



Davenant Foundation School

Worship Policy

Last Reviewed: September 2024

Next Review: September 2026

This policy has been reviewed and to the best of our knowledge we do not feel that it impacts on any group or individuals' equality rights within our school community.

POLICY DETAILS

Policy Name	Worship Policy	Committee Responsible	Standing
Status	Discretionary	Committee Person i/c	Jen Dennison
Produced by	CLC /SML	First Agreed	
Date Produced	1995	Last Review Date	September 2024
References		Next Review Date	September 2026

Introduction and Definitions

Davenant is an ecumenical Christian Foundation school. We follow the beliefs of mainstream Christianity, emphasising the role of God in the world as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Worship is very important to our life. Although the daily experience of most students and staff will be that of collective worship, there will also be opportunities throughout the year to take part in voluntary corporate worship.

At Davenant the daily act of worship is considered an integral and important part of school life. In accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The daily collective worship shall be 'wholly or mainly of a broad Christian character' with some Jewish focused assemblies.

The aim of the collective worship policy is to provide the opportunity for students from all traditions of the Christian church not precluding our Jewish students to: worship God, reflect on the schools values of nurturing mind, body and spirit, develop a community spirit and a common ethos of shared values. In addition worship is designed to aid consideration of both spiritual and moral issues, locally and in the wider world. The Christian faith shapes and inspires all aspect of our community and is the foundation on which we build and reflect the love of God in all aspects of the community by nurturing mind, body and spirit. Students will be:

Compassionate

To encourage and show concern for others whilst displaying kindness and honesty.

Determined

The desire to succeed in school and life with energy commitment and diligence, showing persistence.

Open-minded

The willingness to be quick to listen and slow to speak; accepting each other's differences and new ideas.

Respectful

To show fairness and consideration through acting in a thoughtful and understanding manner.

Inclusive

Displaying acceptance of different religions, denominations, race, age, abilities and sexuality.

Within the curriculum, students are encouraged to learn about the beliefs of others, in addition to their own, as part of the religious education. As a community, we also encourage students to learn about the beliefs of others to broaden their cultural experience and understanding.

Collective worship:

This takes place daily when the school community, or parts of it, comes together to share what it is to be a community in celebration of who we are in Christ. This may, in our case, involve the exploration of and reflection on the part that God plays in the whole life of the community. Collective worship is inclusive of all students and staff in the school community.

Corporate worship:

This takes place when a group of Christians get together as the body of Christ in order to offer Him homage and devotion in response to their experience of His working in their lives. Special services throughout the year may be acts of corporate worship.

Legal framework:

This policy has due regard to statutory legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- ***The School Standards and Framework Act 1998***

This policy also has due regard to guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (1994) 'Religious Education and Collective Worship'

Collective Worship

- The daily act of collective worship is seen as the focal point of the school day and teaching staff are expected to attend large group assemblies with their tutor groups or to ensure that the 'Thought for the Day' takes place in their tutor group, or that which they are covering. The daily assembly should provide a sense of occasion for all in attendance.
- Whilst a Christian Foundation, the school recognises the valuable input of its Jewish students and staff. Collective worship will include and be inclusive of the whole community.
- Collective worship takes the form of either assemblies of various groups of the school community, or the tutor group following the 'Thought for the Day'.
- Collective worship should challenge and enrich the lives of both students and staff, providing opportunities for reflection and a greater understanding of the nature of worship.
- It should enable students to develop further their own faith and beliefs through a variety of stimuli.
- For those students from other faiths, in Sixth Form, assembly themes and whole school lectures should help them reflect from their faith perspective.
- The form and content of the worship must take account of the age and backgrounds of the students. Visiting speakers will be asked to use appropriate language and ideas.
- A variety of opportunities for students to be involved and to respond should be provided.

- The use of any materials in collective worship must be consistent with scriptural values and the aims and ethos of the school.
- Assemblies on Mondays and Fridays will be hosted by members of the Senior Leadership Group and often led by invited members of local churches / synagogues. A variety of styles will be provided over the course of each term. The assembly rota ensures that delivery of assemblies led by external speakers is distributed evenly across the key stages.
- The basic framework for collective worship will relate to the church year and provide opportunities for students to respond to and reflect on what is happening in the life of the school community and the world at large. A theme will be provided for each week, published termly.
- The school programme of collective worship should also emphasise links with the worldwide church. (e.g. the persecuted church, the spread and revival of Christian faith overseas).
- Assemblies should be a focus for worship and celebration of the life of the community. **Notices will be kept to a minimum** and delivered at the start of assemblies to enable an appropriate atmosphere in the assembly. This will be monitored to ensure consistent approach in all assemblies.
- Parents have the right, if they make request, to withdraw their child from the act of collective worship, although there is an expectation that seeking a place at the school and fulfilling the admission requirements will preclude this happening.

Collective worship should include a variety of 'elements', which may include

affirmation	prayer	reverence	reflection
symbols	drama	silence awe	wonder
celebration	caring	dance/movement	communion/fellowship
liturgy	art	mystery	reconciliation/forgiveness
created things	readings	music	ritual
giving	teaching	thanksgiving	testimony

Corporate Worship

- It is expected that, on the whole, all occasions where corporate worship takes place will be of a voluntary nature.
- Opportunities for corporate worship may include the celebration of the Eucharist on certain feast days.
- The school will promote special occasions when all members of the school community - students, staff, parents and governors can come together in an act of corporate worship, for example at Christmas.

Other more informal opportunities for worship and study of the Christian faith are encouraged for students, staff and parents. These may include; prayer meetings, bible studies, discussion groups, prayer breakfasts, conferences, visits from missionary groups and visiting speakers and gospel choir. A member of the S.L.G will oversee these events ensuring the suitability of the groups and their understanding of the nature and values of the school.

Weekly Collective Worship Programme

Day of the week	Delivery of programme
Monday	Year 10/11 – Assembly delivered by external speakers
Tuesday	Year 7/8/9 – Assembly delivered by internal speakers and Tutor Groups
Wednesday	Year 10/11 – Assemblies delivered by internal speakers and Tutor Groups
Thursday	Year 12/13 – Assemblies delivered by external speakers, internal speakers or Tutor Groups
Friday	Year 7/8/9 – Assemblies delivered by external speakers

The school also holds an annual Easter Service, Christmas Service, Welcome Service for Year 7 and Commissioning Service for Year 12 Senior Prefects

Responsibilities:

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Group (supported by the Head of R.S.) will maintain regular contact with senior students and visitors who lead faith focussed activities. The aim of this contact is to monitor what is being organised as well as to provide advice and guidance.

The organisation of the termly assembly rota, assembly themes and Thought for The Day will be managed by a member of SLG along with the Head of R.S

Heads of Year will be responsible for supporting form tutors and groups leading assemblies. They, also, are responsible (with form tutors) for ensuring that Thought for the Day is used appropriately in form time.

The Governors' Standing Committee will review the Worship Policy every two years and will receive interim reports from the Head of R.S.

Worship activities will be the subject of occasional, external inspection along with the broader R.S. curriculum.

Conclusion

Our ideal would be that our corporate worship should inspire Christians to practice Jesus' summary of the Law - to love God and to love our neighbour. Our collective worship should at least enable students to move towards an understanding of this and its potential relevance to their lives.