

# Howden Church of England Infant School

## Collective Worship Policy



*Roots to grow so together we flourish.*

At Howden C of E Infant School, we live and learn together and look after one another as part of the family of God. We are deeply rooted in the values of the Christian faith and experience the kindness, respect and support that come with being connected in a loving community. Together, our children are able to grow, flourish and bear much fruit which they will take with them as they travel through life and out into the wider world.

'I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit.' John 15:5.

'Rooted and grounded in love.' Ephesians 3:17.

At Howden Church of England Infant school, our collective worship policy strengthens and supports the distinctiveness of our school, reaffirms our vision and associated values of curiosity, family, nurture, respect and joy and celebrates the central role that each child has to play in their community. As such (and in line with the legal requirement of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 which states the need for each child to attend a daily act of worship) it is placed at the beginning of every school day and all staff are encouraged to attend along with the children.

Collective worship provides a sense of togetherness and belonging and reinforces our strong emphasis on mutual kindness, love and respect for all members of our school community. We recognise that pupils have both the need and a right to develop spiritually, morally and culturally as well as mentally, physically and socially. Our collective worship programme therefore encourages the children to become aware of and engage in conversation around important moral, social and religious issues we may encounter in our school, in the local community and in the wider world.

Collective Worship at Howden C of E Infant School is distinctively Christian and aims to promote our school values of curiosity, family, nurture, joy and respect, as well as allowing children space and time to develop their own personal response to the Christian message. It aims to be inclusive, invitational and inspirational.

## Aims

We seek always to reflect in our worship the Christian foundation of the school and therefore strive:

- For worship to inspire the thinking and day to day action of the whole school community, especially in relation to the school's vision and values;
- To strengthen the feeling of belonging together and of being a family, and to nurture a sense of each individual's worth;
- To develop a feel of community within the school, the locality, (e.g. local church) and foster the sense of being part of a wider community through the celebration of achievements, festivals and special occasions;
- To help pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world by encountering the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and developing understanding of the Christian belief in the Trinitarian nature of God.
- To enable all pupils and adults to appreciate that Christians worship in different ways, for example using music, silence, story, prayer, reflection, as well as through the varied liturgical and other traditions of Anglican worship, festivals and, where appropriate, the Eucharist.
- To experience the joy of singing, praising and celebrating together as a school community;
- To seek to provide opportunities for spiritual, social and moral development.
- To help children develop respect and sensitivity to the beliefs and values of others.
- To help children discover their place in the world.
- To encourage respect and care for God's created world by promoting a positive attitude to environmental issues locally, nationally and globally;
- For collective worship to contribute to pupils' experience of awe and wonder.
- To elicit curiosity and inspire children to find out more about themselves and the world around them.
- To provide an opportunity to bring personal needs and those of others to our worship.
- To provide staff and children with opportunities for silence, reflection and prayer.
- To include the children in planning for and the evaluation of collective worship.

## Organisation

Children and staff have the opportunity for prayer and reflection every day and the opportunity for sung worship when the whole school meet together. At present, the pattern is:

| Day              | What                                                    | The person leading                                                |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday 8.55am    | Whole School Worship. Often the introduction of a theme | JH (or LH)                                                        |
| Tuesday 8.55am   | Class Worship                                           | Class teachers                                                    |
| Wednesday 8.55am | Phase Worship                                           | FS2 led by class teachers<br>Years 1 and 2 led by Reverend Little |
| Thursday 8.55am  | Whole School Worship using Picture News                 | In phases.<br>Rota of teaching staff                              |
| Friday 8.55am    | Whole School Celebration Worship                        | JH                                                                |

For the first few weeks, children in FS2 participate in collective worship in their classroom until ready to join the rest of the school in the main hall. Collective worship lasts for approximately 20 mins each day. Christian values are allocated to each half term (in both collective worship and across the curriculum) with other themes including Christian festivals, events in the church year/calendar, social issues, moral concerns, seasonal and commemorative celebrations amongst others. An overview of planning is provided for all staff by the RE/collective worship lead and resources made available so teachers can then plan for their class worship and Picture News worship in greater depth.

Parents are invited to participate in collective worship with the school each Friday where their children are receiving an award. Awards are given for children who have demonstrated our Christian values in school or in the local community throughout the week.

#### Withdrawal

Parents and Carers have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship if they wish. They are not obliged to state their reasons for requesting withdrawal of their child.

## Rhythm for Collective Worship

### Gather

- We use the greeting, 'We meet together in the presence of God...who helps us to grow wisely'.
- Three children are chosen to sit at the front of the hall; one with a bible, one with a cross and one with a candle. The following is said:  
Child 1: This is the bible, it reminds us of...  
All: God the Father.  
Child 2: This is the cross, it reminds us of...  
All: God's son, Jesus.  
Child 3: This is the candle, it reminds us of...  
God, the Holy Spirit.
- As the candle is lit, we all say, 'Light of the world, light up our world with your love. Amen.'

### Engage

This part of our collective worship is the time when new possibilities or different perspectives are introduced. This may happen in a number of ways including through Bible stories, other texts, poetry, drama, visual images or videos.

### Reflect

This part of our collective worship encourages everyone to consider how the Bible story or other stimulus has resonated with them or challenged them. Questions are asked to explore the children's thoughts and understanding. A time of stillness and silence is included.

### Send

The final part of our worship provides an opportunity to consider how God might be challenging those present to step out to serve one another and to make a difference in the world. It is within this that we also pray to offer thankfulness, ask for help etc. We also pray using the Lord's Prayer and prayers written by the children. We end with the following words, 'Go in peace...we go in peace. Go in joy...we go in joy. Go in love ... we go in love. Amen.' The candle is blown out.

### Community Link

Howden Church of England Infant School places a high priority on maintaining links with Howden Minster. Reverend Little and other church members come into school to lead collective worship each week. The school holds some services in the Minster to celebrate specific events in the Christian calendar, these celebrations include Harvest Festival, Christmas and Easter.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Reverend Little and other Foundation Governors visit regularly and complete monitoring forms/visit forms with feedback for the staff and school, as well as monitoring by HT and SLT. Our 'Worship Squad' are also invited to evaluate collective worship and offer feedback. All leaders of collective worship are asked to evaluate continuously, reflect after every worship and improve their practice. This process supports the school's self-evaluation.

### Governance

Foundation Governors liaise to discuss aspects of the role of the Church and Collective worship during their visits to school and governing body meetings.

### Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

Howden Church of England Infant School is committed to ensure that every child will benefit from Collective Worship. Worship is collective in that it involves meeting, exploring, questioning, and responding to others and, for some, to God. In our church school pupils, their families and other adults can expect to encounter worship that is inclusive of, and fully accessible to, all. Many pupils and staff in our school will come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as of no faith background. Moreover, many pupils will naturally be at different stages of their spiritual journey during their time in school. Collective worship at Howden Church of England Infant School provides the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and engage with integrity. Pupils will therefore should be given the opportunity to think and ask questions. There will be space to consent, and dissent: to participate and to stand back; and to consider. It is an expectation that care will be taken to ensure that the language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith in all those participating, listening and watching.

### Resources

- Selection of collective worship books, artefacts, posters and music.
- Websites and multimedia,
- Roots and Fruits

- Out of the Box - class collective worship
- Jack in the Box - EYFS collective worship
- Picture News
- Worship tables in classrooms on which the school vision and Christian values must be displayed alongside a cross, candle and bible. Tablecloths are changed in line with the Christian calendar:

### Conclusion

Following the guidelines of this policy will guarantee the school meets their legal requirement, that each pupil receives their collective entitlement and that continuity is ensured.

Date of review: September 2026