**A blue shield with a crown and a cross

AI-generated content may be incorrect.St Oswald’s Catholic Primary School**

**Love Jesus**

**Love Learning**

**Love Each Other**

**“We are a learning community promoting the Gospel values of mutual trust, care and respect”**

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**Prayer and Liturgy Policy 2025-26**

**“Where two or three meet in my name I am there among them.”**

**“We are a learning community promoting the Gospel values of mutual, trust, care and respect”**

As a school we ensure that all children and staff are treated fairly and equally. All children have equal rights to access all areas of the curriculum, regardless of race, gender and disability. Within this subject area, the SLT and all staff endeavour to provide the appropriate provision for this to occur. This policy follows guidelines and practices that are stated and outlined in St. Oswald’s Equality Scheme.

**(Matthew 18:20)**

**“Lord teach us to pray.”**

**(Luke 11:1)**

Introduction to Prayer and Liturgy

At St. Oswald’s Prayer and Liturgy has Christ at its heart, and whilst respecting diversity in belief, is Catholic in nature and reflects the traditions of our church and its belief in the Trinity. In our school, we believe that it is much more that a legal requirement. It is central to the Catholic life of our school, our mission, and is an essential part of the spiritual and moral development we aim to encourage and foster in our pupils.

Legal Requirment

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily ‘act of worship’ offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single ‘act of worship’ for all pupils, or separate ‘acts of worship’ in different school groups such as classes, year groups or phases.

Prayer and Liturgy is not designated curriculum time. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from Prayer and Liturgy. However, given its importance in our Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will 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 such as the RE curriculum.

Aims for Prayer and Liturgy

At St. Oswald’s, through Prayer and Liturgy, we aim to:

* Provide daily opportunities for children and staff to come together in God’s presence to welcome Him into our hearts, thank Him, listen to Him and to place our own needs and those of others into His hands.
* Offer an opportunity to be inspired by the person of Jesus through listening to his Word.
* Be an opportunity to reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
* Develop a sense of community and belonging to our school family than promotes a common ethos, shared values and reinforce positive attitudes.
* Develop a sense of awe and wonder for children and staff.
* Respond to and celebrate different aspects of life in our school family, our parish community and the wider world.
* Allow participants to explore their own beliefs and respect those of others.
* Develop skills such as reverence, reflection, interpretation and contemplation

Principles

At St. Oswald’s the following principles guide our practice within Prayer and Liturgy:

* Prayer and Liturgy is inclusive. It is an experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.
* Prayer and Liturgy is fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic nature.
* It is always presented in a positive way with a sense of occasion.
* Prayer and Liturgy contributes towards the Religious Education of our children by containing a range of elements such as: music (including hymns), readings from scriptures, speech, drama, and different types of prayer and reflection including silence.
* It provides opportunities to celebrate, share reflect and take part in a social gathering which may include members of the children’s families.
* It addresses the emotions and feelings of young people such as joy, friendship, sadness, loneliness, anger etc.
* It considers 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 it
* Those from other Christian traditions – or none
* Those from other faith backgrounds
* It respects the freedom of pupils and staff in the invitation to prayer and worship.

Guidance for planning and learning Prayer and Liturgy

At St. Oswald’s we plan with reference to the Sunday Gospel, the Church’s liturgical seasons, RE topics, significant dates and events, the curriculum as well as issues in the local community and the wider world. In planning our prayer times, we are mindful that taking part in any Prayer and Liturgy implies more than simply passive attendance, it requires a response (through word, song or prayer) from those gathered.

Prayer and Liturgy is concerned with the honour and glory of God and we hope that these ‘acts of worship’ will be restive, friendly and prayerful, with participants gaining positive feelings form the experience, as well as long term sustenance for their faith journey.

RE Leader provides class teachers with weekly focus’, music, artwork links to support the delivery of Celebration of the Word. There is also guidance for classteachers on how to support the children when they are leading elements of the Celebration of the Word.

Creating the environment

At our school we aim to create an environment that encourages prayer and the inclusion of:

* Prayerful images
* Appropriate music
* Suitable lighting
* A comfortable space in which to sit
* Atmosphere of peacefulness

**Focus/Prayer Table**

Each classroom has a permanent designated area for prayer. This prayer table should contain a variety of the items suggested on the list below. This prayer table may be used as the focus for a class prayer time, or a separate prayer focus may be created in another area/space within the room.

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| --- | --- |
| Candles | Remind us that Jesus is amongst us and it the Light of the World |
| Bible | The word of God should be given prominence on the prayer table |
| Flowers/plants | Greenery is a reminder of God’s beautiful world and of the gift of creation |
| Sacred images/objects | Crucifix, statues, pictures of Jesus and Mary |
| Interesting objects | Variety of stones/shells/beads give a good focus for prayer |
| Meaningful pictures | Pictures or photographs appropriate to the theme |

There are lots of pictures on our school website and X which show prayer focus examples.

**Colours** – the colours used of items or fabric/cloths can be different for each liturgical season. The change of colour highlights the mood and focus of the prayer of the Church.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Purple | Advent and Lent | Red | Pentecost, Good Friday |
| White | Christmas, Easter and special feast days | Green | Ordinary Time (Pentecost to Advent and after Christmas to Lent |
| Gold | Special occasion |  |  |

**Resources**

Each class has their own Good News Bible and Bible stand. Resources for staff and children to use on their focus table can be found centrally in our Prayer and Reflection area. This enables staff and children to be able to easily select appropriate items when setting up a prayer focus. Ten Ten, Caritas in Action, CAFOD CST resources can also be used to support Celebration of the Word. Use of CJM music, John Burland, contemporary and traditional hymns and songs.

Structure

Staff leaders of Prayer and Liturgy will always follow the structure detailed below. Children are then guided and supported to use this format in an age-appropriate and progressive way, following guidance from Liverpool Archdiocese. Planning templates can be found in the appendix.

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| Gather | Consider how to begin, to create a reverent and receptive atmosphere for example a bell, quiet music or a song/hymn. Begin with the sign of the cross and light a candle. Introduce the theme of the prayer. |
| Listen | This is where the reading from Scripture comes and is central to the worship. Everyone is encouraged to use the correct responses at the beginning/end of the Scriptures being shared. |
| Respond | This is the chance to reflect on and respond to what we have heard. We may be invited to reflect with music, or silently, on a particular part of scripture, sing a response or make a prayerful response in some way, use of slides/images and videos, including bidding and traditional prayers. All gathered must have some active way of responding, in their own hearts. |
| Go Forth | The celebration of the word should be brought to a conclusion with something to do during that day or week, drawing upon the theme and piece of scripture. Sometimes children may be given an object or prayer card to remember the focus of the prayer. The special time together should end respectfully with the sign of the cross. |

Weekly Opportunities provided for Prayer and Liturgy

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| Whole School | Wednesday Word is led by Deacon Paul Blinston and the RE Leader.  All staff and children attend. |
| Key Stage / Phase | Children gather in their Phase groups once a week for Celebration of the Word, in the school hall, playground, field or prayer garden. This can be led by a class teacher or by the children. |
| Class | On the remaining days of the week children share a prayer time within their class. This will usually be within the classroom or could be outside on the field or within our prayer garden. |
| **FAITH IN ACTION LITTLE DISCIPLES** | **FAITH IN ACTION CHILDREN TO RUN SMALL PRAYER GROUPS WITH CHILDREN ACROSS THE SCHOOL DURING ONE LUNCHTIME** |

Other Opportunities provided for Prayer and Liturgy

**Class assemblies:** Each class leads 1 assembly per year based on their RE topic. Part of these assemblies is a Celebration of the Word, and families are invited to join at these times.

**Faith In Action:** Each year the Faith in Action group invite their families, staff and children to share their Celebration of the Word. This is also an opportunity to present the Faith in Action children with their PIN badge certificates.

**Year 6 Leavers Celebration of the Word:** The Year 6 children and staff invite their families to share in a Celebration of the Word. This recalls the Year Six children’s journey through our school ad points them towards their future lives in Secondary School.

**Year 4** – Children attend mass at St Oswald’s and St. Edmund Arrowsmith Church with the parish family on Wednesday’s in the spring and summer term.

**Ash Wednesday Mass** – Upper Key Stage 2 go to mass with the parish family and receive ashes to mark the start of our Lenten journey. Deacon Paul Blinston administers ashes in school to staff and the rest of the children.

**Recording**

At St. Oswald’s, Celebration of the Word may be recorded on a simple planning template incorporating the 4 key elements of gather, listen, respond and go forth. There is a version of this which children are supported to use also. Photographs of prayer tables and prayer foci my be taken.

**Monitoring and Evaluating**

The SLT and RE Leader sensitively observe times of prayer by joining in. Prayer times are then evaluated considering the points of the Liverpool Archdiocese ‘Celebration of the Word experience’ form (See appendix). It is them possible to share areas of success and identify any elements which may need developing to ensure that pupils and staff are receiving the highest quality prayer experiences.

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| --- | --- |
| **DISCUSSED AND AGREED BY RELEVANT STAFF** | **Sept 2024** |
| **DISCUSSED AND AGREED BY GOVERNING BODY** | **Sept 20234** |
| **MONITORING AND EVALUATION** | **Ongoing** |
| **REVIEW DATE(S)** | **Reviewed 13.12.19**  **Reviewed 21.09.20**  **Reviewed 14.09.21**  **Reviewed 12.09.22**  **Reviewed 15.09.23**  **Due to be reviewed September 2025 – following the launch of Prayer and Liturgy – To Love You More Dearly** |

Appendix

* Adult Celebration of the Word Planner
* Child Led Celebration of the Word Planner
* Celebration of the Word Experience Form
* Progression in pupil led Celebration of the Word

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A screenshot of a calendar

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A close-up of a document

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A Guide to Progression in Celebration of the Word

This document is intended as a guide for members of staff so that we can promote pupil leadership of collective worship,

relative to children’s age and stage of development.

* How independently should children be leading collective worship by the end of each phase?
* What prayers and resources might you expect them to use?
* How much involvement should staff have?

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| **Year Group** | **Guidance** | **Other Forms of Prayer to Explore** |
| **Reception** | Children are supported by an adult with the 4 part organisation of Gather, Listen, Respond, Go Forth  Children lead gather in the autumn term, leading to the other parts as the year progresses.  As part of Celebration of the Word children may:   * Set up the focus table * Choose suitable artefacts from a limited choice * Sing a gather song, process in, breathing, stillness * Greet everyone * Pass things round * Say prayers * Say who/what they want to pray for. | Different Forms of Prayer:   * **Vocal Prayer:** Speaking your prayer, either   silently or aloud.   * **Meditation:** Focusing your thoughts on   God or a sacred text   * **Contemplation:** A silent, receptive state of   prayer where you rest in God's presence according.   * **Adoration:** Praising and worshipping God   for who He is.   * **Confession:** Acknowledging and repenting   for sins.   * **Thanksgiving:** Expressing gratitude for   God's blessings.   * **Supplication/Petition:** Asking God for   your needs and desires.   * **Intercession:** Praying for the needs of   others.   * **Praying with Scripture**: Using the Bible as a guide for prayer, either by reading and reflecting on a passage or by praying the words of the Bible according to The Navigators. * **Journaling**: Writing down your thoughts   and prayers in a journal   * **Praying with Music**: Using songs, hymns,   or other forms of music to express your prayers.   * **Prayer Walks**: Walking in a specific area   while praying for the people and places you encounter.   * **Using your Senses**: Praying in different   environments and using your senses to connect with God, such as lighting candles, focusing on artwork, or spending time in nature   * **Mindful Prayer**: Paying attention to the   present moment and offering your thoughts and feelings to God.   * **Creative Expression**: Using art, drawing, or   other creative forms to express your prayers. |
| **Year 1 and 2** | As previous plus:  • Choose suitable artefacts from a less limited selection  • Given the theme, choose an appropriate way to Welcome or Go Forth (from a limited selection) (With adult input to help)  **Year 1** - Children to be supported by an adult with the four-part proforma of Welcome (Gather), Word, Response To Word, Mission (Go Forth) to plan and lead elements of Celebration of the Word. Typically, Children would lead the up to two elements in the Autumn term and then progress to leading most sections as the year progresses.  The Whole class will evaluate liturgy verbally and this will influence future practice. Class teachers will regularly model liturgy to our pupils.  Key parts in the liturgical year will influence the themes of our collective worship, e.g. Advent, Lent etc. Year 1 will help to plan for specific liturgical collective worship and events, e.g. Pentecost.  **Year 2**- Pupils will generate the ‘Go Forth’ element of their collective worship with adult input. |
| **Year 3 and 4** | **Year 3 & Year 4** will now plan and celebrate Celebration of the Word more independently with adult support prompting pupils to our worship prompts. Children to increase the variety of ways that they can ‘gather’ and also the variety of ‘go forth’ options  As previous plus:   * Children may provide a suitable focus without limit of choice and can make appropriate use of liturgical colours. * Children may lead singing. * Children may lead operation of technology (for music, ppt, etc). * Write prayers and petitions etc for inclusion in Celebration of the Word that fit the theme of the Celebration of the Word. * Choose suitable ways to Gather, Listen, Respond and Go Forth.   **Year 4** – As above, but children are to begin generating their own ideas for ‘respond’ that is linked to their theme. |
| **Year 5 and 6** | As above plus:  Given the set theme, children can now select Scripture passages (initially from a limited selection).  By the end of **Year 6**, children should be able to develop all parts of Celebration of the Word independently and with understanding when given a theme or passage from Scripture.  Children to discuss what went well and how they felt about the prayer and liturgy that they have taken part in/led.  Staff will be facilitating high levels of independence using the range of resources available to the pupils. Pupils should be undertaking a greater level of evaluation based on their previous experiences throughout school. |

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