

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



LOVE LEARN ACHIEVE

St John Fisher Mission Statement

The school, in partnership with parents, carers and with the parish of St John Fisher, offers to each one of its children a Catholic education centred on Christ, which enables them to grow in God's love, learning to be the best they can be in accordance with Christian values.

Approved by: Mrs. K. Blom

Date: July 2023

Last reviewed on: July 2023

Next review due by: July 2024

The context of this prayer and liturgy policy

'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.)

At St John Fisher School, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life. We aim to be a living, loving and sacramental community which is inspired by the life of Christ and the teachings of the Church, rooted in Gospel values. We hope that from the minute you enter our school you clearly see and feel that we are a Catholic community.

Statement of requirement

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools 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; Instrument of Government, clause 2).

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 (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)).

Acts of worship may take place at any time during the day. It may take the form of a single act of worship with the whole school community or separate acts of worship in year/class groups. When we gather for Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*) we focus on the Word of God, we use symbols and ritual and we are open to God's presence among us. Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*) is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum including RE.

Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*) in our school is an integral part of our ethos, aims and relationships, as Christian values permeate all aspects of school life and all relationships. It is a way of deepening our relationship with God together and individually. Through the many forms this worship takes, we grow in spiritual, moral and liturgical understanding. We allow ourselves to grow in understanding of our living faith tradition and then develop a sense of wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ. It is through Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*) that we share each other's faith experiences and learn the skills of prayer and reflection. This is a very important aspect of life at St John Fisher School. Together we grow in God's love, learning to be the best we can be.

At St John Fisher, our provision for prayer and liturgy fulfils 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 our school are familiar.

Responsibility

Governance

The governors, as guardians of St John Fisher 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 who is responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school, Mrs Zoe Newnham.
- 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.

Head teacher

The head teacher, 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.

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, that 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 head teacher 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.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Masses and Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*)

- Monthly Mass for Children in Key Stage 2 (Year 2 join in the Summer Term)
- Mass in school or in Church on Holy Days of Obligation and a Mass on or near the feast day of St John Fisher, when possible held in Church for the whole school
- Class Mass for Y2 is celebrated in the classroom in the Spring Term. The priest explains each part of the Mass to make it more relevant to them; this prepares them for the summer term when they start to join the KS2 Masses
- Mass of celebration is held in school after Y3 First Communion and one of thanksgiving for Y6 as they prepare to leave the school at the end of the summer term
- New school year mass is celebrated in school on a Saturday at the beginning of each academic year, welcoming new pupils and parents
- Staff and pupils are invited and encouraged to attend Education Sunday Mass each September
- KS1 / EYFS meet for a separate collective worship each week
- Two 'whole school' collective worships (*prayer and liturgy*) are also held each week; led by the HT/DHT, a class or the Chaplains
- Class-based prayers are said in the morning, before meals and at the end of the day
- Children and staff are invited to say seasonal prayers before school with the RE Lead and school Chaplains (Rosary, Advent and Lent)
- Y1 – Y6 hold class based acts of worship responding to each RE topic, following We gather, we listen, we respond and go forth – pupil led
- Class Prayer and Liturgy is planned daily (when we do not have whole school collective worship) and takes the form of Wednesday Word, the Mark 10 Mission, prayerful meditation, personal prayer journals, pupil led prayer
- Prayer leaders are encouraged in each class
- Regular opportunities for Y3 – Y6 to celebrate Reconciliation, including Advent and Lent
- Key Stage 2 pupils take part in Eucharistic Adoration
- Nursery children have a short daily prayer time of their own

Liturgy and Prayer

- Formal prayers to be learned by heart and recited aloud
- Formal prayers with which children are familiarised e.g. those used in Mass
- Response prayers e.g. psalms, bidding prayers and litanies
- Prayers read aloud for listening
- Prayers improvised for listening or repeating phrase by phrase
- Prayers to be read silently e.g. from display captions or classroom prayer books
- Prayers composed by children for their own use (all pupils from Y1 - Y6 have individual prayer journals)
- Collective meditation
- Individual reflection or contemplation
- Prayer of movement, dance or gesture

- Sung prayers
- Our St John Fisher School prayers
- Prayer artefacts such as rosaries, hold crosses, prayer stones

DAILY PRAYER and LITURGY at SJF				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Whole School Collective Worship.	Mass; Meditation; Prayer Journals; Reflection; Class or Year group Worship; Liturgical Prayer.	Wednesday Word; Mark10 Mission; KS1 Collective Worship.	Mass; Meditation; Prayer Journals; Reflection; Class or Year group Worship; Liturgical Prayer.	Whole School Collective Worship.

Our school endeavours to give all children a variety of prayer experiences. Each classroom has an area of focus for prayer, displaying items and pictures appropriate to the liturgical season and some written forms of prayer. Children are encouraged to choose or compose prayers for class use and to suggest prayer intentions. They may also bring items from home to display. Children's work is featured in the area. The children and staff have individual prayer journals that they use regularly to add their own prayers and reflections. There are areas around the school promoting prayer and reflection, including our outdoor reflection area in the Woodland Garden.

Resourcing

Prayer and liturgy are central to St John Fisher'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. The Catholic character of the school is reflected in religious artefacts and images on display throughout the building. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy are maintained and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season.

Each class has a class set of prayer and liturgy resources, including St Mary's Press Children's Bible, liturgical cloths, a class set of prayer hand crosses, rosaries, a crucifix and candles. Each class has a copy of YOUCAT Catechism and YOUCAT Kids. Each class has access to a class set of Bibles appropriate to their age.

Training and formation

All new staff are 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. Each new member of the teaching staff receives a copy of YouCat and these books are available in the staffroom and classes. Any individual training needs are identified and addressed through training and formation. There is also regular opportunity for 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.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy takes place regularly and involves all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors.

Areas for development are identified and issues raised are actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

Pupil and staff evaluation of Collective Worship (prayer and liturgy)

Before each act of Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*) we consider:

- How are the children supported to lead, take part and plan?
- Is there content to meet the needs of all present?
- Is there an appropriate focus? Are the resources used suitable? Are computing / Music etc. prepared and ready?
- Do all the readers / leaders have all they need? Have all support staff been briefed?
- Have invitations been sent to members of the community (if appropriate)?
- Is the accommodation suitable and ready?

As we **gather** we consider:

- How do participants gather? Is there a procession / movement to another area?
- How is a prayerful atmosphere created? Is there an invitation to participate? Does everyone feel welcome?
- Is the purpose of the act of worship clear and the focus explained?

As we **listen** we consider:

- Is the Scripture they are listening to suitable? Is the Word treated with reverence?
- Has / have the reader(s) been well-prepared so as to engage the listener?
- How is the 'reading' shared – role play, music, power-point etc.? Is it suitable for the participants?
- Do participants listen attentively? Do they show good listening skills?

As we **respond** we consider:

- Is there maximum participation? Is time given for individual silent reflection?
- Do children pray / respond wholeheartedly? Are adults good role models? Do all adults present participate?
- Are participants invited to respond in a variety of ways?

As we **go forth** we consider:

- Does Worship conclude appropriately?
- How are participants enabled to take the message away with them?

After each act of Collective Worship (*prayer and liturgy*) we consider:

- Was it a positive, enriching religious experience for all present?
- Has this worship enhanced the spiritual and moral development of those present?
- Was the time and content appropriate for the age, ability and background of the children?
- Did all parts of worship help to develop the Liturgical formation of participants?
- Was it well-organised, led and presented?
- Was there a sense of community, common ethos and shared values?
- How could pupils have more opportunity to lead or respond?

Spiritual Development of Pupils

The growth of the spirit in children is promoted not so much by words, as by experience. At St John Fisher, our strong spiritual ethos permeates everything we do both in and out of the classroom.

The Chaplaincy Team is selected from Years 5 and 6. The team has become increasingly active in leading the prayer life of the school. They take responsibility for leading assemblies, acts of worship and prayers.

Spiritual Development of Staff

In order to develop and maintain the school's Catholic ethos, staff members also come together to pray regularly; staff meetings and briefings have shared prayer or reflection. Members of teaching and support staff attend Monday and Friday Acts of Worship as well as year group and class based acts of worship. A large proportion of staff members attend special Parish events such as Education Sunday Mass and the Holy Communion Masses, which are spread over three weekends. Staff are invited to have their own prayer journals just as children are. All staff are invited to early morning liturgical prayers during October, May, Advent and Easter.

Review

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