

LVS ASCOT

POLICY ON ASSEMBLIES AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP IN THE SENIOR SCHOOL

This policy describes the aims and principles of assemblies in the Senior School at The Licensed Victuallers' School along with strategies used to ensure the aims are met and principles adhered to.

“Assembly” is a coming together of either the whole school or a specific group within the school. Many, but not necessarily all, of these assemblies will also be vehicles for collective worship.

The word “worship” derives from the Anglo-Saxon “weorthscipe” meaning honour or “worth-ship”. In LVS, this definition allows assemblies/collective worship to be considered as examining all that is of value and honour; and exploring the spiritual dimension of life: valuable occasions when members of the school community come together to collectively give worth to promoting the aims of this policy as described below. For many, this exploration would be within the understanding that the focus for worship is God. LVS acknowledges and celebrates its Christian (non-denominational) ethos, identity and practices. LVS is also clear, that for assemblies/collective worship to have integrity, it is important to acknowledge that the school is not a worshipping community but rather a worship enabling community. Assemblies and collective worship are gatherings or ‘collections’ of people of diverse, religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment.

Both assemblies and collective worship are very different from RE. RE is a subject with schemes of work which promotes pupils’ learning about religions and learning from religion. Assemblies will often cover religious matters but the aim of assemblies is very different.

What are the aims of assemblies (and collective worship) at LVS? (Those aims which also apply to collective worship are indicated by *)

1. to make explicit the values and assumptions which underpin the day to day life of the school and the wider community
2. to develop a sense of community, students and staff
3. to affirm and develop the individual
4. to offer opportunities for reflection, meditation and prayer *
5. to develop a sense of enquiry and to encourage a search for meaning in human existence
6. to foster a sense of joy, awe and wonder in the creation/universe *
7. to allow an experience of the “sacred” and the awareness of the presence of God in others and in oneself *
8. to explore social, moral and spiritual values *
9. to consider and celebrate the values of the Christian gospel *
10. to consider and celebrate the main Christian festivals *
11. to consider and celebrate the richness of other faith traditions
12. to encourage singing and music making as a means of celebration and expression *
13. to recognise and celebrate individual and collective achievement
14. to play a role in the remedy of inappropriate or unacceptable attitudes and behaviours

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15. to encourage an awareness of and a compassion for the needs of the world community *
16. to foster and encourage charitable giving
17. to communicate to the LVS community, details of significant events in the life of the school

What are the principles of assemblies (and collective worship) at LVS?

1. they should be linked and seen to be integral to the whole school experience/ curriculum
2. they should be enjoyable and hopefully memorable
3. they should be designed to engage students and elicit responses
4. they should be well resourced and carefully planned
5. they should be flexible enough to respond to special occasions and unforeseen events
6. they should be related to the age and background of the pupils present
7. they should foster a sense of occasion – a feeling that it is a very important part of the week
8. they should be inclusive, sensitive and not proselytising
9. they should encourage individual pupils to play a part, including drama, music and reading

How are assemblies organised at LVS (Senior School)?

In addition to all-school assemblies which take place at the beginning and end of each term, all students in the Senior School attend assemblies in the theatre as indicated below. (accurate as of May 2006)

Years 9 and 10	Tuesday 11.20 - 11.50
Years 11,12 and 13	Thursday 11.20 - 11.50
Years 7 and 8	Friday 12.20 - 12.50

Co-ordination

The Chaplain has overall responsibility for assemblies and liaises closely on all relevant matters with the Head of Senior School.

Leadership

Although the Chaplain leads a significant proportion of assemblies, other members of staff, supported by the Chaplain, are responsible for planning and delivering assemblies throughout the course of the year. In addition, invited guests from outside agencies and other faith groups are invited to lead assemblies.

Attendance

All students attend assemblies on the appropriate day, every week. Tutors attend assemblies on the same day as their tutees. All other members of staff are expected to attend at least one assembly in any given week. In the week of their academic review, only

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those students who are directly involved with their tutor in the review process are permitted to be absent from assembly; other tutees in the group attend as normal. All other absences from assemblies must be authorised by the Head of Senior School.

Other organisational matters

Atmosphere is all-important in creating the right foundation for assemblies and collective worship. Quiet, orderly behaviour and respectful attitudes on entering, leaving and throughout the assembly are expected. Staff enhance the atmosphere by their presence and participation. School prefects on assembly duty should report to the theatre five minutes before the assembly is due to begin. They will ensure students enter the theatre in an orderly and calm way, in preparation for a few minutes silence prior to the assembly. Students will sit together with their tutor and others in their tutor group in a designated area of the theatre. Suitable music may be played, before and after the assembly in order to assist in the creation of a conducive atmosphere.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Assemblies and Collective Worship are on-going processes carried out on a weekly, termly and annual basis so that effective review can take place. This policy was written in May 2006 and will be reviewed in December 2006.

Conclusion

LVS holds that assemblies/collective worship can make significant contributions to pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. In the context of the school's Christian history and ongoing identity and ethos, LVS strives to ensure that all assemblies and acts of collective worship are inclusive, educational, pragmatic and reflective; providing valuable experiences in the lives of individual students and of the school community as a whole. This policy aims to ensure this is achieved.

Reviewed **December 2009**

Reviewed by **G J Best**