

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



“Doing our best for God”

Mission Statement

The Primary aims of our school:

- To foster sound personal relationships among its members - staff, pupils, parents and governors - in a Christian environment.
- To affirm the place of worship, prayer and liturgy in the educational experience.
- To initiate projects to broaden the school's role in the parish and wider community.

1. Aims and Purpose

1.1 The aims and purpose of Prayer and Liturgy are:

- To provide an opportunity for the children to worship God;
- To enable children to consider spiritual and moral issues;
- To enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- To encourage participation and response;
- To develop in children a sense of community spirit;
- To promote a common ethos with shared values and to reinforce positive attitudes in line with our school's mission and Gospel values;
- To promote and celebrate the partnership between home, school and parish;
- To grow in respect for places and objects associated with prayer and worship.

2. Prayer & Liturgy

2.1 We understand worship to be a special act or occasion to show reverence to God. Prayer and Liturgy involves members of the school coming together and participating in an assembly or act of worship in the classroom, staff room or church. We expect everyone to take an active part.

2.2 In line with the Catholic character and foundation of our school, we base our assemblies on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Catholic Church. However, we conduct our assemblies in a manner that is sensitive to the individual faith and beliefs of all members of the school community.

3. Organisation of Prayer and Liturgy

3.1 Prayer and Liturgy takes a variety of forms: collective, individual, reflective, responsorial, pupil-led and participatory. It can take place in various places such as in individual classrooms, in the school hall, in the church or outside. It will involve different groups: a teacher's own class, the whole school, key stage groups or combinations of classes depending on desired outcome. Prayer and reflection is undertaken throughout the day as part of classroom ritual including morning, lunchtime and end of day prayers and planned worship sessions led by the teacher or pupils.

3.2 In collective worship we praise, ask and thank. We recognise that we are a faith community, so the focus is on life generally and that of the community: home, school and parish (including sacramental preparation). Worship is an expression of our values: that each person is respected and shows respect for the other as a person of 'Christ'. Prayer is an important part of worship.

3.3 The content of prayer and worship in school is a combination of themes integrated with the RE curriculum, PSHE curriculum, SRE (This is my Body), Sunday's liturgy, Saints' days, Holy days, the liturgical calendar, 'Wednesday Word' and other sacramental celebrations. The content of prayer and worship in school may also be informed by current events, either locally or in the wider world. Prayer is integral to school rituals including the start and end of the day and at lunchtime.

3.4 The Head teacher or another senior member of staff normally conducts whole school assemblies.

3.5 Our assemblies also reflect the achievements and learning of the children. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that have been discussed in their classes. Assemblies also offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised as noted in the Mission Statement. St Bernadette's school is a successful school and we shall celebrate the successes of all children in assemblies.

3.6 The community spirit of the school is important, as outlined in the Mission Statement, with close links between parish and home. A practical demonstration of the way home and school work together to support achievements of our children is to invite parents to Masses and some assemblies.

3.7 We welcome our parish priests and governor's attendance at assemblies, both parties playing an important role in our school.

3.8 We invite parents and parish members to join a class in celebrating weekly Class Mass both in school or Church following the liturgical calendar and themes followed by staff and pupils in class, which is led by the parish priest. The distribution of the 'Wednesday Word' encourages families to share in prayer, liturgy and reflection.

4. Right of Withdrawal

4.1 We expect all children to attend assembly and worship in school whether it is in class or as a whole school. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during the period concerned. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

5. Monitoring and Review

5.1 It is the role of the RE Co-ordinator to monitor the policy and practice of collective worship. The RE co-ordinator is to liaise with the head teacher before reporting to governors on Religious Education and Prayer & Liturgy.

Signed: Jill Greenhalgh

Date: October 2020

Review Date: March 2022