

Sheffield SACRE

Collective Worship Guidelines 2015: “Be Still and Share with Open Hearts” - A Broader Perspective for School Assemblies

Appendix 6: The Determination Process

1. There are **three types of determination** as follows:

Whole school determination – the school will offer inclusive worship in which all pupils can take part and which will draw from a range of religious and other traditions. In this case the whole school is exempt from Collective Worship which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”

Part determination – the school will offer one group of pupils the opportunity to meet for worship specific to their faith whilst the remaining pupils meet for worship which is wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character. In this case part of the school is exempt from Collective Worship which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”

Series of determinations the school will offer a range of faith groups represented in the school community the opportunity to meet for worship specific to each faith. Separate provision will be made for pupils whose parents/ carers do not wish them to attend the faith worship provided by the school. This usually takes place on one day of the week. On the remaining four days of the school week, the school would meet in normal school groupings for inclusive worship in which all pupils can participate and which will draw from a range of religions and other traditions. In this case a series of groups of pupils within the school are exempt from Collective Worship which is “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”

In order to apply for a determination, the Headteacher should consult with governors, parents, and staff, all of whom will need the following information to guide their decisions:

- A statement from the school as to why the ‘wholly or mainly broadly Christian character’ of Collective Worship is not appropriate (for all or part of the school)
- What is known about the heritage and background of pupils at the school
- Clear information about what the alternative form of collective worship would be and to whom it will apply
- The number of withdrawals from broadly Christian acts of Collective Worship
- Sheffield SACRE’s guidance on Collective Worship (i.e. this current document)
- An outline timetable of the determinations procedure
- The school’s current policy on Collective Worship, and how parents from all backgrounds were engaged in drawing up the policy

- Any other information that the Headteacher considers may be appropriate to supporting the application, e.g. relevant paragraphs from the school's OFSTED report
- Governors and parents should also be given the opportunity to see collective worship in the school, should they wish.
- Governors must vote at a meeting of the full governing body. Parents and teachers should be given the opportunity to vote in a secret ballot.

On receipt of a school's request for a determination, the Chair of SACRE will

- Commission an independent review of collective worship at the school across a period of a week to gain a view of provision and quality and compliance with Circular 1/94 and Local Authority guidelines. The review will be carried out by someone with relevant experience and expertise
- Convene a sub-committee of at least 5 SACRE members, with at least one member from each committee of SACRE, to hear the application
- Invite the school to present its case for a determination

The sub-committee should be presented with the findings from the independent review; the information provided by the school to parents and governors in its consultation process; and also information about what has been done to engage parents and governors in the determinations process. The sub-committee will then make a recommendation to SACRE on whether the determination should be allowed.

1. Where a determination has been granted in respect of all or some of the pupils in the school, a daily act of Collective Worship must still be provided for them. This will be in the form agreed by SACRE to be more suitable for their needs.
2. Where a determination has been granted in respect of a class or description of pupils of a particular faith or religion, the alternative Collective Worship may be provided for those pupils as a whole. It may not be distinctive of any particular denomination of any faith or religion, but may be distinctive of a particular faith or religion.
3. Parents/ carers continue to have a right to withdraw their children from the Collective Worship. The parental right should be freely exercisable and a school must give effect to any such request. Parents/ carers are not obliged to state their reasons for seeking withdrawal. However, schools should make sure that those who want to withdraw their child from Collective Worship are aware of the aims of the school's programme in this regard. It is recommended that parents/ carers are given the opportunity to discuss this with the school if they wish. Furthermore, the right of withdrawal should be clearly explained in the school's prospectus and Collective Worship policy (see **Appendix 4**).

4. Where a single determination has been granted for the whole school, it is not permissible for pupils to be divided into faith groups for worship. Where a determination covers only part of the school, or where more than one determination has been granted in respect of different pupils at a school, a single act of worship may be provided for each group of pupils covered by a single determination.

5. Information about new arrangements for Collective Worship in the school should be published in the school prospectus. This information should also be made available to Ofsted.

6. SACRE must review its determination if the school so requests and, in any event, within five years of the date when the determination was made or last reviewed.

7. Complaints about the determination process should be addressed to the Secretary of State for Education. If s/he is satisfied that SACRE has acted, or is proposing to act unreasonably, in determining whether it is appropriate for the requirement for Christian Collective Worship to apply in the case of a school or group of pupils, or has failed to discharge its duty in this respect, s/he has the power to direct SACRE to revoke the determination or withdraw the proposed determination or (as the case may be) to discharge its duty.