



Policy No: 22a(2)

**OUR LADY'S ABINGDON (OLA)
ASSEMBLY & COLLECTIVE WORSHIP POLICY**

This policy, which applies to the whole school, is publicly available on the school website and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Document Details

Information Sharing Category	School Domain
Version	1
Date Published	September 2021
Authorised by (if required)	Head
Responsible Area	Leadership Team

We comply with the Government guidance and regulations, currently in force, regarding COVID.

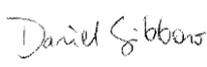
Availability: All who work, volunteer or supply services to our school have an equal responsibility to understand and implement this policy and its procedures both within and outside of normal school hours, including activities away from school.

Monitoring and Review:

Reviewed: September 2021

Next Review: September 2022

Signed:

Head	Deputy Head
Mr Daniel Gibbons	Dr Beth Reynaert
Signed: 	Signed: 

1. Rationale and aims

As God's family we learn to love, respect and forgive; guided by his word.

Our Lady's Abingdon complies with the requirements set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act regarding Collective Worship. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement it is an integral part of school life and central to its Catholic tradition. The act of worship is **not** taken in designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. To worship God is to raise our hearts and minds to Him, in reverence and praise, as individuals and as a community. Worship plays an important part in the development and growth of our faith and our relationship with God. It can instil in us a sense of belonging, dignity, grace, self-discipline, order, respect, thanksgiving, repentance, community spirit, creed, tradition, sacrifice – all of which influence our way of life.

Acts of Worship at OLA will:

- be an integral part of the life and character of OLA
- be appropriate to the children's age and ability
- take account of different faith/family backgrounds
- provide a variety of prayer and liturgical experiences
- often require the children's participation

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Collective Worship and Assemblies Policy: Reviewed September 2021

- usually include scripture

We aim to ensure that pupils at OLA attend a collective assembly at least two days in each week during the school term; usually Monday and Thursday. A rota with key staff involvement in assembly delivery is drawn up at the start of the academic year. Monday assemblies are delivered by the Head with a catholic theme and focus and Thursday's by either the Deputy Head or Chaplaincy Co-ordinator. The aim of assemblies is to inspire intellectual engagement with the world around us, introducing pupils to issues they may not have previously encountered

Assemblies at OLA should reflect the following general principles and be:

- An educational activity linked to the whole curriculum
- Memorable and enjoyable
- Designed to actively engage pupils and elicit responses
- Well planned
- Flexible and able to respond to special occasions
- Related to the age, ability and background of the pupils
- Inclusive and not confessional

Topics are drawn from a variety of subject areas. Pupils are encouraged to deliver assemblies themselves with the support of a teacher, to develop their public speaking skills. Collective assemblies may offer an opportunity to re-affirm, interpret and put into practice the values of OLA. It provides a time to celebrate the various achievements of members of our community. If collective gatherings are genuinely to stimulate reflection and growth, they need to involve all members of the community.

OLA aims:

- To develop the moral, intellectual and physical capabilities of our pupils.
- To explore social, moral and spiritual values.
- To develop a sense of Community.
- To encourage an awareness of and a compassion for the needs of the world community.
- To enable children to participate knowingly, actively and joyfully in different forms of worship, especially the Eucharist.
- To enable children to grow in communion with God, each other and the wider community.
- To familiarise children with the different forms of worship within our faith.
- To enable children to gain a deeper understanding of Jesus and His teachings.

OLA's objectives are to:

- To give our children the experience of the rites and prayers of the Mass.
- To provide opportunities that offer a variety of experiences of personal and collective prayer and worship.
- To provide children with the experience of using our traditional prayers.
- To explore and reflect upon the values that underpin our beliefs and actions.
- To enable the children to reflect on scripture within liturgy and worship.
- To reflect the Church's liturgical year within the school's different forms of worship.
- To develop an understanding of the signs and symbols that are associated with belief.

2. Co-ordination

Acts of worship will take place on the school premises in either the CMA (whole school) or smaller Year group venues such as the Top Hall, classrooms or the OLA chapel. However, on special occasions worship will take place off the school premises, for example, St Edmund's Church. The readings and themes for whole school assemblies will be the responsibility of the person delivering the assembly. The Head has overall responsibility.

Pupils may be asked to take part in assemblies in the following ways:

- To lead an assembly (prefects are ideal for this)
- To deliver a spiritual reading
- To provide information for the pupil body
- To give out notices about forthcoming events

3. Organisation and Responsibilities

Assemblies are held as a whole school in the CMA. During the Coronavirus pandemic, where social distancing was required, assemblies were either delivered to Form Tutors online (either live or pre-recorded) or delivered by Heads of Sections to whole year groups (bubbles). During remote learning, whole school assemblies were held once a week as an opportunity for

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Collective Worship and Assemblies Policy: Reviewed September 2021

social contact. In the Lower School, parents are invited, through the school events list and invitations, to celebrate class assemblies, class masses and school liturgies. All children are given prayer books when they join the school.

Person designated responsibility for Assemblies: Oversee or delegate the organisation, content and smooth running of all weekly and end of term assemblies. Responsibility for arranging Collective Worship in the Lower School rests with the Lower School Coordinator and RE coordinator.

Head/Deputy Head: To preside at assembly or delegate this role as appropriate and to meet and afterwards thank outside speakers.

Speakers: Teachers are expected to lead assemblies and people from outside of the school may also be invited.

4. Planning, content and delivery of acts of collective worship

- All worship is planned and structured, with reference to the Church's liturgical year or other relevant themes which link with the other curriculum areas e.g. PSHEE, RS
- Collective Worship is recorded on the assembly rota at the start of each term. Dates are arranged and placed in the iSAMs calendar and published to the Parent/Student portals and on the school website.
- It is flexible, in order to respond to school, local, or world community situations or issues
- It provides opportunities for children to plan and lead worship e.g. class masses and the Worship Group in Lower School
- Worship will take place in the following ways:
 - Whole school – assembly and morning prayers in the CMA
 - Lower School - morning prayers followed by Hymn Practice
 - Lower School – class based collective worship led by class teachers
 - Lower School - class led or Key Stage assemblies on a rota basis.
 - Eucharistic/ Liturgy of the Word celebrations, with the parish priest (when available and appropriate), e.g. Advent, during Lent, end of the school year
 - Liturgical celebrations such as Remembrance, Harvest Festival, Mercy Day, Easter etc
 - Holy days of Obligation – in the parish church

5. Elements of worship

- Focal point in CMA, classrooms, Top Hall, OLA Chapel
- Music and hymns; Scripture and prayers
- Movement and participation; Posture; Gesture; Greeting; Gather-Listen-Respond-Go
- Symbols and signs; Posters/icons/statues
- Silence and meditation; Reflection and contemplation
- Psalms and intercessions; Litanies; Blessings
- Ritual; Repetition; Spontaneity
- Flowers/plants; Guests

6. Monitoring and evaluation

At least once a year, the RE co-ordinator (Lower School) and the Chaplaincy Coordinator will evaluate and review provision and children's participation.

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Collective Worship and Assemblies Policy: Reviewed September 2021