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**PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY**

 **Our School Mission Statement:**

*Together in Christ we grow in faith and knowledge.*

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***“To be a Catholic without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing.”***

*Prayer makes up the daily fabric of school life. We see it as a friendship with God -frequently talking and questioning. It is central to everything we do. In good times and troubled times, we turn to pray collectively and encourage private spontaneous and creative prayer for all children. It sets the rhythm of the day at St Bede’s. It is the best weapon we have for the children to feel comfortable in a turbulent world and often difficult lives.*

1. **Introduction**

*Regular liturgical celebrations and daily prayers in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church, should be at the heart of school life. (A7.7) The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of learning and teaching should create time for the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and develop a mature spiritual life. (A8.7)*

[**From Christ at the Centre: A Summary of Why the Church Provides Catholic Schools, Rev Marcus Stock STL MA, Director of Schools, 2005**](file:///H%3A%5CDownloads%5CChrist_at_the_Centre.pdf)

The Catholic School is essentially different and distinct from other institutions in both philosophy and practice. Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust recognises the importance of emphasising this distinctiveness in our acts of collective worship. To this end, our acts of worship are designed to:

* Foster and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ
* promote an appreciation of prayer, worship and liturgy
* encourage the participation of pupils so as to reinforce the unique worth of each individual within our community and also.
* in line with the Liturgical Calendar, the directives and the translations of the liturgical books of the Roman Catholic Church.

In accordance with the Scheme of Delegation and the Diocesan Memorandum of Understanding each school in the Trust must provide religious education and collective worship in accordance with the teachings, rites and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church and will be subject to the authority and direction of the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle. The key areas of the distinctive nature of Catholic education are recorded in ‘Principles, Practices and Concerns’ as supplemented by ‘The Common Good in Education’ (Bishops Conference 1996), focusing particularly on the search for excellence as an integral part of the spiritual quest within oneself and within the wider community.

**The Right to Withdraw**

An Academy’s Funding Agreement is drafted to mirror the requirements for Acts of liturgical prayer. Each pupil must take part in a daily act of liturgical prayer unless they have been withdrawn by their parents, or if in the sixth form they have decided to withdraw themselves.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from liturgical prayer and are not required to provide a reason for doing so.

Parents will be encouraged to discuss their decision with the **headteacher** following a request of withdrawal in terms of:

* The elements of worship in which the parent would object to the pupil taking part in.
* The practical implications of their withdrawal.

Alternative provision will be arranged for pupils who are withdrawn from liturgical prayer.

* Alternative provision may involve religious worship relevant to their particular faith or denomination provided that:
* The effect of the alternative provision would not replace the denominational liturgical prayer with that of the statutory, non-denominational worship.

Such arrangements can be made at no additional cost to the school.

The alternative provision will be consistent with the overall purposes of the school curriculum.

The Trust’s Funding Agreement also states that: ‘Where a Mainstream Academy is designated with a religious character in accordance with section 124B of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents) or further to section 6(8) of the [Academies Act 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/32/schedule/1):

b) subject to clause 28, the Company shall comply with the requirements of section 70(1) of, and Schedule 20 to, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as if the Academy were a foundation school with a religious character or a voluntary school, and as if references to ‘the required liturgical prayer’ were references to liturgical prayer accordance with the tenets and practices of the specified religion or religious denomination of the Academy.’

c) the Company shall ensure that all quality of.…. the Academy’s liturgical prayer…are inspected. Such inspection shall be conducted by a person chosen by the Company and the Academy shall secure that such inspection shall comply with the requirements set out in any statutory provision and regulations as if the Academy were a foundation or voluntary school which has been designated under section 69(3) of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 as having a religious character.

Liturgical prayer in a Catholic school is, however, more than just a legal requirement. It is central to Catholic education and is an essential part of the Trust’s overall provision for prayer and worship. We are proudly Catholic in both senses of the word. Everyone in our community is invited to contribute to it and gain from it, regardless of faith, level of belief and commitment.

The inspection of the Trust’s arrangement for the inspection for prayer and liturgy and RE shall be through Section 48 Inspections. The report on Religious Education is produced for the Bishop of Hexham & Newcastle, who under Canon Law 804 and 806, as the Diocesan Bishop he has responsibility for the schools in the diocese, and for the Governing Body of the schools concerned. *“The formation and education in the Catholic religion provided in any school is subject to the authority of the Church…. the diocesan Bishop has the right to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, even those established or directed by members of Religious Institutes”.* ([Canons 804, 806 Code of Cannon Law](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P2N.HTM)).

The Trust is a Eucharistic Community this means that we are a communityrooted in the Catholic tradition, which gathers to celebrate Eucharist on a regular basis. The word “Eucharist” is a translation of the Greek word eucharistia, which means thanksgiving.  Through sharing liturgical life and mutual support for one another, the trust is strengthened to live Christ- centred lives dedicated to spiritual growth and social commitment.

The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch."[*(Catechism of the Catholic Church 1324)*](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p2s2c1a3.htm)

In accordance with the [1988 Education Act](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents) and the [DfE Circular 1/94](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/281929/Collective_worship_in_schools.pdf), liturgical prayer within the Trust provides opportunities for pupils and staff to come together as a community through daily prayer in the classroom, through participation in weekly assemblies and through other liturgical celebrations. Furthermore, through prayer and liturgies we are able to encourage pupils and staff to reinforce positive attitudes they may have within their community. We also highlight and try to change negative attitudes within our society to encourage a common ethos and shared values amongst all.

In accordance with the Trust’s Scheme of Delegation responsibility for arranging liturgical prayers rests with the Local Governing Committee after consultation with the Principal/Headteacher.

**Aims**

The Trust aims to provide opportunities for pupils and staff to come together in community to worship God and to respond to the invitation from God to be in relationship with Him.

Prayer and liturgy reflect the traditions of our Church, taking into account the spiritual 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, faith communities or none.

**We endeavour to do this by:**

* Helping to develop the faith of each individual within our community.
* Promoting the belief that our Trust is a caring community.
* Giving pupils an insight into and understanding of Gospel values.
* Developing an understanding of the responsibilities the Gospel values place upon each individual within the community.
* Developing a sense of mission.
* Encourage those who form part of the worshipping community in church.
* Help those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church.
* Include pupils from other Christian traditions, or none or from other faith backgrounds; and
* Provide an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Therefore, at the start of each day the staff in all of the Trust schools gather as a community and briefing begins with a prayer and a reflection to remind us of all of God’s presence among us.

**2. Vision and Values of Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust**

The Trust has adopted the following vision and values to guide us in our mission and to underpin all that we do:

***Our Vision:***
Our schools will be places of excellence – providing service and witness to children, their families and the wider Catholic community, adding value as a family of schools and enriching the learning and experience of all our young people so they may achieve their full potential.

***Our Values:***

The following values underpin everything the Trust and our Schools will do:

**BEING**Just and Responsible: We seek to act justly, fairly and responsibly in all our relationships to ensure ‘The Common Good’ is upheld.

**PROMOTING**Spiritual and Human Development: We believe a knowledge of and a personal relationship with Christ gives meaning and purpose to our lives.

**ACHIEVING**Quality in Teaching and Learning: We believe everyone should gain dignity and self-worth through quality teaching and learning which allow all in our school community to excel.

**SHOWING**Respect for Every Person: We believe that all are created in the image of God and therefore we will respect the unique and intrinsic value of every person, promoting equality and celebrating diversity.

**CREATING**Community: We believe our schools to be faith communities where Gospel values of truth, honesty, forgiveness and reconciliation are lived and where there is special care for those most in need.

**COMMUNICATING:** We value the views and opinions of the communities whom we serve and will actively engage and respond.

## 3. The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy at Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust

* To reflect upon the mystery that is God;
* To provide opportunities for students and staff to come to know Jesus Christ through prayer and action;
* To heighten pupils’ awareness of questions related to the ultimate mysteries of life and to explore the beliefs and commitments made by themselves and others in response to such questions;
* To grow in liturgical understanding and development with specific reference to the Catholic tradition;
* To respond to life’s challenges, celebrate life’s wonders and comfort and console at times of difficulty;
* To celebrate the richness and diversity of our God given creation and the responsibilities we have for its stewardship;
* To give opportunities for silent contemplation, reflection, personal response and prayer;
* To explore, reflect on, express, affirm, or challenge commonly accepted personal and social values and individually held beliefs;
* To express our faith as a Christian community thus reinforcing the sense of belonging, the development of community spirit, the promotion of a common ethos and the reinforcement of positive attitudes;
* To provide staff and pupils with opportunities to worship God hence enabling individual spiritual moral development; and
* To offer pupils the opportunity to prepare themselves for challenges in their adult life.

**To fulfil these aims we will:**

* Ensure the Act of Worship is seen as part of the total curriculum, an integral part of the life of the school and seen to be important;
* Adopt an approach that is based on educational principles which aid the spiritual development of individuals. Therefore the form, shape and content will be educational;
* Respect the integrity of the individual, to give the opportunity to participate creatively and encourage each to make an individual response to a shared experience;
* Build up accessible resource materials for use in assemblies and the daily act of worship;
* Experiences of prayer and liturgies will be high quality, reflecting the liturgical seasons and feasts of the Church.
* Endeavour to provide a physical environment that is conducive to the above;
* Involve a wider combination of staff, pupils and relevant members of the community in assemblies; and
* Provide an opportunity to review Liturgical Prayer.

**Role of Trust Head of Catholic Life**

The Trust Head of Catholic Life acts as a resource to support to Lay Chaplains and Chaplaincy Teams. Their role is to provide:

* Training and support
* Point of contact
* Identify and meet the training needs of those involved in chaplaincy in our schools
* Oversee spirituality timetables
* Assistance with sacred spaces
* Opportunities to meet and discuss ideas and problem-solve together
* Assistance with the planning and preparation of key Liturgical celebrations including major feasts and seasons across sectors
* Resources for websites

The Trust Head of Catholic Life will work with school Chaplains and those with responsibility for co-ordinating collective worship to develop ideas to:

* Make prayer engaging and meaningful
* Increase involvement of our young people in the prayer life of their school
* Develop whole Trust MAT spirituality events including retreats and liturgies

**The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy**

The role of the Co-ordinator for Collective Worship is detailed at **Appendix 1.**

The coordinator for Collective Worship is Vicky Marley. (see Appendix 1 for job description) who is supported by Geraldine Powell.

**Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinator. It is evaluated and reviewed by the Headteacher, members of Senior Leadership Team and the Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinator with the whole school teaching staff and Governors every two years.

**The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy, Appendix 1**

* Formulating a written policy for Liturgical prayer
* Ensuring that there is a development plan for Liturgical prayer included in the school development plan
* Ensuring that liturgical prayer is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
* Ensuring that liturgical prayer 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 liturgical prayer
* Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to liturgical prayer including withdrawal from liturgical prayer
* 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 Liturgical Prayer and providing feedback
* Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Liturgical prayer

# **Communication**

* Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Liturgical Prayer
* Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
* Acting as consultant to colleagues
* Encouraging positive attitudes towards Liturgical Prayer
* Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Liturgical Prayer
* 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 liturgical prayer
* 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 Liturgical Prayer including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
* Budgeting efficiently

## Organisation of Liturgical Prayer at St Bede’s.

**Planning, content and celebration**

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

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.

Pupils are taught skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing to a token way.

**The timetable of Liturgical prayer is as below.**

Whole school Celebration of the word – Monday morning (30 mins)

Wednesday morning – FS/KS1 celebration of word (20 mins)

Thursday morning – KS2 celebration of the word (20 mins)

Tuesday morning – Hymn practice (30 mins)

Friday afternoon - Angelus led by head boy and head girl followed by celebration assembly

Pupil-led class Liturgical Prayer (15 mins) at a time in class each deemed appropriate by the class teacher. These happen on the day where there is no other celebration of the word.

Celebration of the word take place in the school hall and pupil-led prayer takes place in classrooms, the hall or prayer garden. Mass takes place in St. Bede’s Church.

“Stay and pray” events take part weekly with parents and carers. Classes have rotas for this.

Prayers are also said in classes at the beginning and end of each school day, and before lunchtimes.

In Foundation Stage prayers are also said before snack time.

Mini-Vinnies meetings begin and end with a prayer and these take place fortnightly.

Staff and governor meetings always begin meetings with a prayer.

Rosary group happens once weekly.

The children will also learn prayers that link in with significant liturgical events such as Jubilee Prayers, prayers for new popes, bishops and parish priests and significant world events.

Whole school masses take place half-termly and at specific times i.e. beginning and end of the academic year, beginning of Advent, Easter and Pentecost. Liturgies also take place forHarvest Festival, Ash Wednesday, Lenten services, Memorial services and the May Procession. Bambini are blessed each Advent. Classes also attend masses on a rolling rota on Tuesday mornings to join in with the parishioners. KS2 children will often contribute to mass. Special liturgies also take place during Holy Week and Advent with prayer stations in the school hall and church.

Stations of the Cross takes place during Lent. These are either held in classes using the Stations in Church and/or around the school in smaller groups.

Rosary and prayer group is voluntary and is held once a week.

Travelling cross bags and travelling cribs are sent home to share with family to share key religious celebrations i.e. Easter and Advent. Liturgies are also shared to our families virtually (Facebook, Instagram, School Website) during Advent, Lent and Holy Week.

Children also take part in the following annually: May procession, lesson and carols, Harvest Festival of thanksgiving and beginning and the end of year celebrations.

**Recording**

Collective Worship is recorded in the assembly file on the school system. Teachers have their own prayer and liturgy files for class liturgical prayers. Individual plans are completed for child led liturgical prayers which are monitored by the school chaplain and RE coordinator termly. Floor books evidence high quality celebration of the word that parents engage with.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The subject leader and school chaplain monitors pupil led prayer through class drop-ins, followed up by informal discussions with class teachers and pupils.

Class teachers complete an evaluation form for pupil led liturgical prayers once per term which is sent to the subject leader (Appendix 3).

Liturgical prayer is monitored using Liturgical prayer monitoring form, Appendix 4.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform CSED.

We invite feedback and evaluation from children, parents and staff and welcome opportunities to improve our prayer life.

**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' [[1]](#footnote-1)

**Prayer**

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

**Retreats / Pilgrimages**

Youth Village Festival is held annually for Y6/ children.

Opportunities for retreat are offered for KS2 that are diocese led

Children attend “mini missions” to their catholic feeder schools.

**Sacred Spaces**

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. All hall display reflects our Catholic ethos and are changed in line with liturgical year.

**Holy Mass & Celebration of Sacraments**

Whole school masses take place half-termly and at specific times i.e. beginning and end of the academic year, beginning of Advent, Easter and Pentecost. Liturgies also take place for Harvest Festival, Ash Wednesday, Lenten services, Memorial services and the May Procession. Classes also attend masses on a rolling rota on Tuesday mornings to join in with the parishioners.

**Sacramental Preparation: Supporting Parishes**

Children in Year 4 are invited to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Communion. Children follow the Come and See programme in school and attend extra sessions with catechists from the Parish of St. Bede’s. Parents are invited to attend sessions throughout this programme to support their child. staff attend parish masses to support the FHC children.

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)