



DDAT and Woodthorpe C of E Collective Worship Policy

March 2025

This policy was approved by the Trust Board on: 10 February 2025

To be reviewed February 2027.

DDAT Vision and Values

Our Vision for Derby Diocesan Academy Trust is to nurture and empower everyone to reach their fullest potential, supporting each other on this journey. Inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ, we cultivate a vibrant learning community where children and young people flourish academically, emotionally, and spiritually. Our mission and vision flow from the Church of England's vision for education, which emphasises the development of wisdom, knowledge, and skills; hope and aspiration; community and living well together; and dignity and respect. Together, as a community rooted in Christian faith and education, we embrace the abundant possibilities of "Life in all its fullness"

We do this through five values – Inclusivity, Integrity, Community, Excellence and Courage.

Policy Statement

DDAT and Woodthorpe C of E Primary School are committed to high-quality Collective Worship, which embodies and lives out the Christian vision and Biblical narrative each day.

The Woodthorpe C of E vision is distinctively Christian in nature, reflecting the school's strong foundation in faith.

Our school's vision is:

"Learning and growing together to be the best we can be."

This vision is deeply rooted in the biblical teaching:

"Be strong and courageous, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." – Joshua 1:9

This vision shapes our school community, inspiring pupils and staff to strive for excellence while fostering resilience, faith, and a sense of togetherness in all that we do.

To achieve this vision at Woodthorpe C of E, we will:

- **Provide a Nurturing Environment** – Create a supportive and inclusive school community where every child feels valued, safe, and encouraged to reach their full potential.
- **Promote Christian Values** – Embed our Christian foundation in all aspects of school life, ensuring our values guide learning, relationships, and personal growth.
- **Inspire a Love for Learning** – Offer a rich, engaging curriculum that fosters curiosity, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning.
- **Encourage Courage and Resilience** – Empower children to be strong and courageous in facing challenges, knowing they are supported by faith, family, and school.
- **Teaching Perseverance** – Inspiring pupils to aim high, strive for success, and never give up.
- **Develop Character and Compassion** – Instil respect, kindness, and responsibility, helping pupils become caring and thoughtful members of their community.

- **Strengthen Links with Church and Community** – Maintain a close relationship with St. John the Baptist Church in Staveley and the wider community, reinforcing our shared vision and values.
- **Listening and Valuing Voices** – Respecting and appreciating the opinions and perspectives of our pupils.
- **Celebrate Every Achievement** – Recognise and celebrate the successes of all children, encouraging them to be the best they can be in all areas of life.

Legal Requirements

Legislation requires schools to conduct a daily act of Collective Worship.

“... Worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to ‘Collective Worship’ rather than ‘corporate worship’. (DfE Circular 1/94 para 57)

Collective Worship recognises that every participant is part of the collective, but there is no assumption that all have the same beliefs and values.

Collective Worship should be:

“Appropriate to the family backgrounds of the pupils and their ages and aptitudes.” (DfE Circular 1/94 p.22)

Therefore, Collective Worship in Church of England schools must be inclusive and invitational of all participants.

The main legal requirements for Collective Worship are:

- *Collective Worship in a church school should be carried out in accordance with the school's founding trust deed, and in accordance with the school's Ethos Statement, which is to be found in the statutory Instrument of Government*
- *the school must provide an act of Collective Worship for all pupils every day*
- *this act of worship can take place at any time of the school day and in any regular school grouping e.g., whole school, key stage or class unit.*
- *a statement must be included in the school prospectus that makes it clear parents may withdraw their children from Collective Worship on religious grounds. A similar statement should appear in the Collective Worship policy document. The ‘religious grounds’ do not have to be justified and explained by the parents. Should children be withdrawn, the school must provide adequate supervision to ensure their safety.*

*Children should **not** be withdrawn from Collective Worship for other purposes, e.g., reading, music lessons, to do so is to break the law.*

(From Derby Diocesan Board of Education Guidelines for Collective Worship, 2022)

Principles of Collective Worship

Aims and Objectives of Policy and Collective Worship

Through Collective Worship, we aim to:

- Provide opportunities for all (pupils, staff and the wider school community) to encounter and engage with Christian worship
- Explore the school's distinctive Christian vision and values
- Develop understanding of Christian beliefs, traditions, and practices
- Develop an understanding of the Trust and School Vision and Values and how these contribute to living "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10)
- Foster spiritual growth and personal reflection
- Build community and shared values across our schools
- Support moral and social development
- Celebrate and share in times of joy
- Provide comfort and support in times of difficulty
- Enable participants to explore their own beliefs and questions of faith
- Provide Collective Worship that is inclusive, invitational and inspiring - in line with the Church of England guidance – (2021)
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/collective-worship-guidance-18052021.pdf>

Inclusive, Invitational and Inspiring

- **Inclusive** – Our acts of worship recognise that pupils and staff come from homes of different faith backgrounds as well as no faith backgrounds, so it will be inclusive of, and fully accessible to all. Care will be taken to ensure that language used by those facilitating worship avoids assuming faith of those participating, listening or watching. For example, "Christians believe..." rather than "we believe".
- **Invitational** – Our acts of worship will be consistently invitational. There is no compulsion. Rather, worship will provide the opportunity to engage whilst allowing the freedom of those of different faiths and those who profess no religious faith to be present and to engage with and treat others with integrity. Pupils and adults will only be invited to pray if they wish to do so and should be invited to pray in their own way. Prayer should always be accompanied by the option to reflect.
- **Inspiring** – Acts of Worship will be formational and transformational. By asking and discussing big questions about who we are and what we do in worship we hope to motivate pupils and adults into action or to think differently. There will be opportunities to think, reflect

and ponder on their and the wider community's behaviour and actions. Collective Worship will inspire pupils to act and become courageous advocate of causes.

Implementation

Collective Worship at Woodthorpe C of E follows a structured three-year cycle, with Christian values thoughtfully mapped out across each year. Within each annual cycle, six core values are explored in depth, each carefully linked to the school vision, British Values, and Protected Characteristics. This approach ensures a rich and meaningful worship experience that fosters spiritual growth and a strong moral foundation.

	Autumn Term		Spring Term		Summer Term	
2024/2025	Thankfulness	Creativity	Peace	Trust	Forgiveness	Justice
2025/2026	Courage	Compassion	Friendship	Hope	Truthfulness	Humility
2026/2027	Generosity	Service	Respect	Wisdom	Responsibility	Perseverance

Each half-term, the Collective Worship lead creates a planning overview outlining the themes and focus for worship each week. This overview draws on a diverse range of resources, including the *Values for Life* folder, *Roots and Fruits* books, *Picture News*, the NATRE website, the religious calendar, materials from recent DDAT training, and various online sources. Staff members and pupils in the Worship Squad are encouraged to adapt, enhance, or modify this plan to suit the needs of their class, incorporating their own knowledge and expertise of the Christian faith.

At Woodthorpe C of E, Collective Worship follows a structured weekly schedule:

- **Monday (2:45 PM):** Whole-school worship focused on the term's Christian value, typically led by the Collective Worship lead and members of the Worship Squad.
- **Tuesday (2:45 PM):** Whole-school worship led by staff, dedicated to singing praise.
- **Wednesday (2:45 PM or a convenient time):** In-class worship using *Picture News* or a relevant current topic, encouraging discussion based on both Christian and British values.
- **Thursday (2:45 PM or a convenient time):** In-class worship focused on the term's Christian value.
- **Friday (2:45 PM):** Whole-school worship celebrating success and achievements linked to the school vision and values, led by the Head of School. Parents and families are invited to attend if their child has received an award.

This structured approach ensures a meaningful and reflective worship experience throughout the week.

The whole school worship at Woodthorpe C of E on Mondays follows a structured approach that reflects the traditional Church of England liturgy. The worship incorporates four key stages. These stages may also be used during other worship sessions throughout the week.

Here's a general outline of what those four stages might look like:

Gather

As children enter the hall, music is played, candles may be lit, and a welcome is given with a spoken response from the children, setting a calm and reflective atmosphere.

Engage

The message of the worship is delivered through a variety of creative and engaging methods, including Bible stories, poems, music, drama, pictures, film clips, and artefacts. Recognising the diversity of personal spiritual styles, we ensure worship is inclusive and meaningful for all. During this time, children also reflect on the *Ows, Wows, and Nows*:

- **Wows** – Awe and wonder moments in life.
- **Nows** – Everyday moments to appreciate and be thankful for.
- **Ows** – Challenges or difficulties we may face.

Respond

Children are encouraged to respond to the message by discussing, sharing, reflecting, or singing. They consider: *What have we learned? How will it make a difference in our lives?*

Send

The worship concludes with a final reflection on the message, an invitational prayer, and music as the children leave, reinforcing the theme of the worship.

Prayers

Prayer is an integral part of worship and is always invitational. We regularly use the *Lord's Prayer* and the *School Prayer*, alongside prayers written and read by the children. Time is also provided for personal reflection.

Spirituality in Collective Worship

The language of spirituality is explicitly shared and woven into Collective Worship, as well as throughout other parts of the school day. Children are encouraged to reflect on life's experiences through:

- **WOWS** – Moments of awe and wonder.
- **NOWS** – Everyday moments to appreciate and be grateful for.
- **OWS** – Times of challenge or difficulty.

By embracing this reflective framework, we nurture a deeper sense of spiritual awareness and connection in our worship.

At Woodthorpe C of E, we actively foster links with St. John the Baptist Church in Staveley, ensuring a meaningful connection between worship in school and church. Father Adrian leads Collective Worship during the year, providing spiritual guidance and reinforcing shared Christian values.

As a whole school, we visit the church at least three times per year, marking key events in the Christian calendar. These visits offer pupils the opportunity to experience worship in a church setting, deepening their understanding of faith and community.

In Woodthorpe C of E, Collective Worship and assembly are both key aspects of school life, but serve distinct purposes.

- **Collective Worship** is a legally required activity in UK schools, intended to provide pupils with an opportunity for spiritual reflection, with a broadly Christian character. It should be inclusive, allowing all to engage in a way that is meaningful to them, regardless of faith background.
- **Assembly** is a gathering for school-wide communication, celebration, or educational purposes. It may include messages about school values, achievements, or social themes but does not necessarily have a religious or spiritual focus.

While Collective Worship can take place within an assembly, the two are not synonymous, as assemblies may also cover secular topics without any worship element.

Anglican Faith and Practice

In addition to the above, we seek to provide acts of Collective Worship that reflect the faith and practice of the Church of England, therefore:

- we use the Bible as a sourcebook for inspiration and learning and make pupils familiar with the Lord's Prayer, psalms and other verses of scripture. We also introduce them to a variety of well-known prayers, many of which express the central beliefs of Christians throughout the ages.
- we use aspects of Anglican liturgy to create a framework for worship. We use Christian symbols as a focus for reflection and provide opportunities to discover the value of meditation and silence. We observe the cycle of the Anglican year including celebrations of the major Christian festivals. This clear framework also helps demarcate worship from assembly.
- we aim to provide a Collective Worship space which is attractive and well prepared with appropriate thought having been given to colour, space, seating, ambience and music.
- we foster links with our local, CE Parish Church, involving parish clergy in leading Collective Worship and providing coherence between worship in church and academy and visit for weekly services as part of the Christian calendar.

- Recognising the Anglican Communion is part of a global church, we promote links with other local churches and Christian organisations

Rights and Responsibilities

As established by the 1944 Act and reinforced through this policy, parents have the right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship. However, having chosen to send their children to Woodthorpe C of E School, it is hoped that no one will exercise this right. Should such a situation arise, appropriate arrangements would be made in keeping with the requirements of the Act.

Collective Worship is inclusive and as such is open to those of all faiths and none to be present with integrity. Parents who wish to withdraw their child/children should make an appointment to meet with the Head of School. Following these discussions, any desire to formally withdraw children from worship must be done via a letter to the Head of School.

Connections to Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC)

We recognise that progression in SMSC is fostered across the curriculum. However, Collective Worship provides a significant moment in the school day to deepen pupils' Moral, Social and Cultural knowledge and their Spirituality. For example, children will be encouraged to reflect on and celebrate the deeper meanings of life, consider their own behaviour and recognise the need for forgiveness, appreciate the contributions of others and respond to their needs, value their own culture and the cultures of others.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Collective Worship at Woodthorpe C of E is carefully monitored each year to evaluate its impact on both the school and the wider community. This process involves the active participation of school leaders, staff, and pupils, all of whom play a key role in the continuous development and improvement of worship.

Regular attendance and involvement in Collective Worship provide valuable opportunities to assess its content, delivery style, and overall effectiveness. Feedback from staff and pupils, gathered through questionnaires and verbal reflections, offers a comprehensive understanding of the worship experience.

As part of our whole-school approach to monitoring, we also actively encourage input from parents. These contributions are shared at staff meetings and play an essential role in shaping the spiritual growth of our school. Through this collaborative approach, we ensure that Collective Worship remains relevant, meaningful, and a central element of our faith-driven journey.

The impact of Collective Worship is then independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) Inspections conducted by the Church of England.

Further details can be found [here](#).

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. We therefore aim to make Collective Worship accessible to all and accommodate ourselves to individual needs when appropriate.

Implementation of Policy

The Head of School and Collective Worship Leader are responsible for this policy, which will be reviewed every two years. Its implementation is the responsibility of all those planning and leading Collective Worship.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Appendices

To support school leaders, links to the Derby Diocesan Board of Education Guidance on Collective Worship are :

[here](#).

Appendix B Acts of Collective Worship – Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Appendix C Visitors leading Collective Worship

Appendix D Children participating in the organisation and planning of Collective Worship

Appendix E Colours of the Christian Year