

Prayer and Liturgy Policy July 2023

Our Mission

Mission statement

Together as a family community at St. Bernard's we aim to shine and achieve

Jesus teaches us

- **To love God**
- **To love each other**

So we will always try:

- **To love, respect and be kind to each other**
- **To follow the right path**
- **To forgive each other**
- **To take pride in all we do**
- **To be the best that we can**
- **To look after each other**

We follow the example Jesus gave us, so that we can laugh together, work together, smile together and pray together and bring joy to others.

Our Mission Statement commits us to being a “community that prays together”. The practices and procedures set out here help us to fulfill that commitment.

Aims for Worship and Prayer

The provision for prayer and worship in our school seeks to ensure that all pupils and staff will be enabled to:

- ❖ Give glory and honour to God;
- ❖ Reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- ❖ Reflect on and deepen personal belief;
- ❖ Encourage a sense of belonging to a community;
- ❖ Grow in liturgical understanding;
- ❖ Contemplate something of the mystery of God;
- ❖ Wonder at and celebrate life.

What Is Prayer and worship?

“Prayer is a surge of the heart: it is a simple look turned towards heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and love”

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2558

“Worship aims to provide an opportunity for the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2559

“(Worship) may engage those involved in prayers of Blessing, Adoration, Petition, Thanksgiving and Praise”

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2626 -2649

Worship may include

Silence	Meditation	Prayer of Adoration
Poems	Singing	Prayer of Praise
Scripture	Sayings	Prayer of Thanksgiving
Ritual	Dance	Prayer of Petition
Processions	Visuals	Prayer of Imagination
Drama	Gestures	Spontaneous prayer
Movement	Using artefacts	Traditional prayer
Sharing food	Sharing thoughts	Shaking Hands

An act of worship should:

- Begin with something which gathers/draws the community together
- Focus more deeply on the theme
- Involve the Word of God
- Conclude with a sense of renewed and deepened relationship with God

Our Acts of Worship should be:

short and **simple** (ie uncluttered and understandable)

orderly but **informal**

and have **variety**.

Introduction

Prayer, worship and liturgical celebrations are central to our Catholic tradition and form an integral part of the school day.

A child's relationship with God will grow if there is communication. In prayer we become aware of God's presence with us and His Love for us – we listen to Him in order to discover His will for us , and we express our gratitude, praise , love and admiration.

Prayer must, therefore, be encouraged in a variety of methods –private individual prayer, group prayer, whole school prayer- and it should sometimes be informal as well as formal.

It is essential that we provide an atmosphere and situations which complement, extend and enrich, through the experience of the school community, the religious formation provided by the home and parish.

In this context as well as preparing children for a more real participation in the Eucharist celebration of the parishes, school assemblies collective worship, should be directed towards the expression and celebration of our school community.

The experiences we provide should try to show the children “where they are” and that it is from here that they can go to God. Clearly scripture and doctrine must be basic, but everything else that can contribute to the search for the meaning can be explored e.g. music, art, literature, dance etc.

Music/hymns singing is an activity in which ALL can play an active part in praising the Lord

Our Parish priest will visit for liturgical celebrations and Mass may be celebrated in school for individual class/whole school Mass – where parents and parishioners should always be made welcome.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

Foundation Governors are the Bishop's representatives and have responsibility for ensuring that prayer and worship are in accordance with Canon Law, the Bishop's directives and Diocesan Guidance. The Governors as a whole have responsibility for determining policy and for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for 'Collective Worship' are in place after consultation with the head teacher.

Headteacher

Is responsible for the organisation of prayer and worship in accordance with the policy of the Governors.

Subject Leader

The role of the Subject leader includes arranging times, places, resources, planning, preparation and leadership of the whole variety of prayer and worship that takes place in the school.

Teachers

Are witnesses to the life of prayer and worship in the school? They have a key role in ensuring by their words and deeds that they provide encouragement and support for the aims and purposes of this policy.

Young Prayer Leaders

Some of our Year 6 children take on the role of Young Prayer Leaders. They lead prayer and liturgy in our Nursery each week, prepare prayers and scripture to display in school and support with leading Bible Club with Year 2.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. Parents and prospective parents should be aware of the importance of prayer and worship in the life of the school and that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place spontaneously in a variety of contexts and at various times.

Should parents wish to withdraw their children they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies for Curriculum religious education, PSHE, behavior and pastoral care. All these policies contribute to the spiritual development of pupils and identify a variety of roles which will be fulfilled in a spirit of co-operation and collaboration.

Guidelines

Clear guidance about sensitive issues such as about Eucharist etc children of other faiths

Celebrating Eucharist in school – see existing diocesan guidance

Celebrating with pupils of other faiths – see 'The Catholic School and Other Faiths' p.27

Retreats and away days

Visitors

Visitors who are invited to lead prayer and worship in the school may be bound by their own professional codes of conduct. In school situations they should be made aware of and work within the school's prayer and worship policy.

Monitoring, review and evaluation

Monitoring of Prayer & Liturgy will be undertaken by the Headteacher/Subject leader on a continuous basis and reports given to the Headteacher & Governor who will conduct any necessary follow up, including affirmation, encouragement and guidance.

The Programme: principles and provision

Principles

All acts of prayer and 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 pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and faith background;
- ❖ Be attentive to the liturgical life of the Church;
- ❖ Be of suitable depth and duration;
- ❖ Respect the freedom of pupils and staff in the invitation to prayer and worship

Planning

The programme, formal and informal, of prayer and worship is to be planned

- ❖ with the structure of the liturgical year, significant times and seasons in the life of the school, and the whole curriculum in mind;
- ❖ in consultation with appropriate parties and with reference to the aims and purposes of prayer and worship as set out in this policy;
- ❖ to ensure genuine acts of prayer and worship;
- ❖ To develop in pupils and staff the skills that enable them to participate, prepare, organise and lead prayer and worship.

Organisation

The Senior Leadership Team & Subject leader will arrange the prayer and worship programme indicating the days, dates, times, timings, pupil groupings, leadership, venues. The week will always start with Gospel Assembly – sharing the Gospel from the Day before. The theme will run through the whole week. Class assemblies and class collective worships may echo the theme. However at times other appropriate themes may also be used.

Acts of prayer & liturgy with children should last about one minute for each year of the child's life eg 5 minutes for Foundation stage, 10 minutes for Year 6. As we feel it is appropriate, they may be involved in longer prayer and liturgy sessions - particularly whole school or key stage prayer and liturgy

To help children develop a sense of prayer it is important to have places for quiet reflection.

Each classroom will have its own collective worship area where children can focus their attention and thoughts. On entry to St. Bernard's there are always prayers displayed in the environment to reflection and demonstrate the prayerful nature of our school

Prayer may take place in classrooms, in the hall, in the outdoor prayer area or any quiet place inside or outside of school.

It is important however, that children become aware that they can talk to God any time and any place.

Programme

Leaders will include a variety of opportunities for all staff and pupils to participate, prepare and lead prayer and worship. It will provide for a variety of school groupings at different times of the day, week, term and year.

Planning sheets for children to use to support them in planning and leading worship are included as an appendix to this policy

Resources

A developing bank of resources is kept in each classroom and in the Liturgy area in the hall.

Recording

Those responsible for Collective Worship may keep a record on the Collective Worship planner provided. Other acts of prayer and worship will be recorded via the use of displays, service leaflets, photographs and entries in the Catholic Life of the school floor book.

Time table for Collective Worship – there may be variations due to significant events.

Monday	Key Stage 1 Gospel assembly 9:00 am Key Stage 2 assembly 10:00 am
Tuesday	Class collective worship led by pupils – various times
Wednesday	Class assembly 9:00, parents invited
Thursday	Class collective worship - various times
Friday	Whole school collective worship 9:00 am

Where there is no planned collective worship:

- Each class should begin and end the morning with a prayer.
- Each class should begin and end the afternoon with a prayer.

Prayers may be traditional prayers or prayers made up by children.

Appendix 1

Planning guide

There are four elements to be considered when planning acts of prayer and worship.

These are:

- Gathering

- Word
- Symbolic action/response
- Mission/sending out

Here are just some examples of each.

Gathering	The word of God	Symbolic action/response	Mission /sending out
Stand quietly Form circle Silence stillness Sit Music Join hands Enter differently Create a focus Light a candle Turn lights off Process Invite Singing	Read Drama Poetry PowerPoint Art Mime Pictures Dance Listen Story Slides Puppets Song Video Sculpt	Light candle Sign of the cross Breaking bread Burn paper Respond to psalm or reading Passing on – water, bread, focus object Presents Blessing Ashes Wash hands Acclamation Offerings Anointing Hold hands Burn incense Shake hands	Invite to leave when ready Singing Processing Moment of silence Action or task accepted Commitment outreach

Planning sheet for collective worship

Our Theme

Some ideas

How will we start

What will we say or read?

How will everyone join in?

Do we want music?

Do we want a prayer?

Planning sheet for collective worship

Our theme	
What we can look at	What we can sing
What we can listen to	What we can all do
What prayer we can say	How it will end

Planning sheet collective worship

Our theme
Gathering – how will we begin?
The Word - what scripture will we read/act out
The response – how we will all take part
Prayer Hymns/songs/Music
The mission/sending out - how we will end it?
Other ideas