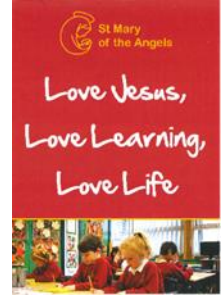


St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Person responsible: Mrs. H. Thorpe

To be reviewed: September 2027



We use the language 'Prayer and Liturgy' in place of the term 'Collective Worship' in our daily life, practices and policies. This policy is written to reflect and support our school mission statement: Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love Life.

The context and aims of this prayer and liturgy policy

Context

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.' (Marcus Stock (2012), Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

Aims

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- Assist our children in developing their own personal relationship with God
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition

Statement of requirement

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The law requires all maintained schools:

- Provide daily collective worship for all pupils including in the sixth form (section 70, 1988 Education Act)
- Acts of collective worship are not to be designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school this means that time of collective worship are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum for Religious Education
- Recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Prayer and Liturgy.

In addition:

- Foundation Governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools
- The governors and the head teacher are responsible for ensuring that there are daily timetabled opportunities for whole school.

Our school must ensure that:

- There is a named person who is responsible for organising Collective Worship across the school. At St Mary's this is the Headteacher, Mrs Thorpe, supported by the RE Lead Mrs Kane.
- Collective worship, in the form of prayer or liturgy, happens for all pupils daily
- All pupils are able to access the prayer and liturgy offered within the school day
- Collective Worship is well resourced, both in regard to content and the continued professional development of those planning and leading, this includes enabling pupils to plan and lead
- There is regular and comprehensive monitoring of Collective Worship which clearly demonstrates the living of our school's Catholic mission

Responsibility

(a) Governance

Prayer and Liturgy Governor – Mr Kwateng

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 – Mrs Thorpe

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(s) 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 – Mrs Thorpe

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
- there is daily planned prayer for all pupils, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- pupils are supported in their liturgical formation to take an active role in the planning, preparation, and delivery of prayer and liturgy according to their age and capacity, and in a manner which facilitates their progressive participation
- resources to support the planning of prayer and liturgy are appropriate and readily available to staff and pupils
- induction on prayer and liturgy takes place for new members of staff as required
- staff have access to effective training and formation opportunities
- monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy take place regularly and feed back into planning for future liturgies
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the headteacher and governing body to support whole-school development and the Catholic life of the school
- there is collaboration with local clergy and parishes
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisor

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Daily Prayer

Monday: Whole School Gospel Assembly led by HT or DHT

Tuesday – Class based prayer

Wednesday Class based prayer and KS1/KS2 Hymns & Singing Assembly

Thursday – Class based prayer

Friday – Whole School Celebration Assembly led by HT or Teachers and Classes

Class Prayer

Each classroom has a prayer focal point which includes a cloth in the current liturgical colour, the Bible and a candle. Other objects are added/used as appropriate. Class Based prayer can be led by both staff and children.

Classes use a daily cycle of prayers, which are progressive throughout school. Each class pray a morning offering, a grace before meals, a grace after meals and an end of day prayer. During Advent and Lent, special prayers for these seasons are also used. Children also experience silence within their class prayer, with their teacher's understanding and guidance.

Each class has a 'Prayer and Liturgy' resource box, which contains a wide range of coloured cloths, artefacts, books etc to support teachers in adapting their prayer focus area for different times of the Liturgical Year. The Prayer and Liturgy boxes also include children's planning cards for the preparing and leading of Prayer and Liturgy. They are different for each Key Stage.

Every class has a Prayer Leader system. Prayer Leaders contribute to and lead daily prayer time in the classroom in different ways.

Prayers are said daily in each classroom at the beginning and end of the morning and afternoon sessions – or as a whole school or Key Stage if we have gathered for an assembly. These are usually occasions for communal prayer and children are also encouraged to engage in their own silent prayer or add to the prayers which are being said.

As part of our Religious Education curriculum, children are often asked to contribute to class prayers or to compose their own prayers based on a theme. These may be shared and celebrated and incorporated into the daily prayers as appropriate.

All children participate in periods of Prayer, which may also be integrated into RE lesson time. Prayer leaders and children's Prayer and Liturgy planning sheets are used in all classes and will also be on display. Classroom prayer may, but not must, be organised around the Gather-Word-Reflect-Mission structure. The structure is often used to support children when planning and leading their own times of structures prayer.

Whole School

The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher take responsibility for the leading of Monday Celebrations of the Word, sometimes other staff members will also lead these. These times of liturgical prayer are Gospel-based.

Celebration of Mass is planned for through discussion with our parish priest. Mass is celebrated both at church and in school for the whole school and for smaller groups. These take place throughout the liturgical year. Opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation are planned for during Lent, through discussion with our parish priest.

Regular whole school Celebrations of the Word are held to celebrate significant times/dates (eg. Harvest, Holy days of obligation, etc) and other special times throughout the year, such as Holy Week.

In 2026-2027 we plan to develop the role that each class will take a turn per half-term to lead a class assembly based upon the branch from the Religious Education Directory (RED) they are studying, largely inspired by their knowledge – and consequent prayerful response - from Religious Education lessons.

During Advent, whole school Celebrations of the Word are delivered daily by all teachers linked to a theme for the season. EYFS and KS1 create and perform their own nativities and KS2 prepare and lead a Carol Service for the community.

During Lent, each class hosts a 'Stay and Pray' time to which families, parishioners and governors are invited, we also host these in Key Stages too. The whole school also engage in the Stations of the Cross. We mark special seasons and times such as Lent, Advent and Holy Week with additional special times of prayer and liturgy, such as the celebration of Mass, lectio divina and contemplative prayer.

Hymn Practices

Time spent singing is a religious experience and is marked as special. The children enjoy singing and it is a very joyful way in which to worship God. We have a shared repertoire of hymns linked to the liturgical year to support the use of varied hymns and music within prayer and liturgy.

Inclusive Provision

The whole approach to prayer and liturgy is inclusive rather than exclusive. The individual needs of every child are considered when prayer and liturgy is being planned.

Sacramental Programme

As a school we aim to support our KS2 children as they approach their Sacraments. Our RE lead facilitates this programme in conjunction with our parish. Weekly sessions take place during the time of preparation. The Sacraments of First Forgiveness and First Holy Communion take place at St Mary of the Angels Church in the spring and summer term.

Resourcing

Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources, including staff time, formation training, and dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy.

The Catholic character of the school is reflected in religious artefacts and images on display throughout the building. Some of these have been by our school community, e.g. our Willow St Mary of the Angels Angels, our stained glass windows, our ceramic mission statement coffee table, etc

Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy are furnished and maintained as such and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season. Staff training and formation costs funded to ensure that all staff are able to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

Training and formation

All new staff will be supported during induction and beyond, so that they fully understand the responsibility they carry within their individual role for leading prayer and liturgy in the school. Any individual training needs will be identified and addressed through training and formation.

Staff engage with Diocesan led formation appropriately. There will also be the opportunity for whole-staff professional development at least once a year, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

Individual opportunities for formation are also provided for according to need, e.g. our Head teacher engaged with the EducareM programme 'Christ the Teacher' in 2025-2026.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate. The APoP is integral to this process.

Review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors.