school community.

#### **5 Roles and responsibilities**

It is essential that all members of the school community commit to the implementation and practice of this Sikh Faith Policy.

##### **The Akaal Academy Trust Derby (the Trust) should:**

- promote and support the Sikh values and the ethos of the school
- approve the policy, ensure its implementation, encourage and monitor its progress.

##### **The Singh Sabha Gurdwara should:**

- be the religious body that provides a spiritual link with the Akaal Primary School Trust
- help in the implementation of the faith policy in Akaal Primary School by providing expert advice and interpretations of religious scriptures
- help in the inspections of schools under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.

##### **The school's governing board and senior leaders should:**

- put procedures in place to ensure the effective implementation of this policy
- monitor and report progress to the Trust and its committees.

##### **All school staff should:**

- ensure they understand the values underpinning Sikh education
- engage fully in the implementation and cultivation of the values of the Sikh faith in the life of the school.

**Parents and carers should:**

- accept responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children
- fully support this policy and its implementation.

**Pupils should:**

- participate in the school's full curriculum
- undertake to live by the values of the Sikh faith to the best of their ability and endeavour to be involved in Sikh celebrations
- take part in events that stem from the values of the Sikh faith (or *Sikhi*) and the Sikh way of life.

## 5 Conduct

Collective worship and assemblies provide opportunities to learn and practice the following ways of working and routines. Pupils will:

- be part of a reflective atmosphere, sometimes using music as children enter and sometimes using displays as a focal point for the attention of the children
- regard worship as a special time and be enthusiastic about its content
- enter assemblies in a dignified and respectful way
- use worship as a period of calm reflection, being quiet and thoughtful
- listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in reflection and singing.

Senior leaders or other members of staff will normally lead assemblies, but pupils are also encouraged and will be supported to share in leading assemblies. Local representatives of Gurdwaras, local clergy or other representatives of local religious groups will be invited into the school to share the leadership of the assembly.

Assemblies should be arranged in a manner as sensitive and inclusive as to ensure that all children feel comfortable to attend the great majority of assemblies.

## 6 Organisation

Assemblies, and the collective worship they contain, will form a part of a series of themes planned well in advance of the day, and based on the school values which are linked to the Sikh faith. A record of values for the year is available to staff in advance of planning their assemblies.

However, some assemblies will need to respond to events as they happen, either within the school community or in the wider community, locally, nationally or globally.

The school will provide a variety of worship experiences for the children. These will include time for prayer/reflection and singing of sacred texts. The following formats may be used to build a programme of daily worship:

- whole-school worship led by a senior leader
- worship in key stages, classes or groups, with each following the same themes and the content, differentiated appropriately for the needs of the pupils involved
- whole-school or self-selecting groups for sacred music and singing

- regular celebration assembly in which children share their achievements
- class worship, possibly with a discussion about a topical issue
- specific prayers and reflections for lunch time, at the beginning of the day or end of day
- participation by parents, carers, grandparents and other relatives
- visitors, involved in one-off or regular contributions, with the potential for weekly or other regular prayer clubs.

The themes of collective worship will be based on the following:

- the values of the school
- the traditions and calendar of the Sikh faith
- the religious traditions and calendars of other faiths that are represented in the school and in the wider community
- themes or topics taught as part of the school curriculum.

Whilst flexibility is used where required, collective worship is usually organised as follows:

- Monday – introductory assembly based on the value of the month
- Tuesday – singing assembly based on the values songs, Sikh shabads and songs with links to the school
- Wednesday – assembly based on world religions
- Thursday – assembly based on the Christian religion
- Friday – assembly based on Sikhi

Parents and carers will be encouraged to attend assembly regularly for celebration assemblies and class-led assemblies, as well as assemblies for special events or times of the year. Parental involvement will promote the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of the school's pupils.

Governors are also invited to attend assemblies as one way of them sharing in and getting to know the work of the school.

## **7 Right of withdrawal**

Any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious education or collective worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for making such requests.

## **8 Monitoring and review**

The Trust will review this policy and the school's practice of collective worship regularly, with the support of senior leaders. The school will keep a file recording the content of each act of worship and evaluate its impact on pupils. Training is encouraged and available for those who wish to lead acts of worship.

We are committed to equal opportunities for all, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability or religion. We will monitor the impact of this.

## Appendix

### An example of act of worship

1. Learn and use the Sikh way of greeting:

Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh

*(Khalsa belongs to Almighty God to whom belongs the victory)*

2. Learn and recite the basic creed of the Sikh faith – the Mool Mantar, which reads as follows:

Ik Onkar, Satnam, Karta Purakh, Nirbhau, Nirvair,  
Akaal Murat, Ajuni, Saibhang, Gurbursad.

*There is one and only one God, The Name is Truth, The Creator, Without Fear, Without Hate, Immortal, Beyond birth and deaths, The Enlightener, Known by the Guru's Grace.*

3. Sing a Sikh prayer hymn such as 'Tu Thakar' which will enable them to understand Sikh concepts about the Divine. Videos can be displayed and pupils would expect to join in the singing.

thoo thaakur thum pehi arudhaas	You are our Lord and Master; to You, I offer this prayer.
jeeo pindd subh thaeree raas	This body and soul are all Your property.
thum maath pithaa hum baarik thaerae	You are our mother and father; we are Your children.
thumuree kirupaa mehi sookh ghunaerae	In Your Grace, there are so many joys!
koe n jaanai thumuraa anth	No one knows Your limits.
oochae thae oochaa bhuguvunth	O Highest of the High, Most Generous God,
sugul sumugree thumurai soothr dhaaree	The whole creation is strung on Your thread.
thum thae hoe s aagiaakaaree	That which has come from You is under Your Command.
thumuree gath mith thum hee jaanee	You alone know Your state and extent.
naanuk dhaas sudhaa kurubaanee	Nanak, Your slave, is forever a sacrifice.

4. This might be followed by other topics or story telling from different faiths, or by reflection on moral, human and British values, for example.