



ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

'Through love and service, with Jesus in our hearts and heads, we can achieve anything.'



Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." Mt. 19:14

Our vision

Following the teachings of the Church, we believe that every child, by reason of their Baptism, has a right and a duty to take a 'full, active and conscious' part in the Liturgy of the Church. (*Sacrosanctum Concilium 14*) Prayer and liturgy identifies us as Christians. Therefore, by our baptism we are all called to a relationship with God and be Christ's presence on Earth (the mystical body). It is at the heart and soul of school life.

We wish every child to discover their own sense of spirituality and be equipped and able to express it personally and as a part of our faith community.

We are committed to following the teachings of the church with regards to prayer and liturgy. We aim to be in line with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory believing what it says with regards to the importance of prayer being at the heart of our Catholic school. As it says:

Just as Our Lord Jesus Christ is at the heart of all our prayer and liturgy, so too he is at the centre of every Catholic school. His Gospel is the reference point for its ethos and values; he offers the definitive example of the educator. Joining Christ in praise of the Eternal Father and united by the Holy Spirit in making intercession for the world through prayer and liturgy lies at the heart of the daily life of the school. The quality of the prayer and liturgy in school not only gives honour to God but forms the spiritual and ethical life of pupils and staff alike. (PLD 1.1)

Mission Statement

We are committed to allowing pupils to explore their own faith and develop their relationship with God and what He wants them to be. Our Mission Statement reflects this.

"Through love and service, with Jesus in our hearts and heads, we can achieve anything."

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God.

It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that, 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.' Mt. 18:20.



At St. Joseph's we believe that Christ is present in:

- the proclamation of the Scriptures
- prayers, chants, and responses of the whole gathered community
- the Priest who ministers
- and especially in the body and blood of Christ received in Holy Communion

(Sacrosanctum Concilium 7)

Legal Requirements.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. We also acknowledge that liturgy and assembly are distinct activities.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be classified under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education.

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, including those in the sixth form (Section 70, 1988 Education Act) that is in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schedule 20; 70 Instrument of Government, clause 2). Academies in England are required by their funding agreement and Articles of Association to comply with similar requirements (The Mainstream Academy and Free School: Supplemental Funding Agreement, December 2020; Model Articles for Catholic Academies, February 2019).

The law requires all maintained schools to recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children up to the age of 16 from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)).

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil pupils' entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which pupils in the school will be familiar.



The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that prayer and liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions, or none
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

It will be a spiritual experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship at St Joseph's is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic tradition.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy.

We believe that prayer and liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff. We believe that prayer and liturgy in our school will provide a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationships with God and develop the following:

- To contemplate the mystery of God;
- To unite our worshipping Eucharistic community;
- To develop the necessary skills of:
 - reflection
 - meditation
 - reverence
 - interpretation
 - empathy

Full participation in our faith will allow us:-

- To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;
- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of praying in all its differing forms.



Principles

All prayer and liturgy in this school will focus primarily on the Word of God. It will;

- Give glory and honour to God
- Give everyone opportunities for personal reflection.
- Be a quality experience, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.
- Teach children the fundamentals of good liturgy in order that they can prepare and lead the school community in their journey of faith

... so as to enable everyone at St Joseph's to be sanctified, to become more Holy and more like God (*Catechism of the Catholic Church 1066*)

Every Monday Morning : Whole School Celebration of the Word.

This collection of liturgies was written for the children of St Joseph's. It is the intention that the children themselves prepare and lead the celebrations adapting as they see fit. In this way, their faith and their worship becomes a living part of their lives.

The text is arranged especially to help reading aloud.

There are two or three presiders who prepare the week before.

Children are responsible for the preparation of the sacred space.

Daily Prayer in Classes

Each class has its own prayer area / focal point for prayer and liturgy.

Every class says the following each day:

Morning prayer

Grace before meals

Grace after meals

Prayers at the end of the day

Each year group learns a repertoire of prayers – please refer to the Prayer Progression document, Appendix A

Class Celebrations of the Word



EYFS and KS1 teachers provide opportunities each week for children to have their own celebration within the class.

KS2 children are greatly encouraged and taught to prepare and lead their own class Celebration of the Word each week. They are based upon the Liturgical Year, their current Religion learning and the Sacramental Programme.

Classes have their own selection of prayer and scripture based books.

Every term each class invites parents to participate in their Celebration of the Word on a Friday morning.

St Joseph's have created a progression outline from EYFS to Year 6 for composing personal prayers, which includes prayer openings and a range of prayer types. Please refer to the school's Prayer Progression document, Appendix A.

Celebration of the Eucharist

We believe that The Mass is the 'source and summit of the life of the Church'.

It therefore takes a central place in school life. We celebrate Mass regularly with parents and parishioners and the bond with the parish is strong.

We have whole school Masses at the beginning and end of each term and on special Feast Days and Holydays. These are held in the school hall.

Pupils take a fully active part in preparation for the Masses and baptised Catholic children take on the ministries during our celebrations.

The parish, the Headteacher and the Religion Subject Leader liaise with the Parish Priest regularly and continually look for opportunities to bring school and parish together to celebrate the Eucharist. Parents are individually invited to attend year group masses at Church. Year group masses take place most Fridays and involve two classes (one year group) from school attending the 9.30 a.m. Mass at church.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

During Advent and Lent an emphasis is placed upon the Sacrament of Reconciliation. As part of Class Celebration of the Word, the KS2 classes have the opportunity to focus on the theme of reconciliation which includes the opportunity to go to Confession.

In KS1 the children have more informal time in class to reflect and say sorry to God.

Liturgical Year

Monday Morning Celebrations of the Word guide the children through the liturgical year and include feasts relevant to the school such as St Joseph's Day.

A liturgy marking the Stations of the Cross is led by the Gift Team every year. Every class prepares art work, with the support of a visiting local artist, relating to one Station which is then displayed for this liturgy. After school the Stations are available for parents to walk through.



Prayer Bags are used to pray the Rosary also to mark Advent and Lent to encourage families to pray with their children. Each class has a bag containing resources for a family to have its own time of prayer on one evening. Guidelines are included to assist adults in praying with their children. Families share their experiences by sending photographs of the sacred space that they have created in to school for their child to share.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:

- to develop pupil's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead liturgies which encourages active participation
- to be spontaneous and meaningful in both prayer and liturgy
- to make liturgy meaningful by responding to changing situations within the school, the wider community and the world

The contents of Celebrations of the Word will include:

- **Scripture**
- **Symbol and Symbolic Action**
- **Speak to God in Prayer**
- **Silence**
- **Senses**
- **Sacred Space**

Further description of the above can be found in Appendix B

Responsibility

(a) Governance

The governors, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is a named person(s) who is responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school (the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator)
- the prayer and liturgy policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- there is a budget for prayer and liturgy that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

(b) Headteacher

The headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures that:



- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- they work in partnership with the leader for prayer and liturgy
- those responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school have been given appropriate training and formation to ensure that all guidance is followed and adhered to
- there are suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

Those responsible for prayer and liturgy ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is an Annual Plan of Provision for prayer and liturgy across the school year which identifies liturgical seasons and key celebrations, as well as opportunities for the celebration of the Sacraments

Monitoring and Evaluation

Liturgy and Prayer is monitored and evaluated through:

- Learning walks conducted by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and Headteacher
- Collection of pupil voice
- Displays, children's prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.
- in Religion books, Faith Journeys and whole class evidence books
- the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator has access to electronic files of Celebrations of the Word that have taken place so that resources can be used to help future planning

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. And whether it is impacting positively on the pupils' faith journey.

Resources

Each class has its own collection of liturgy resources. A main supply is maintained by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and is available at all times. School sets an annual budget for use by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator to support prayer and liturgy across the school.

Policy Monitoring and Review



This policy is monitored by the Headteacher and Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every year. The RE Governor and Parish Priest also play a most important role.

Last reviewed: March 2024

Next review date: March 2025