



## Prayer and Liturgy Policy

### School Mission Statement

*“Learning and Growing as children of God”*

#### **The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy**

We believe that Christian prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It 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.

#### **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 understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that prayer and liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from prayer and liturgy. However, given the importance of this in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

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

As a rule, prayer and liturgy will take place on the school premises. However, the Governing Body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, church grounds.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

#### **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 an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the 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:

- to contemplate something of the mystery of God
- to reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- to explore their own beliefs
- to respond to and celebrate life
- to experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- to develop a common ethos and shared values
- to enrich religious experience
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development
- to reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- to reinforce positive attitudes
- to participate fully
- to take time out to ‘wonder at’, ‘to come to terms with’ and ‘to give worth to.’

### **Principles**

All prayer and liturgy in this school will aim to:

- raise our mind and heart to God
- celebrate the presence of God in our life and school community
- be a high quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- support learners’ spiritual development
- give learners positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be kept small, wherever possible, or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be simple and well-paced, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings;
- seek to involve learners at all times in preparation and leadership.

### **Organisation**

|                  |  |  |
|------------------|--|--|
| <b>Monday</b>    | Whole School – Gospel Values and hymn singing  | Led by Headteacher   |
| <b>Wednesday</b> | Class based liturgy – Wednesday Word   | Led by teacher or children   |
| <b>Friday</b>    | Whole School Celebration liturgy – Sunday’s Gospel   | Led by Headteacher   |
| <b>Weekly</b>    | Pupil-led, class-based worship<br>Year 6 prayer and liturgy in KS1<br>Class Masses in church (KS2) | Led by teacher or children<br>Led by Y6 children<br>Readings by children |
| <b>Daily</b>     | Traditional prayers and spontaneous prayer, to begin and end the day, and at lunchtime             | Led by teacher or children   |

## **Pupil-led Prayer and Liturgy**

Each week, pupil-led prayer and liturgy takes place in classes. This follows current best practice, recommended by the Diocese: Gather, Listen, Respond, Going Forth and Evaluation.

## **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy**

Prayer and liturgy is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- in consultation with appropriate parties and with reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in learners, skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship, rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Pupils receive differing levels of adult support, to prepare prayer and liturgy, appropriate to their age.

Skill strategy:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Nursery   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children make the sign of the cross, using an adapted phrase. Progression for pre-school children saying the correct words in the summer term</li><li>• Hands together and eyes closed when praying</li><li>• Morning and lunchtime prayers</li><li>• Simple religious songs/hymns chosen by the staff</li></ul>   |
| Reception | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sign of the cross</li><li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li><li>• Know the Lord's Prayer</li><li>• Children choose the aspects of the liturgy through pictorial cards</li><li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li></ul>   |
| Year 1    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sign of the cross</li><li>• Gospel gesture and responses – when able to</li><li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li><li>• Know the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary</li><li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li><li>• Begin to support the planning of prayer and worship, with help from an adult</li><li>• Make things for the worship floor book, based on 'Go Forth'</li><li>• Simple evaluation of worship</li></ul>              |
| Year 2    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sign of the cross</li><li>• Gospel gesture and responses</li><li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li><li>• Know the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and Parish Prayer</li><li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li><li>• Begin to support the planning and delivery of prayer and worship, with help from an adult</li><li>• Make things for the worship floor book, based on 'Go Forth'</li><li>• Simple evaluation of worship</li></ul> |
| Year 3    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sign of the cross</li><li>• Gospel gesture and responses</li><li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li></ul>   |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
|        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary and Parish Prayer. Create own prayers</li> <li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li> <li>• Begin to support the planning and delivery of prayer and worship, with help from an adult – increasing as the year progresses</li> <li>• Make things for the worship floor book, based on 'Go Forth'</li> <li>• Simple evaluation of worship</li> </ul>   |
| Year 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign of the cross</li> <li>• Gospel gesture and responses</li> <li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li> <li>• Know the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Parish Prayer and other traditional prayers. Create own prayers</li> <li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li> <li>• Children plan and deliver prayer and worship, with support from an adult when needed</li> <li>• Evaluation of worship, recorded on planning sheet and in floor book</li> </ul>   |
| Year 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign of the cross</li> <li>• Gospel gesture and responses</li> <li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li> <li>• Know the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Parish Prayer and other traditional prayers. Create own prayers</li> <li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li> <li>• Children plan and deliver prayer and worship, choosing their own themes, with support from an adult when needed</li> <li>• Evaluation of worship, recorded on planning sheet and in floor book</li> </ul>  |
| Year 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign of the cross</li> <li>• Gospel gesture and responses</li> <li>• Morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers</li> <li>• Know the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, Parish Prayer and other traditional prayers. Create own prayers</li> <li>• Children choose items for the worship table from a selection</li> <li>• Children plan and deliver prayer and worship, with limited support from an adult, including 'Go Forth' activity</li> <li>• Evaluation of worship, recorded on planning sheet and in floor book</li> <li>• Simplify and deliver prayer and liturgy to infant classes</li> </ul> |

## Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, resources, leaders, learner groupings and evaluations
- and in our liturgy floor books.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year, the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all learners and whether learners are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship. This may prompt additional training or resourcing.

## **Resources**

Bibles and age appropriate Gospels are located in the classrooms. Prayer books and other prayer and liturgy related materials are also based in the classrooms. Further materials are available in the music room and teachers support children's planning through suggestions provided by the Diocese and other Catholic organisations, such as Cafod, Missio, Ten Ten Magister and the Wednesday Word.

Each classroom has a crucifix and an area as a focus for prayer and liturgy. The school has a 'Worship Area' just inside the entrance area and a focus for whole school worship in the hall. Materials for worship focal points are also provided by the RE Subject Leader.

## **Eucharist**

Eucharistic celebrations in school highlight a special occasion such as the start of the each school term or end of year, holy days of obligation, founder day or leavers' celebrations. Each week, class Masses are led by junior classes and parents/parishioners are invited to attend. The same general principles apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship - opportunities for learners to participate will be maximised, as directed by the parish priest.

## **The Subject Leader for Prayer and Liturgy**

The Subject leader for prayer and liturgy is Mr Mark FitzGibbon.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the prayer and liturgy Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors, in particular, will play a most important role.

Policy updated in June 2024

## **Appendix 1**

### The Role of the Co-ordinator for prayer and liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy, which may at times form part of the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of learners
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it
- Organising themes for prayer and liturgy
- Assisting the governors to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating
- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing, on occasions, an act of prayer and liturgy

### Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of acts of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and SLT regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre Professional development/ongoing formation
- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- Keeping up-to-date by personal reading

### Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc
- Budgeting efficiently

## **Appendix 2**

### **School Prayers**

#### **Morning Prayer**

O my God, I give to you,  
All that I think or say or do.  
All my work and happy play,  
I will give to you today.  
Amen

#### **Lunchtime Prayers**

These vary and are chosen by the class to be age appropriate

#### **End of Day Prayer**

God our Father, I come to say,  
'Thank you for your love today.  
Thank you for my family,  
and all the friends you give to me.  
Guard me in the dark of night,  
and in the morning send your light.'  
Amen

#### **Traditional Prayers**

Our Father who art in heaven  
Hallowed be thy name  
Thy kingdom come  
Thy will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses  
As we forgive those who trespass against us  
And lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
Amen

Hail Mary full of grace  
The Lord is with thee  
Blessed art thou amongst women  
And blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus  
Holy Mary, Mother of God  
Pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death  
Amen

Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end.  
Amen

**Parish Prayer**

Father in Heaven, pour out Your Spirit on the people of our Parish.  
Help us to recognize Your will for us as individuals and as a Parish Community.  
Grant us a new understanding of Your Word  
and a new commitment to Your service  
so that we truly share and show Your love  
to all those we meet in our daily lives.  
We ask this through Christ Our Lord.  
Amen.

**Prayer to St Michael**

St. Michael the Archangel,  
defend us in the day of battle.  
Be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the enemy.  
May God restrain him, we humbly pray,  
and do thou,  
O Prince of the Heavenly host,  
by the power of God,  
thrust down to hell Satan, and all the evil spirits,  
who wander through the world for the ruin of souls.  
Amen.