Prayer and Liturgy

Policy

St Bernard's High School

Approved by: Full Governing Body	**Date:** July 2025
Last reviewed on: July 2025	
Next review due by: July 2028	

Mission Statement

St Bernard's is a school community that aims to live by Jesus' commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you."

We are a Catholic learning community committed to the ongoing development of the entire potential of every person, achieved through a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

We care for each other as individuals of equal worth, regardless of status, sex, race or religion and thus actively seek to promote safeguarding, justice and fairness.

We provide an atmosphere in which all can grow in our Faith, and encourage this faith by a lively relevant liturgy.

We work with parents, parishes, local communities and industry to prepare our students for the opportunities of adulthood.

1. **The context of this prayer and liturgy policy**

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.' (Marcus Stock (2012), Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

As a Catholic School Community, we are fully inclusive and St Bernard's aims to help all its members in their recognition of Jesus Christ at the heart of their lives, with acts of prayer and worship threaded through its daily life. The purpose is to support all members to mirror and reflect, for and to others, the life of Christ. This is the essence of Discipleship. By "worship" we mean liturgies which enable people to express and confidently declare their faith; inspire and strengthen them in their daily lives and provoke such responses as praise, thanksgiving, joy, love, awe and wonder, commitment, repentance and reconciliation. A fundamental aspect is to facilitate a reflective spirituality, from which faith becomes ever stronger and more fully embedded.

The two main aspects of worship in a Catholic School should be:
• Offering – for example praise, adoration and reconciliation
• Receiving – for example fellowship, forgiveness, inspiration and strength

Liturgy should express in prayer and ritual the spiritual life of those who take part. It should be recognised that there is a strong and interdependent relationship between the Mass and the community, which celebrates it. In other words, the community makes the Eucharist and the Eucharist makes the community. As a Catholic Community the Eucharist must lie at the heart of our worshipping life. St Bernard's seeks to provide a variety of opportunities for worship, in an attempt to meet and engage people at differing stages of their faith journey.

In this faith journey, students should not be passive; rather, they should have opportunities to utilise their God-given talents to enhance the liturgical and spiritual experience of the entire community. This can be achieved through a variety of ministries including: Welcome, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers, Choir, Altar Servers, and Musicians.

2. Statement of requirement

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 9.4 Model prayer and liturgy policy 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 which would be acted on without delay at point of request (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) The Lay Chaplain (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 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 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** (see Annual Plan of Provision for each year plan)

Rhythm of prayer throughout the day

- During form time, at the start of each day.
- At the start of every lesson
- Respectful, reverent and prayerful.
- Prayers can be led by students or staff.
- Opportunity given for spontaneous prayer at the start of every RE lesson.

- Morning prayer in the Chapel
- The Angelus every Friday at midday
- Rosary every morning in the Chapel during the month of May.

Forms of collective worship

Assemblies (Celebration of the Word)

- Weekly assembly for each year group led by SLT/HOY (15-20 mins)

Masses

- Weekly Mass for form groups (each will have 1 per year)
- Year group start of academic year Mass (1 per year group in September)
- Year group start of new calendar year Mass (1 per year group in January)
- Year 7 Harvest Mass (families included)
- Whole school Mass on every Holy Day of Obligation
- End of academic year (Feast Day) Mass
- Year 11 Leavers Mass
- Year 13 Leavers Mass

Sacrament of Reconciliation

- Advent
- Lent

Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass

- Eucharistic Adoration once a term (representatives from each form group to participate throughout the day).

Retreats

- Student retreats at Aylesford (led by 6th Form House Captains and Head Student Team).
- Staff retreat day in January.

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 including our Chapel. 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 (retreat day), 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 will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

8. Review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors.

9. Common prayers

This list is introduced in section 9.5 'Common prayers' of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

Age phase	5-7 (KS1)	7-9 (lower KS2)	9-11 (upperKS2)	11-14 (KS3)
Prayers	The Sign of the Cross The Lord's Prayer Hail Mary Glory Be Grace before meals Grace after meals	The Apostles' Creed Act of Contrition Angel of God Come, Holy Spirit The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester	Morning offering The Rosary The Magnificat Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love	The Benedictus The Angelus Hail Holy Queen The Memorare Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you Eternal rest

Appendix 1 – Common Prayers

Appendix 2 – St. Bernard's School Prayer

Appendix 3 – Mass planning sheet

Appendix 4 – Monitoring/evaluation forms

Appendix 1 - Common prayers

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The sign of the cross is both an action and a statement of faith.
A physical reminder of our redemption in the cross and an expression of faith in the Trinity.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

The Lord's Prayer 'is truly the summary of the whole of the Gospel'. (CCC 2761.)

The Hail Mary

Hail, Mary,
full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among 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.

The first part of the Hail Mary is biblical, drawn from Gabriel's greeting to Mary at the Annunciation and Elizabeth's greeting at the Visitation. The second part of the prayer has its origins in 15th-century Italy.

Glory be to the Father

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

The doxology is a short expression of praise of the Trinity dating back to the early Church. It is used extensively in the Liturgy of the Hours and in devotions such as the Rosary.

Grace before meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts which we are about to receive from your bounty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace after meals

We give you thanks, Almighty God, for all your benefits, who live and reign, world without end. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.
Amen.

Based on baptismal documents of the 8th century but related to texts of an earlier origin.

Act of Contrition

O my God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, and with the help of your grace I will not sin again.

One of the forms of the Penitent's Prayer of Sorrow found in the Rite of Penance.

Angel of God

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

The prayer is based on one by Reginald of Canterbury in the early 12th century.

Come, Holy Spirit

V. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
R. And kindle in them the fire of your love.
V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
R. And you will renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of your faithful, grant that by that same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise, and ever rejoice in your consolation,
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

This prayer is a compilation of a number of liturgical texts drawn from the Mass and Office of Pentecost and the Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of St Richard of Chichester

Thanks be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which you have given me,
for all the pains and insults which you have borne for me.
O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day.
Amen.

Morning Offering

O Jesus, through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer you all my prayers,
thoughts, works and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of your most Sacred heart.

The Rosary

For each mystery or decade, one Our Father, ten Hail Marys and the Glory be is recited.

The Joyful Mysteries (Recited Monday and Saturday)

1. The Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38)
2. The Visitation (Luke 1:39–45)
3. The Nativity (Luke 2:1–7)
4. The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22–35)
5. The Finding in the Temple (Luke 2:41–52)

The Mysteries of Light (Recited Thursday)

1. The Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13–17)
2. The Wedding Feast of Cana (John 2:1–12)

3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom, with the call to Conversion (Mark 1:14–15; 2:3–12)
4. The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28–36)
5. The Institution of the Eucharist (Matthew 26:26–29)

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Recited Tuesday and Friday)

1. The Agony in the Garden (Mark 14:32–42)
2. The Scourging at the Pillar (Matthew 27:15–26)
3. The Crowning with Thorns (Matthew 27:27–31)
4. The Carrying of the Cross (John 19:15–17; Luke 23:27–32)
5. The Crucifixion (Luke 23:33–38, 44–46)

The Glorious Mysteries (Recited Wednesday and Sunday)

1. The Resurrection (Matthew 28:1–8)
2. The Ascension (Acts 1:6–11)
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1–12)
4. The Assumption (1 Thessalonians 4:13–19)
5. The Coronation of Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth (Revelation 12:1; 14:1–5; Isaiah 6:1–3)

Prayer concluding the Rosary [Hail, Holy Queen, etc. as above]
V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.
O God, whose only-begotten Son, by his life, death and resurrection,
has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life, grant, we beseech thee,
that meditating on these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise,
through the same Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked upon his handmaid in her lowliness;
for behold, from this day forward, all generations will call me blessed.
For the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is from age to age for those who fear him.
He has made known the strength of his arm,
and has scattered the proud in their conceit of heart.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and has exalted those who are lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel, mindful of his mercy,

even as he promised to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants for ever.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

Mary's song of praise was first sung to her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:46–55).
It is sung daily at Evening Prayer.

Act of Faith

My God,
I believe in you and all that your Church teaches,
because you have said it,
and your word is true.

Act of Hope

My God,
I hope in you,
for grace and for glory,
because of your promises,
your mercy and your power.

Act of Love

My God,
because you are so good,
I love you with all my heart,
and for your sake,
I love your neighbour as myself.

The Benedictus

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel:
for he has visited his people and redeemed them;
he has raised up for us a horn of salvation in the House of David his servant,
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy ones,
his prophets from ages past:
To grant salvation from our foes,
and from the hand of all who hate us,
showing mercy to our fathers, remembering his holy covenant;
the oath he swore to Abraham our father,
to grant that freed from the hand of our foes,
we may serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life.
And you, little child, will be called the Prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to make ready his ways:
to grant knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins;

Through the tender mercy of our God,
the Dawn from on high will visit us,
to shine on those who sit in darkness,
and those in the shadow of death; to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen.

The Canticle of Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, is taken from Luke's Gospel (Luke 1:68–79). It is sung daily at Morning Prayer.

The Angelus

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among 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.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word.
Hail Mary, full of grace...

V. And the Word was made flesh.
R. And dwelt among us.
Hail Mary, full of grace...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray; Pour forth, we beseech thee, O Lord, thy grace into our hearts; that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ, thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection.
Through the same Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

The Angelus is traditionally said three times a day: at 6am, 12 noon, and 6pm.

Hail, Holy Queen (Salve Regina)

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy,
Hail our life, our sweetness and our hope!
To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.
To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears!
Turn, then, most gracious Advocate,
thine eyes of mercy toward us,
and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

The Salve Regina is one of the Marian Anthems sung at Night Prayer.

The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help, or sought thy intercession, was left unaided.
Inspired by this confidence I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions,
but in thy mercy hear and answer me.
Amen.

A 16th-century version of a longer 15th-century prayer.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

Eternal Rest

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.

Based on the Entrance Antiphon of the Mass for the Dead

Appendix 2 – St. Bernard's School Prayer

Gracious God, in you we find all beginnings and endings.

Help us to show kindness and understanding through open hearts.

Help us to continue to flourish and grow in your love and

Support those in need of your friendship.

Prompt our learning today using our talents and gifts,

So that we may serve you more faithfully.

Prompt our actions with your grace and complete them with your help

So that we may truly love one another as you have loved us.

St. Bernard, pray for us.

Amen

Appendix 3 – Mass planning sheet

Reason for Mass	
Location	
Layout (how many chairs and where – see next sheet for BH1 plan)	
Priest	
Altar servers (how many and names)	
Number of musicians (liaise with JCG) - how many in choir/orchestra/chamber choir	
Hymns chosen for the Mass (liaise with JCG)	
Readings – names of students reading: • First • Psalm • Second • Gospel acclamation	
Bidding prayers – names of students reading and in what language	

Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist – how many needed and names/where are they standing?	

Appendix 4 – Monitoring and Evaluation forms

Form Assembly Evaluation Questions

How would you grade today's assembly overall? *(please circle)*	• Grade 1 – Very good • Grade 2 – Good • Grade 3 – Requires Improvement • Grade 4 – Inadequate
What were the greatest strengths of today's assembly?	
What improvements (if any) could be made to today's assembly?	
How would you grade the prayers said in today's assembly? *(please circle)*	• Grade 1 – Very good • Grade 2 – Good • Grade 3 – Requires Improvement • Grade 4 – Inadequate
How would you grade the readings in today's assembly? *(please circle)*	• Grade 1 – Very good • Grade 2 – Good • Grade 3 – Requires Improvement • Grade 4 – Inadequate
How could the prayers and readings be improved next time?	
How would you grade the hymns/music in today's assembly?	• Grade 1 – Very good • Grade 2 – Good • Grade 3 – Requires Improvement • Grade 4 – Inadequate
How could the hymns/music be improved in future?	

In what other ways could today's assembly be improved upon?	

Form Time Monitoring Form

Tutor Name: _____

Week commencing: _____ Day: _____ Time _____

☐ Uniform Check _____

☐ Equipment on desks _____

☐ School Prayer _____

☐ Tutor Notices _____

☐ Tutor time activities _____

☐ Students engaged _____

D Liturgy Board Updated _____

Areas of Strength:

Areas of concern:

Next Steps:

Week commencing: _____ Day: _____ Time _____

☐ Uniform Check _____

☐ Equipment on desks _____

☐ School Prayer _____

☐ Tutor Notices _____

☐ Tutor time activities _____

☐ Students engaged _____

D Liturgy Board Updated _____

Areas of Strength:

Areas of concern:

Next Steps:

Week commencing: _____ Day: _____ Time _____

☐ Uniform Check _____

☐ Equipment on desks _____

D School Prayer _____

☐ Tutor Notices _____

☐ Tutor time activities _____

☐ Students engaged _____

☐ Liturgy Board Updated _____

Areas of Strength:

Areas of concern:

Next Steps: