

New Horizons Seaside Primary

Collective Worship Policy

Last Review Date:	Sept 2025
Next Review Date:	Sept 2026
Reviewed By:	Mr Lee Murley (Headteacher / Chief Executive Officer)

In May 2013, the DfE published information for academies and free schools about providing collective worship and the subject previously known as Religious Education (RE) now referred to as Religion and Worldviews. This information has now been archived, but remains current.

A section on academies and daily collective worship says:

“An academy’s funding agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for acts of collective worship in maintained schools.

Each pupil must take part in a daily act of collective worship unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves. This applies to academies with and without a religious designation.”

What constitutes collective worship?

The DfE published non-statutory guidance on collective worship in 1994. This guidance remains current.

The guidance explains in paragraph 60 that collective worship in schools without a designated religious character will be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian nature". Paragraph 61 adds that collective worship should not be distinctive of any particular Christian denomination.

1 Aims and purpose of collective worship at New Horizons Seaside Primary

- to enable children to explore some of the main festivals in the Christian calendar such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas including watching Nativity plays performed by our Year R and Year 1 pupils;
- to give the children the opportunity to reflect on values that are associated with modern Christianity, such as charity, compassion and friendship;
- to consider a wide range of moral issues;
- to enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- to encourage participation and response;
- to develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- to promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes;
- to develop in children a sense of awe and wonder about the world;
- to affirm positive values, such as honesty and tolerance;
- to encourage responsibility for making personal decisions;
- to celebrate achievement and special occasions.

2 Collective worship – A time for reflection

2.1 Collective worship involves members of the school coming together daily in classes, year groups or Key Stages and participating in an assembly. We expect everyone to take an active part in the assembly.

2.2 In line with the 1988 Education Reform Act, which states that collective worship should be 'wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character', many of our assemblies are based on values associated with modern Christianity. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school including staff e.g. Christian, Muslim, Atheist and no members of New Horizons staff will lead pupils in prayer relating to any faith or religion.

Many of our assemblies are based on a theme, such as healthy living or environmental awareness or explore a moral issue to help children understand important concepts and ideas appropriate to their age and stage of development. These assemblies will include a time for quiet reflection on the theme.

2.3 We also hold assemblies to help the children understand the significance of religious traditions in world faiths in addition to Christianity, some of which are represented in the school and the wider community. We aim, where possible, to invite speakers into the school to share these with the pupils.

3 Organization of collective worship

3.1 We hold a daily act of collective worship or reflection in our school each school day.

3.2 We conduct assemblies in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that assembly time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way and to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully.

3.3 Members of Seaside staff usually lead assemblies, but sometimes local visitors are invited to lead them instead. Splash assemblies are hosted by New Horizons Seaside Primary once each half-term. See the website below for more information:

<https://www.splashschools.org.uk/schools-assemblies/>

3.4 The themes of our assemblies are broadly those which are claimed as values of the modern Christian faith – in many ways closely linked to our British Values – and we also explore the festivals and events of the Christian calendar such as Harvest, Easter and Christmas. Sometimes the themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum or reflect current issues. We plan our assemblies as part of a series of themes well in advance of the day they take place.

3.5 A key aspect of our assemblies, particularly our Friday ‘DREAMS Assemblies’, is that they reflect the achievements and learning of the children and how the children have exemplified the key qualities of our school DREAMS ethos:

Diligence
Resilience
Enthusiasm
Aspiration
Motivation
Self-Belief

In this way, assemblies play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school and reinforcing the key school message: ‘Everybody Matters, Everybody Succeeds.’

3.6 We invite parents to assembly on some occasions e.g. Star Reader assemblies, Harvest assemblies, Nativities and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home and the school work together to support the achievements of our children.

4 Right of withdrawal

4.1 We expect all children to attend assembly. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending specific collective worship assemblies such as Splash assemblies or those reflecting festivals in the Christian or other faith calendars. A member of staff will supervise the child at this time, but the parents will be asked to provide suitable alternative activities for their child to undertake during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for their request for withdrawal. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

4.2 The Headteacher keeps a record of all children who are withdrawn from collective worship.

5 Monitoring and review

5.1 This policy will be monitored as part of the governors’ committee work.