

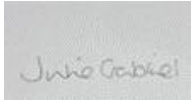


Sacred Heart School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

At Sacred Heart School we all aspire to provide a happy, safe and secure environment in which every child is encouraged to achieve their full potential.

This policy is applicable to all pupils, including those in EYFS.

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Approved by:	SLT Signed and approved by Julie Gabriel on behalf of the Governing Body 
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Worship and prayer are central to the life of the school and are embedded in the whole curriculum, thus safeguarding, supporting and strengthening the spiritual life of all. (Mission Statement)

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that prayer and liturgy in our 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 a relationship with Him, 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.' (Marcus Stock (2012), Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

Statement of requirement

We acknowledge the legal requirement to provide an act of daily Collective Worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, (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 9.4 Model prayer and liturgy policy). We also acknowledge that prayer and liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)). However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy 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 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.

Definition of terms

At Sacred Heart School there is a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, and celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy has its own character:

- **Prayer** is the "lifting up of the hearts and minds to God." It has a simple structure with one or two elements and includes a balance of familiarity and creativity.
- **Celebrations of the Word** are structured (often in four parts) with elements drawn from liturgy. The Word of God is proclaimed during a Celebration of the Word.
- **Liturgies** are taken from official books and include a set structure to be followed, words to be spoken, gestures to be performed and symbols to be used. They include Masses and Sacraments of Reconciliation.
- **Assemblies** are school gatherings which are used to inform, instruct and recognise achievements. At Sacred Heart School, all assemblies begin with prayers.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Sacred Heart 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.

However, prayer and liturgy in Sacred Heart School is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of our school life, is central to the Catholic tradition and is at the heart of our school.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

The Church recognises parents/carers as the first and primary educators of their children and therefore, we aim to assist and support parents/carers in the education and religious formation of their child, seeking to work in close partnership with them. When we celebrate Mass with the parish family, we aim to foster strong links with the wider community.

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

- To hear and respond to the Word
- To contemplate something of the mystery of God and His creation
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs and allow opportunities to deepen their own relationship with God
- 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 develop the skills of:
 - Reverence
 - Contemplation
 - Reflection
 - Interpretation
 - Empathy
 - Meditation
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding
- To develop an awareness, experience and understanding of the place/role of symbol to express feelings and beliefs.
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ
- To nurture and celebrate the uniqueness of each individual as a member of God's family, enabling them to fulfil their God-given talents, to be the best they can be
- To prepare for life in modern Britain and celebrate the diverse world we live in

Principles

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- 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.

Responsibility

a. Governors

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.
- the Coordinators for prayer and liturgy are responsible for Prayer and Liturgy in the school. At Sacred Heart School the people responsible are Johanna Collyer (Head) and Antonia Gabriel (Deputy Head).
- the Prayer and Liturgy policy is updated regularly and shared with all staff and governors. It is available on our school website for parents to see.
- 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
- the headteacher is also one of the leaders for prayer and liturgy alongside the the RE coordinator (Antonia Gabriel)
- 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

The Prayer and Liturgy Coordinators will 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 and they will purchase new ones when required. This might include: visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- induction and support on prayer and liturgy takes place for new members of staff as required
- staff have access to effective training 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 the parish priest and the Sacred Heart Church parish especially when orders of service are written for Masses.
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure we keep updated with best practice.

d. Teaching staff and other adults

Teaching staff and other adults will ensure that:

- Christian values are held at the core of all learning
- they form positive relationships where a high level of self-esteem is fostered
- they provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for all
- they have an opportunity to discuss and contribute towards the school's approach to prayer and liturgy
- they keep parents/carers informed of any school or class celebrations, liturgies or Masses and invite them to share these when appropriate
- they acknowledge moments of awe and wonder when they occur.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

At Sacred Heart School, prayer and liturgy is an intrinsic part of the school day. We have a whole school Celebration of the Word Assembly each Monday morning which all staff attend. The Sunday Gospel is read during this celebration. On Tuesday mornings, children have a Key Stage assembly which begins and ends with a prayer and on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, each class begins the day with class prayers or a Celebration of the Word. Class prayers are often pupil led. Our Friday morning's Awards Assembly starts with a reflection on the Gospel of the week and prayers. All staff meetings and Governor meetings begin with a prayer. All staff INSET days begin with prayers. Children say grace before lunch and each day ends with our afternoon prayer. There are opportunities for prayer within RE lessons (as part of the Celebrate Lens from the RED) and each classroom has a prayer focus to encourage children to pray whenever they would like to. Our Mary Garden is also available to all children at playtimes for quiet, reflective prayer and class prayers can be held here. We also have weekly separate Hymn Practices for FS/KS1 and for KS2.

We celebrate Mass with the parish on all Holy Days of Obligation and we celebrate Mass at the start of each term and have a special Year 6 Leavers' Mass. We have a special Mass for our Feast Day – the Feast of the Sacred Heart and an Advent Mass. We have a Reconciliation Celebration of the Word, an Ash Wednesday Celebration of the Word and a Celebration of the Word to honour Mary in May culminating with a procession of flowers to our Mary Garden.

Each academic year we devise an Annual Plan for Provision of Prayer and Liturgy and a termly Liturgical Calendar to identify weekly liturgy themes, Masses and class assemblies for the term. In addition, we present Harvest and Mother's Day celebration assemblies during the autumn and spring terms. During the academic year, assemblies may be linked to the work of an aid organisation and drive a fundraising initiative eg CAFOD or in response to a national or international appeal. Year 2 leads a special assembly for Maundy Thursday which includes a Liturgical dance, Year 5 and 6 lead the Stations of the Cross and a Candlemas assembly alongside their Reception Class Buddies. Year 1 leads an assembly on Pentecost. Foundation Stage and KS1 both perform Nativities and Year 6 leads a Nativity tableau and lead the whole school Carol Service. Other year groups choose to lead special assemblies based on a Gospel story of their choice or a liturgical even such as Lent or Advent. The school and parish communities are invited to join us for all Masses and class assemblies.

Voluntary opportunities for prayer and reflection are offered through the Rosary group during May and October and Stations of the Cross during Lent and for private, personal prayer during class prayers or when a pupil or member of staff identifies a need.

The school actively supports and celebrates children who are involved in parish sacramental preparation programmes. Currently the parish programme is led by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinators.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy

In order for prayer and liturgy to be fully effective at Sacred Heart School, we provide children with excellent liturgical opportunities where they can deepen their relationship with God. Prayer and liturgy in our school allows children to:

- feel valued as individuals
- feel safe and secure
- be encouraged to be involved in deciding the form and content of the class prayers and/key stage/whole school liturgies
- be encouraged to choose appropriate readings
- devise their own prayers and pray in a way chosen by them
- be confident when arranging the worship space and preparing an appropriate focus in line with the liturgical year
- welcome all to share their prayers

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 involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims

and policies with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community as well as national and international events.

- to develop skills in pupils that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

The format for Celebration of the Word for our school will be:

Gather – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)

Proclaim – every Celebration of the Word will centre around at least one text from the Bible. The Word of God will be proclaimed from a bible or lectionary.

Respond – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, music, drama, art, poetry etc.) We place our needs before God (intercessory prayers)

Go Forth – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

Timetable for Prayer and Liturgy

	Foundation Stage	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Monday	Whole School Celebration of the Word assembly led by Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher		
Tuesday	Key Stage Assemblies led by class teachers		
Wednesday	Class Prayers/Celebration of the Word led by class teachers		
Thursday	Wow Assembly	Class prayers with pupils taking an active (age-appropriate) role	Class prayers with pupils taking an active role/leading
Friday	Awards Assembly led by Headteacher or a member of SLT		

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded:

- on an APOP and liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings, resources, prayer suggestions and a timetable of evaluation
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Masses

Masses in school will highlight a special occasion and include all children. The same general principles will apply to planning a Mass as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations, we consult with the parish priest to include relevant and accessible readings for the Liturgy of the Word.

All pupils are invited to be active participants at whole school Masses and baptised Catholics are asked to proclaim the Readings.

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 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. At Sacred Heart School resources are kept in each classroom to include prayer books, bibles, statues, crosses, devotional objects and liturgical colours pack. Whole

school and key stage resources are kept in the main corridor under the prayer focus display and organised by liturgical colours and larger items are stored in the Head teacher's and Deputy Headteacher's offices. All staff are able to access these resources when needed.

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 regular whole-staff professional development, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required. The Deputy Headteacher leads staff training for class prayer suggestions at the start of each staff meeting to promote a variety of different forms of prayer.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's Annual Plan for the Provision of Prayer and Liturgy 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. Areas for development will be identified on our school CSED and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinators 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. The RE Governor reports back to the Governing Body on his/her annual visits. Governors are also invited and often able to attend informally school Celebration of the Word assemblies, prayers and Masses during the course of the year.