Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School
PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

School Mission Statement

We are inspired by the teachings of Jesus Christ who is at the heart of all that we do.

Working in unity with our families, parish and community, we encourage and support the children to grow in faith and reach their full potential in a happy, caring and loving environment.

At Our Lady and St Edward's we continually strive to develop the full potential of the school community in an environment permeated by the Catholic Faith and promoting Gospel values.

At the heart of our mission is the family, school and parish, each supporting and working in mutual co-operation for the benefit of the children.

We are seeking to enrich the lives entrusted to our care through a broad and balanced curriculum designed to meet the needs of each pupil.

The school provides opportunities for young children to develop spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically and emotionally, and share their qualities, abilities and ambitions thus fulfilling individual potential.

As a worshipping community we respect all people and create a loving, caring atmosphere which overflows into an ethos of warmth and welcome towards parents, parish and the local community.

"In every child there is a space only God can fill" St Thomas Aquinas

Introduction

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

In any school there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.

Prayer → Liturgical Prayer → Liturgy

Christian meditation — Service of the Word

Sacraments:

Prayer before meals — Assembly — Liturgy of Hours — Mass

Penance — **Devotions** — **Benediction**

Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	**Structured (often 4 part)**	**Taken from official books**
One or two elements	**Elements drawn from liturgy**	**Complex structure**
Balance of familiarity & creativity	**Places of Scripture**	**Many elements**
	Contrasts and creativity	**Range of ministry**

In Catholic terminology 'worship' is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to
open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God's world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

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.

'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.'[1]

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered 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. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

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. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

[1] Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will 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 that those which are specifically structured, within Come and See RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic School
Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy
Prayer and liturgy in Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using 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 acts of prayer in Our Lady and St Edward's Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.[2] Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration
Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

[2] Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.
A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Day	Worship	Time
Monday	Whole school Gospel and prayer led by Headteacher	9.00-9.30
Tuesday	Pupil /teacher led prayer-class level	Individual class timetable
Wednesday	Teacher led prayer using 10:10 resources	Individual class timetable
Thursday	Pupil /teacher led prayer-class level	Individual class timetable
Friday	Whole school worship and celebration	10.10-10.40

Leading Prayer and Liturgy
As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. At times this may be led by the DHT or other senior leader. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Planning
Liturgical Prayer at Our Lady and St Edward's is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the Religious Education Curriculum Directory and significant dates in the curriculum. When planning for Liturgical Prayer, both staff and pupils have an active part and will take the following into consideration:
- The four parts: Gather, Word, Response and Mission
- Participation of others
- RE themes and the 'Gospel for the week'
- Liturgical themes
- Celebrations, achievements and experiences of others
- The 'think, see, hear and do' approach

Recording
Prayer and liturgy is recorded in a whole school folder and in each class folder.

Monitoring and Evaluation
Prayer and liturgy is recorded using prayer and liturgy planning sheets.
Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

Resources
The school has a wide range of resources which support the delivery of the Prayer and Liturgy calendar. These are mainly located in classrooms and the Headteacher's office.

Eucharist
Eucharist celebrations form a very important part of our Collective Worship. Opportunities for

children to participate are maximised and parents and other members of the community and Parish community are encouraged to attend. The celebrations will take the following forms:
- Whole school Masses in church led by classes on a rota
- Class masses in church
- Whole school masses for celebrations such as Saints Days and Holy Days of Obligation

The learning environment
'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment' [3]
Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Retreats
Retreat days are represented by pupils across the school. These retreat days include MECMAT Trust celebrations, joint ecumenical service with St John's CofE school. Prayer stations during Advent. Shared CAFOD event with feeder primary schools and the high school. Welcome Mass at the high school. Attending Parish rosary sessions each October.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy
Mrs K Woods is the prayer and liturgy lead.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator 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.

Approved by Governors 25th June 2026
To be reviewed June 2028

[3] Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher 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 school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- 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

Collective Worship and Prayer Progression

Collective Worship Skills Progression		Prayer Progression
Year	What we want the children to be able to do to plan, deliver and evaluate acts of worship:	
EYFS/Year 1	• Teacher led • Sign of Cross • Response to questions asked • Select appropriate colour cloth for the liturgical time of the year • Select crucifix, open Bible, lit candle and begin to explain why • Select other appropriate artefacts to match the theme • Participate in preparing the focal area with these items • Make the sign of the cross • Put their hands together ready to pray • Know that the sign of the cross is a special sign and that it marks the beginning and the end of the liturgy • Teacher selects appropriate scripture passage and reads, explaining how it links to the theme • Offer simple spontaneous prayers, with support • Use appropriate responses as modelled by the teacher, explaining how the activity response links to the theme • Take part in appropriate reflection as supported by staff • Take part in silent prayer times/meditation up to one minute • Teacher articulates the stages within the liturgy • Teacher guides children to evaluate the liturgy • Children can begin to say how the liturgy makes them feel	By the end of the year, as well as the Sign of the Cross, children are encouraged through teacher modelling to generate their own spontaneous sorry, asking and thank you prayers EYFS Morning Prayer End of the Day Prayer The Lord's Prayer Hail Mary Year 1 As above Grace before meals Grace after meals Prayer at the end of the day
Y2	Yr2 to generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy. Whole class to evaluate liturgy,recorded on proforma. As above plus: • Teacher models links between sections of the liturgy, commenting on what is happening next and why, giving more detail than FS as to how this links • Children more confident in spontaneous prayer • Children know appropriate responses	As above Glory Be

	• Children can respond to the Gospel appropriately making the sign of the cross on the forehead, lips and heart and begin to explain why • With support, children can begin to select an appropriate Bible story – teacher to explain / help the children leading explain why the scripture choice links with the theme • Take part in appropriate reflection as suggested by the children – teacher to explain / help the children leading explain why/how the activity links with the theme • Take part in silent prayer time/meditation up to 2 minutes • Takes part in evaluation as guided by the teacher • Children can say how the liturgy makes them feel, what they enjoy and what they can improve	
LKS2	Yr3 to generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy, and plan their own mission for children to complete the liturgy. Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on proforma. Yr4 – Children to generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy, a response to the word, and plan their own mission for children to complete the liturgy. Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on proforma. As above plus: • Teacher supports the children to begin to articulate and explain the links between the stages of the liturgy so that this flows appropriately and the theme follows through from beginning to end • Children can select a Bible story and can begin to explain why and how it links to the theme. Adult to support children's selection of appropriate Bible story and support them where needed in explaining how it links with the theme • With support, children can plan a 'response' or reflection appropriate to the theme of the liturgy • Children are confident in spontaneous prayers • Children can articulate how they can live out the mission • Take part in silent prayer/ meditation for up to 3 minutes • Children can evaluate the liturgy with greater confidence and some independence as supported by staff • Children can articulate how the liturgy makes them feel and give appropriate evaluations	Morning Offering Y3 Grace before meals Y3 Grace after meals Y3 Prayer at the end of the day Y4 The Apostles' Creed Y4 An Act of Contrition Y3 Angel of God Y3 The Prayer of St Richard of ChichesterY4 Come, Holy Spirit Y4
UKS2	Children to use Open Bible online resource to select a reading linked to the theme provided on liturgical calendar. Pupils to then find the passage in Bible to add to their prayer focus. Children to	The Rosary Y5 The Magnificat Y6 Act of Faith Y6 Act of Hope Y6

	generate their own gather, response, word and mission according to the theme. They may use songs, actions, prayers, classroom resources within the liturgy. We encourage active participants throughout. This is overseen by an adult, and guided only when necessary. Evaluation is recorded on proforma following whole class discussion. Children are encouraged to give reasons for their responses and recommendations. As above plus: • Children can independently plan and prepare all aspects of the liturgy • They explain confidently why prayers, scripture, responses have been chosen and how these link with the theme; and weave these explanations into the liturgy • Adult to support children's selection of a more diverse range of scripture passages linked to theme to enable their repertoire to extend. • Spontaneous prayers are confident • Children can confidently say how the mission links to the theme and its choice is appropriate • Children can take part in silent prayer/meditation up to 4 minutes • Children can confidently articulate the impact that the liturgy has on them and suggest and follow through independently outcomes of evaluations • The liturgy is overseen by the adult, guided only when necessary with minimal teacher talk and support throughout	Act of Love Y6