

St. Theresa's Catholic Primary School

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Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

“We learn together, we play together, we pray together, we grow together in the love of God”

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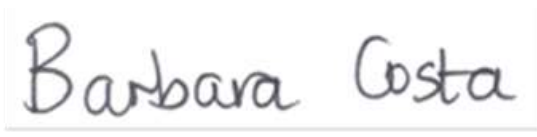


Title	Prayer and Liturgy Policy
Author	Caroline O'Brien
Associate Author	
Target Audience	All staff
Stake holders consulted	All staff
Associated Policies/ Documents	Religious Education Policy/ RSE Policy/ PSHE Policy
New Policy or Review of existing policy	Review
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The recognition of the significance of Religious Education in the classroom is expressed in the Bishops Statement on Religious Education in Catholic Schools as:

‘Therefore, religious education is never simply one subject among many, but the foundation of the entire educational process.’

‘Religious education is then, the core subject in a Catholic School.’

Headteacher  Barbara Costa

Chair of Governors  Fiona Kerin

1. The context of this prayer and liturgy policy

'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.)

2. Statement of requirements

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. Prayer and liturgy are not designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education.

3. 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(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

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 is fed 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 Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

4. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Children participate in class-based prayer at key times throughout the day. Each class has a prayer focus reflecting either the current topic studied or the liturgical year.

The RE Co-ordinator is responsible for timetabling a diary of dates for whole school Liturgies and Masses.

There are whole school Masses at the beginning of the school year, St Theresa's feast day and Holy Days of Obligation which are celebrated in the school hall. Non-Eucharistic liturgy – e.g.: Distribution of Ashes, Reconciliation, lighting of Advent candles etc. are also honoured.

The whole school (excluding the Nursery) attends assemblies three times a week, involving collective worship and a celebration of pupil achievement.

The whole school celebrates Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day and saints' feast day assemblies. St David, St George, St Andrew and St. Patrick are celebrated with a whole school attendance. Liaison between our parish priest and the RE Co-ordinator ensures the preparation of Masses and Services in the Liturgical Year. In each celebration, all Key Stage 2 year groups will be actively represented or involved by assuming a role of ministry, (e.g. by serving, reading, singing, playing music, responding, dancing, acting, offertory procession).

Pupils are increasingly given opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy. Currently, pupil leadership is modelled and led particularly through the Mini Vinnies, with a clear intention to extend opportunities for leading class prayer,

readings, music, reflections and symbolic actions across the wider pupil body, appropriate to age and stage of formation.

The school holds an annual Spirituality Day in the Summer Term in which the children have time to consider the presence of God in their lives.

The classes take part in learning during the day including:

- Use of class-based prayer areas, linked to the liturgical year and RE themes
- Activities in class based on the Year which the church is celebrating e.g. The 2025 Jubilee, and Jubilee of St Francis of Assisi 2026-27
- An opportunity for the children to compose their own special prayers which will be placed in their prayer box which can be located on the RE table in the classrooms
- Children will have spiritual mediation led by the class teacher
- Visiting the prayer garden (Jack's Garden).
- Art activity using Religious pictures as a focus.

The Prayer Spaces

Dedicated prayer spaces are provided throughout the school to support children's spiritual development and opportunities for reflection, prayer and encounter with God.

Each classroom has a prayer area which is used daily and is updated regularly to reflect the liturgical season, RE themes and the lived experience of the children. These prayer areas support class-based prayer, moments of stillness, and opportunities for children to contribute their own written prayers and intentions.

In addition, there is a prayer station located in the front entrance of the school, which provides a visible and welcoming space for pupils, staff, parents and visitors to pause for prayer and reflection. This helps to witness to the Catholic identity of the school and makes prayer a natural and accessible part of the daily life of the school community.

Outdoor prayer and reflection opportunities are also provided through the school prayer garden (Jack's Garden), enabling children to encounter God through nature and creation.

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

6. 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. 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.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy take place regularly and form part of the school's wider cycle of review of Catholic life and mission, including RE and Collective Worship.

- regular observations of prayer and liturgy across classes and whole-school worship
- pupil voice, including reflection and evaluation by pupils involved in leading prayer and liturgy (e.g. Mini Vinnies)
- staff reflection and feedback following whole-school liturgies and key celebrations
- governor involvement in monitoring the Catholic life of the school, including prayer and liturgy
- feedback from parish clergy and diocesan advisers, where appropriate

Findings from monitoring and evaluation are used to identify strengths and areas for development, and inform planning, staff formation and the ongoing development of prayer and liturgy across the school.

APPENDIX ONE- Progression of Prayers

Year	Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Traditional Formal Oral Prayers	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross
		Hail Mary	Hail Mary	Hail Mary	Hail Mary	Hail Mary	Hail Mary	Hail Mary
		Our Father	Our Father	Our Father	Our Father	Our Father	Our Father	Our Father
		Glory Be	Glory Be	Glory Be	Glory Be	Glory Be	Glory Be	Glory Be
Liturgical Prayers and Responses	Simple responses e.g. Amen	Simple responses e.g. Amen	Simple responses same as EYFS and...	Prayers at Mass (Lord have mercy, Prayers of Intercession e.g. Lord hear our prayer, Children's Eucharistic Prayer II)	Prayers at Mass as in KS1 and Penitential Rite	Prayers at Mass as in KS1, Penitential Rite, Glory to God (Gloria)	Prayers at Mass as in KS1, Penitential Rite, Glory to God (Gloria), Rite of dismissal and Holy holy, holy	Prayers at Mass as in KS1, Penitential Rite, Glory to God (Gloria), Holy holy, holy, Rite of dismissal and Lamb of God
		And with your Spirit	Mass responses		Blessing and giving of the ashes	All Mass prayers and responses including:		
		Peace be with you Greeting the Gospel (acclamation)	Prayers used at Baptism	Prayer for Lent (This is the wood of the cross)	Some simple phrases from the psalms	Eucharistic acclamations	Eucharistic prayers for Masses with children	Eucharistic prayers for Masses with children
		Simple litanies of thanks and praise.	Simple examination of conscience/ review of the day			Take part in Mass Renewal of Baptismal promises	Litany of the Saints	Litany of the Saints
		Prayers for the blessing of the					Take part in Mass	Take part in Mass

		Advent wreath Prayers for the blessing of the Advent candles				Blessing and giving of the ashes Some simple phrases from the psalms	Renewal of Baptismal promises Blessing and giving of the ashes Some simple phrases from the psalms	Renewal of Baptismal promises Blessing and giving of the ashes Some simple phrases from the psalms
Gesture and Action	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	Sign of the Cross	As in KS1 and...	As in KS1 and...	As in KS1 and...	As in KS1 and...
	Sign of Peace Join hands together Hold hands	Sign of Peace Join hands together Hold hands Lift hands up	Sign of Peace Join hands together Hold hands Lift hands up Bow Use Holy Water	Sign of Peace Join hands together Hold hands Lift hands up Stand up for the Gospel Reading Genuflection Bow Use Holy Water Cross hands across chest for blessing at Communion	As in KS1 and... Sign forehead, lips and heart to greet the Gospel Take part in Offertory Procession Make a throne for God (to receive Holy Communion)	As in KS1 and... Sign forehead, lips and heart to greet the Gospel Take part in Offertory Procession Make a throne for God (to receive Holy Communion) Strike chest three times as words 'through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault' are said in the Penitential Act	As in KS1 and... Sign forehead, lips and heart to greet the Gospel Take part in Offertory Procession Make a throne for God (to receive Holy Communion) Strike chest three times as words 'through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault' are said in the Penitential Act	As in KS1 and... Sign forehead, lips and heart to greet the Gospel Take part in Offertory Procession Make a throne for God (to receive Holy Communion) Strike chest three times as words 'through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault' are said in the Penitential Act
Informal Prayer	Nursery Prayer	Prayerful reflection of the day (Morning and End of the day Prayers)	Prayerful reflection of the day (Morning and End of the day Prayers)	Prayerful reflection of the day (Morning and End of the day Prayers)	As in KS1 and...	As in KS1 and...	As in KS1 and...	As in KS1 and...
	School Motto	Grace before meals Grace After Meals Simple litanies of thanks and praise.	Grace before meals Grace After Meals Simple litanies of thanks and praise.	Grace before meals Grace After Meals Simple litanies of thanks and praise.	Spontaneous prayer	Spontaneous prayer	Spontaneous prayer	Spontaneous prayer

		School Motto	School Motto	School Motto				
Silence and Reflection	Begin to take part in simple still exercises.	Take part in simple still exercises.	The ability to maintain stillness for a few moments and think quietly.	The ability to maintain stillness for a few moments and think quietly. Rest hands on knees.	Participate in extended periods of stillness and quiet thoughts.	Participate in extended periods of stillness and quiet thoughts Breath in and out.	Take part in guided meditation. Going on a journey.	Take part in guided meditation. Going on a journey.
Independent skills of prayer and worship	To begin to be able to understand the reasons for a focus point, to aid prayer and choose with support an appropriate coloured cloth and artefact.	To be able to understand the reasons for a focus point, to aid prayer and choose with support an appropriate coloured cloth and artefact.	To be able to independently choose artefacts and cloths for focus areas and contribute a prayer independently when asked.	To be able to compile an appropriate focus area on a given theme, choose a hymn and contribute prayers independently.	To be able to plan and deliver a simple liturgy for their peers choosing an appropriate scripture story, hymn/ song. and focal area	To be able to plan and deliver a liturgy for their peers that incorporates meaning and links to questions of faith.	To be able to plan and deliver a liturgy for another class/ parents that identifies links with scripture and their faith. Begin to contribute to focal/ prayer areas around the school.	To be able to plan and deliver a range of liturgies for various audiences that engages all participants in a thought provoking manner. Take responsibly for focal/ prayer areas around the school. thereby contributing to the chaplaincy of the school.