



*Anchored in Christ*

# **Christian Ethos (including RE & Collective Worship) Policy**

**Approved by Governor Committee:**

**N/A**

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**Responsibility of:**

**LT member with responsibility for Christian Ethos & Chaplain**

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## 1. Funding Agreement Requirements

The requirements for academies to provide Religious Education and Collective Worship are specified in clauses 22 to 25 of the Funding Agreement.

These require the Academy to:

1. make provision for the teaching of Religious Education and for a daily act of Collective Worship
2. arrange for all students to take part in a daily act of Collective Worship of a broadly Christian character
3. recognise that parents/carers will have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship
4. recognise that teachers have the right not to take part in Religious Education and Collective Worship
5. ensure that it is the Principal's responsibility to put the above provisions into effect

The DfE arrangements for academies states that the content of Religious Education and Collective Worship will be for the Academy to determine. In the case of the Chelsea Academy, the content will be within the guidelines of the London Diocese. Acts of Collective Worship will be in accordance with the faith and principles of the Church of England.

## 2.0 A Framework Policy for Religious Education and Collective Worship

The Vision, Mission, Values and Principles of the Chelsea Academy set the expectations and tone within which all policies will be set; they give a particular sense of purpose and direction to all of the Academy's work. We at Chelsea Academy are 'Anchored in Christ'. This framework policy is prepared within that context.

### 2.1 Chelsea Academy Vision Statement

Learning together to Flourish.

*We will be a diverse and inclusive community welcoming both students and staff with open arms. Our Christian values will anchor us, providing the framework with which to live, learn and work together through kindness and love.*

*Throughout their time at Chelsea Academy each student will flourish, benefitting from a rich academic curriculum and strong pastoral care. Learning will excite, inspire and challenge. Beyond the taught curriculum there will be many opportunities for students to develop their interests and passions. We aspire to acknowledge and embrace vulnerability. All students will develop: resilience, wisdom, hope and skills with which to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.*

### 2.2 A Christian Vision for the Academy

Christian values and beliefs underpin the ethos of the Academy as they do in other Church of England Schools within the Diocese. Central to this vision is a belief in a loving God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit who creates and sustains the Universe and whose loving purposes are extended to all of humanity and creation. The education and growth of the whole person – spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially and physically – flows out of that understanding enabling them to flourish.

The Academy admits local children and young people both from families who are practising Christians, and from families of different backgrounds, who want an education informed by Christian values and beliefs.

The educational vision for the Academy is closely allied to the Christian vision of learning and personal development. The religious education curriculum – and collective worship – will be stimulating and challenging for all students. The Christian approach to living and learning will naturally be prominent, but students will develop proper regard for other faiths and belief systems, by learning about them and by exploring and debating faith, beliefs and values

### **2.3 Mission**

The sponsors' original mission for Chelsea Academy was defined as follows:

Our mission is to create an inspirational community of learning and achievement that will make a positive contribution to community cohesion in Kensington and Chelsea. This learning community will be rooted in Christian values, providing outstanding educational opportunities and experiences that will enable all students – regardless of age, ability and background to reach beyond themselves, bringing out the best in themselves and so making a difference to the world that they are part of and will shape.

Inspired by this, our Mission for the whole Academy is 'Work Hard, Be Kind, No Excuses'. The following scripture verses exemplify each part of our Mission:

#### **Work Hard**

*Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters (Colossians 3:23)*

#### **Be Kind**

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)*

#### **No Excuses**

*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:37)*

### **2.4 Values and Principles relevant to this Framework Policy**

Our Christian Ethos is at the core of our mission and our five identified Christian Values.

More than a simple motto, we are 'Anchored in Christ' and this phrase is used prominently throughout the Academy branding; our school badge is an anchor for this reason. The anchor divides the badge into five distinct areas, which themselves represent our values.

The Academy's five identified prominent Christian Values – **Forgiveness, Joy, Perseverance, Charity and Servant Leadership** – reflect the character of Christ's love:

*See table on next page*

The character of Christ's love (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)	Identified Christian Values	What does this mean for the Chelsea Academy learning community?
Love is patient, Love is kind, It is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude, It does not insist on getting his own way, It does not disrespect others, It is not irritable or resentful, It keeps no record of wrongs, It does not celebrate wrongdoing but celebrates the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.	<b>Forgiveness</b>	Students and staff will 'wipe the slate clean' and show mercy to each other when they have been wronged, even when they don't deserve it, because of the unfailing and undeserved mercy and grace that God always shows us.
	<b>Joy</b>	Students and staff enjoy life at the Academy with celebration and great delight as a result of valuing the people and things around them.
	<b>Perseverance</b>	Students and staff never give up on learning and teaching in the face of hardship and adversity, grounded in the belief that God's love, mercy and faithfulness is always there to support them.
	<b>Charity</b>	Students and staff are generous, hospitable, gentle and pleasant to all; always ready to help and offer service, willing to 'go the extra mile' for someone else's benefit, treating all equally with tolerance and respect.
	<b>Servant Leadership</b>	Students and staff will co-construct in learning and teaching and will consistently lead by example, like Christ, showing self-discipline, humility, honesty and integrity in all tasks and for all people. They will lead, putting the needs of others first, helping others to develop and perform as highly and effectively as possible.

The following foundational Christian principles are also at the heart of our ethos:

- Everyone, whether student or staff, is created in the image of God and therefore of unique value and meaning;
- Because we are all part of an orderly and purposeful creation, our own lives are to be lived with purpose and a sense of service; the ultimate calling for all human beings is to love God and our neighbours as ourselves;
- Diversity is fundamental to the natural world and human society and will be embraced and welcomed by the Academy;
- The development of character – the spiritual and moral aspect of the person – is every bit as important as the development of mind and the gaining of qualifications;
- Human beings hold the earth in trust and must embrace the opportunities presented by science and technology with due regard for the natural world.
- Personally and corporately, the Academy will encourage creativity, sustainability, respect for the natural world and an understanding of our responsibilities as citizens of a local, national and global community.

The values and beliefs set out above are embedded in the life of the Academy. They will help every student, on their journey to flourish as adults; to become capable of principled leadership, constructive team membership, to be successful in the world of work and to contribute to the life and well being of the communities in which they live.

### **3.0 Collective Worship**

#### **3.1 Definition and Legal Status of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is a gathering of a 'collection' of people of diverse religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not presuppose any particular religious commitment. In our context as a Church of England Academy with an inclusive, yet distinctively Christian Ethos, it refers to a service of worship which is educational and inclusive in its nature, rather than being a gathering of believers. Opportunities should be provided for students to offer worship to God, through Jesus Christ, without losing sight of either the different starting points of each of the students, or the need for the act of collective worship to take account of the developmental ages of the students.

*Collective Worship and assembly are not one and the same thing. An assembly is a gathering of the Academy or groups of students in the Academy for purposes such as notices, achievement celebrations, talks about behaviour and school procedures etc. They are, in essence, different from each other, but in practice they often overlap. Part of our time together may involve both, but more emphasis and time should be given to the Collective Worship element.*

The daily act of Collective Worship is a legal requirement in all schools. In a Church of England school it should always be Christian worship and it should reflect the traditions of the Church of England, developing learners' understanding of Anglican traditions and practice. On occasion, this Christian worship may include reference to the traditions and celebrations of other world faiths in accordance with the Academy's inclusive ethos.

Collective Worship is an integral part of the life of Chelsea Academy. Collective Worship needs to make a major contribution to upholding the religious character and Christian distinctiveness of the Academy and ensuring that it is understood and owned by all students, staff and governors. The importance of worship therefore should be central to the life of the Academy.

Collective Worship takes place in the form of Academy Assemblies, Year Assemblies, Coaching Time and termly Church Services that the entire Academy attends.

### 3.2 Aims of Collective Worship

At Chelsea Academy we recognise that Collective Worship is an important opportunity to provide opportunities for our students' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development. It is our aim that Collective Worship should:

- contribute to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of each child.
- support the social and emotional aspects of students' learning (SMSC)
- promote community and social cohesion
- give expression to, and reaffirm and practise the Christian values and attitudes of the Academy community
- allow for reflection and response to the fundamental questions of life and those things that are of eternal concern and value to human beings
- celebrate and give thanks for the achievements within the Academy, local and international community and occasions of significance, including special times in the Christian and other world faith calendars
- foster and enable a concern for the needs of others, a recognition of the vulnerability of self and of others
- provide members of the Academy community with the opportunity to praise and reach out to God
- provide members of the Academy community with the opportunity to reflect on the attributes of God
- provide members of the Academy community with the opportunity to reflect on the teachings of Christ
- provide members of the Academy community with the opportunity to experience stillness and quiet
- provide members of the Academy community with the opportunity respond to Christian language and symbolism
- provide members of the Academy community with the opportunity to experience a variety of forms of prayer and meditation. These might include praise, seeking forgiveness, asking on behalf of self and others or quiet reflection.
- to help students to begin to understand the nature and purpose of worship
- provide a foundation for a mature understanding and practice of worship in the future.

### 3.3 The Act of Collective Worship and Guidelines for Worship Leaders

A variety of teaching and learning styles and active and interactive methods are appropriate in acts of Collective Worship. Any and all of the methods employed in the worship space (Theatre, Sports Hall, Classroom or Church) can be used effectively in acts of Collective Worship. A variety of resources will also be used (e.g. Google slides, videos, oral reflections, music etc). Leaders will choose the style/method and resources which are appropriate to the content.

The content and process must be sufficiently stimulating in order to evoke a response in the individual. This may not be visual, but opportunity must be given to express this response through reflection and prayer.

If announcements are to be given at the same time as an act of worship then they will be of a positive nature, which at times may enhance the act of worship itself. Announcements will be made preceding the act of worship and a clearly defined break between them and the act of worship will be made (a change of personnel, music, a moment of silence etc). **The Academy recognises that there is a difference between Acts of Collective Worship and the assembly of students.** On some occasions assembly may precede or follow an Act of Collective Worship. When this happens the transition from Assembly to worship will be marked in some suitable way e.g. a specific statement, the lighting of a candle, key words or sentences or reflecting on an image on screen.

During Collective Worship in the Theatre, the following **guidelines** should be followed:

- The Academy community should be welcomed positively and appropriately. Anglican sentences and responses may be used such as: Peace be with you / and also with you; The Lord is here / His Spirit is with us; Go in peace to love and serve the Lord / In the name of Christ Amen
- A piece of music such as a hymn or song may be sung collectively or listened to at the starting point of the collective worship
- Biblical references should underpin the message of the main presentation, which should be on the Theme for the Week. The verse of the week will be used as outlined by the Chaplain.
- Audio and visual resources should be used as part of the presentation
- A Collect can also be used as a focus for worship
- A prayer should always close the time of worship; this could be led by a student, the Chaplain or another staff member. This prayer could be the Academy Prayer or another suitable prayer relating to the theme.

### 3.4 Schedule of Fortnightly Whole Academy Assemblies in the Theatre / Sports Hall

Assemblies are on a rotation between Academy and Year Group assemblies. Once a half term a House assembly takes place, usually in the penultimate week.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Week 1 of HT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academy Assemblies led by LT</li> <li>• Combined YG assemblies led by staff on a rota</li> </ul>	Curie and Einstein (Theatre)	Faraday and Galileo (Theatre)	Lister and Newton (Theatre)	Years 8 & 9 (Sports Hall) Years 12 & 13 (Theatre)	Year 7 (Sports Hall) Years 10 & 11 (Theatre)
<p><b>Week 2 of HT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year group Assemblies led by HoY</li> </ul>	Year 11 (Theatre)	Year 10 (Theatre)	Year 9 (Theatre)	Year 8 (Sports Hall) Year 12 (Theatre)	Year 7 (Sports Hall) Year 13 (Theatre)
<p><b>Penultimate week of HT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House Assemblies led by House Leaders</li> </ul>	Curie (Theatre)	Einstein (Theatre) Faraday (Sports Hall)	Galileo (Theatre)	Lister (Theatre)	Newton (Theatre)

### 3.5 Collective Worship in Coaching Time

On at least one day a week, when a Coaching Group is not in an assembly, the Learning Coach will develop/discuss the theme for the week with the Coaching Group, using the resources that the Chaplain provides to underpin and support this. Students are therefore given the opportunity to reflect on the ideas they have heard. That session of discussion should end with a prayer. The best Coaching Times are when they are fully co-constructed and student involvement/student leadership is predominant.

Students are encouraged to lead, contribute to and participate in worship. The wider community is also encouraged to act in partnership as a resource for worship. Great efforts are made to build upon strong relationships with clergy and Christian youth organisations, for example.



Chelsea Academy also aims to provide Eucharistic worship in the Anglican tradition in the theatre once a year for all Year 7 students.

### **3.6 Right of Withdrawal**

At Chelsea Academy we seek to be an inclusive community however we respect the right of parents/ carers to withdraw their children for Collective Worship. The Academy expects that withdrawal will only be made following parental discussion with the Principal/Chaplain, followed by written confirmation of withdrawal.

Students over the age of 16 are able to withdraw themselves from worship. This request should also be made in writing.

The Academy has a system of suitable supervision for students under 16 withdrawn from Acts of Collective Worship. However, no additional work is set or followed at this time.

### **4.0 Personal spiritual growth**

Chelsea Academy aims to allow all students and staff the time and space to explore their own beliefs, to reflect and consider spiritual and moral values and make their own responses. It also recognises those concepts, principles and behaviours that characterise the highest examples and achievement of the human spirit as worthy of celebration. The Academy aims to encourage spiritual growth and the development of character through, but not limited to:

- The Flourish 8 programme
- Discrete Citizenship lessons
- Opportunities for spirituality across all subjects
- Prayer spaces including the Chapel
- Extended Curriculum opportunities
- Events and activities that promote courageous advocacy

Parents and carers are warmly invited to participate in the Christian life of the Academy. This is facilitated by the Chaplain's fortnightly reflection in the Parent Update and from the Principal in the termly newsletters. There are also additional opportunities through occasional parent/ carer prayer groups

### **5.0 The curriculum for religious education**

The aim of Religious Education is to explore the place and explicit significance of religion in human life, making a distinctive contribution to each student's search for a faith by which we live. It also contributes to students' wider development, spiritually, morally, culturally, and socially. All concerned seek to ensure that it promotes understanding and respect and tolerance for those who follow other faiths.

The RE curriculum reflects the national Statement of Entitlement and guidance from the London Diocesan Board for Schools. All students study RE at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. At Key Stage 5 all students attend an RE lecture each half term which is organised by the Chaplain. In addition, extra opportunities for RE provision utilising specialist visiting speakers and opportunities are organised throughout the year.

### **6.0 Staffing**

Strong Christian Leadership provides a clear sense of direction for Chelsea Academy and maintains a vision of a thriving Academy, including a care for the physical, spiritual and mental well being of all who live and work in the Academy. The Academy week begins with prayer led by the Chaplain or Principal and the Chaplain uses a range of communication to support the spiritual growth of staff e.g. Weekly Uplift.

## Christian Ethos (RE & Collective Worship) Policy

Reviewed: October 2024

In appointing staff to Chelsea Academy, the governors seek those who demonstrate a commitment to and ability to contribute to an innovative and successful Academy. Staff will be expected to support and respect the Christian values on which the Academy is based in their dealings with students and the way they conduct themselves. We will welcome applications from those of all faiths and those of no faith for posts, provided they are comfortable with and supportive of, the Christian Ethos of the Academy.

A Chaplain plays a key role beyond that of overt worship life of the Academy. They work closely with all colleagues but especially the Leadership and Pastoral teams to best meet the needs of the whole child. This holistic approach is central to the further development of rich Home/Academy partnerships and the development of vibrant community links.

Chelsea Academy is organised in six houses, each under its own House Leader. Each House has its own act of worship – a House Assembly – once per half term which affirms its identity and that of the Academy as a whole.

The Academy is also brought together, at least weekly, for Collective Worship led by a range of staff. This is called a Whole Academy Assembly.