

St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Recognising and celebrating the presence of Christ in one another

- ♦ St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School aims to be a positive force within the Catholic Church inspired by the life of Christ in the Gospel.
- ♦ The school is committed to the widest and fullest education with ambition for all pupils in a partnership between home, school, parish and community.
- ♦ The school aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure and valued.



School Mission

"Recognising and celebrating the presence of Christ in one another"

At St. Mary of the Angels:

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Our Mission statement underpins this policy and principles.

Legal Requirements

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 school groups.

Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

The 'act of worship' is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a 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, within the RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Mary of the Angels.

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Prayer and liturgy takes into account 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 Church;
- Those from other Christian traditions - or none;
- Those from other faith backgrounds

Aims:

Our aim is to nurture and develop in all children a sense of prayer as a meaningful part of our relationship with God and empower full participation at a level appropriate to their age. We aim to develop leaders of the future through the opportunities provided.

Objectives:

- To develop community spirit and to promote a common spiritual and moral ethos and shared values.
- To enable children to reflect upon and celebrate the word of God and participate fully.
- To enable children to see prayer as a natural expression of their developing relationship with God through excellent modelling.
- To encourage spontaneous and traditional prayer as a means of communicating.
- To know and recite the formal prayers of the Church showing an excellent understanding of the Liturgical Year.
- To give opportunities for silent reflection and to develop in children a sense of stillness leading to meditation.
- To engage and inspire heartfelt responses through various media and artefacts available which will allow them to explore their personal beliefs and mission.
- To develop confident, enthusiastic initiative in children in leading prayer and liturgy.

Responsibilities**Governors**

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 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.

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 leaders 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.
- They are a role model for leading prayer and liturgy across school.
- There are suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school.

Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator (PLC)

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 takes 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.

Staff

- All adults contribute to the school's spiritual life.
- All will bring different talents and gifts.
- All will teach pupils how to participate meaningfully in a range of prayers.
- Assist the PLC in teaching pupils in how to organise and evaluate high-quality prayer experiences.
- Follow the school prayer policies and model responses and gestures.

The place of prayer and liturgy in the whole school.

The act of prayer is central to the life of the school. It is a way of celebrating our individuality and our communal belonging to the Body of Christ

Day	Theme/ focus
Monday	Gospel assembly and prayers - whole school
Tuesday	Teacher led Key Stage prayer services and (alternative weeks) Pupil prepared and led prayer services
Wednesday	Hymn practice (KS1/KS2 on rota) Prayers led by TA / Teachers
Thursday	Prayers led by Teachers /TAs
Friday	Congratulations assembly - led by SLT to praise chosen children for good behaviour and work All staff attend.

How do the children pray?

The children have the opportunity to find out about and respond in a variety of ways to Jesus' example and teaching with regard to prayer. They are encouraged to explore the different forms of prayer and helped to grow in appreciation of the importance of prayer in developing a relationship with God.

We give children opportunities to

- **Pray in silence** - the children are encouraged to encounter God. They may concentrate on an object, a picture, a candle, some quiet background music to help them experience this.
- **Write and say their own prayers**
- **Pray with Prayer Partners**
- **Share spontaneous prayer** - prayers may be prayers of petition for a sick parent, grandparent or friend. Children are also encouraged to express thanksgiving, love and praise to God the Father in their spontaneous prayer.
- **Pray through gestures or actions.** - children are encouraged to make even the simplest gestures thoughtfully so that the gesture or action is a prayer in itself. Gestures that the children will be taught as they move through the school will include: making the Sign of the Cross, joining their hands, offering the sign of peace, bowing their heads at the name of Jesus.
- **Learn the prayers of the Church appropriate to their age** - See Teach us to Pray document and prayer booklets
- **Pray through music and song and through 'creative prayer' experiences** - Listening to reflective music can create an atmosphere conducive to prayer and

reflection. The singing of hymns can be so joyful. "Singing hymns is praying twice." Reflective music and singing are both used during prayer and worship sessions.

Understanding prayer and liturgy

At St Mary of the Angels, throughout the year, there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, and celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character, dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration, and its content. Staff are familiar with the characteristics of each form through the training they regularly receive.



Liturgical assembly

At St Mary of the Angels, the pupils are taught that we all are called to proclaim through song and prayer together, to listen and to respond to the word proclaimed.

Liturgical ministries

For prayer and liturgy to take place, pupils are asked to carry out particular roles, for example as a server, reader, or musician. Pupils are supported by teachers to ensure that they are well formed and properly prepared because it is important in our worship of God that we offer something which is worthy.

When planning any celebration of word or Mass, planning documents are completed to ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear and well prepared. These roles may include readers of the word, Procession with gifts, Altar servers, musicians and PowerPoint operators. (see Celebration of the Word Planner and Mass Planner)

Whole School Plans for Prayer and Liturgy

The RE lead and PLC work closely with our school Parish, staff and Governors to ensure a cohesive response to the development of child and staff spirituality. Prayer and liturgy takes place in school daily. Staff and pupils are encouraged to pray with thoughtfulness and with respect through a variety of prayer experiences - whole school Masses and liturgies, collective worship and prayer services, together with formal classroom and individual reflective prayer. This worship follows the liturgical year and includes appropriate feast days; it will also encompass Gospel Values and Virtues, Catholic Social Teaching, world events and world's faiths, to enable pupils to appreciate their place in society and respect those around them.

These are planned on the Annual Prayer Opportunity Planner (APOP).

Opportunities across the year include

- Directives from the BDES e.g. Year of the Jubilee
- Sacramental celebrations and relevant preparations and commitment Masses.
- Whole school Masses at the beginning or end of the school terms
- Weekly Mass at church, one KS2 class per week on a rota basis (see rota)
- Family Masses celebrated at Sunday Masses throughout the year
- KS2 Christmas Carol Service
- Holy Week Liturgies (Stations of the Cross)
- Reconciliation for KS2 across the terms.
- Class / Parent prayer services.
- School Patron Day

Parents and parishioners are invited to join in with these acts of worship, where appropriate, through the school newsletter, the parish bulletin and personal letters from the children and teacher. Opportunities provided for parental engagement are factored in at different times to maximise participation.

Teaching

Prayer is led by teachers with the children having opportunities for discussion, contribution and participation according to their ages and abilities (see prayer progression). The person leading the worship values all contributions, which are inclusive, cherished and valued by all.

All prayer services follow the structure of: **Gather, Word, Response and Mission.**

KS1 pupils are supported by the teacher to plan prayer services. The teacher invites children to select elements for use in their liturgy and prayer services and lead where appropriate. Services are planned as a class or group as they progress through the school.

KS2 pupils are given opportunities to plan and lead prayer during weekly prayer services. They are given initial guidance from the teacher and then they are encouraged to plan and lead the worship more independently with excellent modelling.

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. 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.

Monitoring

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. SLT, and the Prayer, Liturgy Coordinator and pupils monitor the quality and impact of the prayer and liturgy regularly through learning walks and pupil and parent voice. (See monitoring on APOP and monitoring prompt form)

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

Questionnaires are completed by staff, children, governors, parents and parishioners on a cycle regarding the quality of prayer and liturgy.

Training and formation

Staff training and CPD enables high quality modelling and challenge to improve methods and styles of prayer. 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, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

Pupils with special educational needs

All children's contributions are valued, and children receive assistance, if necessary, when planning their liturgies. Equal opportunities allow for participation for all pupils, including SEND to join in many forms of prayer and liturgy.

Review.

Prayer and Liturgy Policy
Autumn 2025

This policy will be monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and reviewed by the governors the in line with annual school development plans on a one yearly cycle, or earlier if changes need to be implemented.