



## St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Prayer and Liturgy Policy February 2025

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body every two years.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in February 2025.

It is due for review in February 2027

Hayley Francis      Date: February 2025  
Head Teacher

Lindsay Wise      Date: February 2025  
Chair of Governors

### **Context**

Prayer and Liturgy in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit

Prayer and Liturgy is integral to everyone in the life of the school, in developing their relationship with Christ. Gospel values are embedded in all that we do with Christ at the centre.

Prayer and Liturgy is central to our Catholic ethos and all staff lead and model good practice in prayer. It provides an opportunity for all to reflect on God's word and to celebrate and respond to the beliefs and attitudes, which characterise Christian life.

We provide a rich variety of prayerful and liturgical opportunities, which deepen the pupil's sense of belonging to the faith community of our school and to the wider Catholic Church.

Prayer and Liturgy takes many forms, which includes: prayer, song, assemblies, meditation and liturgies. Pupils are encouraged to meditate and reflect deeply on the Gospel Values and carefully consider how these will impact on their lives and the lives of others.

Pupils take an active role in planning, leading and evaluating Prayer and Liturgy.

*“Treat others as you would like to be treated.”*  
*Matthew 7:12*

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Prayer and Liturgy Policy

## The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

It is the policy of the school to help children grow in their faith, which is based on the teaching and traditions of the Catholic Church. We aim to encourage pupils to develop a personal relationship with God through prayer, this is important for all children in our care, regardless of whether they are practising Catholics or not.

## Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of Prayer and Liturgy for all pupils. We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, **does not fulfil this requirement**. We also acknowledge that Prayer and Liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

As part of this, we also take our duty of Safeguarding very seriously and we understand that personal prayer and reflection may subsequently lead to a disclosure which would activate our well established Safeguarding procedures.

The act of Prayer and Liturgy is not designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. As a rule, Prayer and Liturgy will take place on the school premises, or in the Church.

## The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Prayer and Liturgy in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

# **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

## **The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy**

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

## **Principles**

Prayer and Liturgy in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Provide positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to age and aptitude

## **School responsibilities in facilitating prayer and liturgy**

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the prayer and liturgy policy approved by the governing body. This is done by having oversight of prayer and liturgy in the school, and ensuring it is understood as central to the school's unique mission and is included in the development plan.

The leadership team models good practice as they participate in and lead prayer and liturgy.

## Prayer and Liturgy Leader

The Prayer and Liturgy Leader ensures that prayer and liturgy is organised, led, monitored, and evaluated, providing relevant support and resources for staff and pupils where required.

They are responsible for the development of the Annual Plan of Provision. They have a good working knowledge of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory and base their practice upon it. They ensure that they keep updated with best practice and ongoing formation through contact with diocesan advisers and others.

Opportunities for prayer and liturgy are provided for all members of St Joseph's school community.

Praying and celebrating liturgies together on a regular basis offer staff an opportunity to deepen their own spiritual lives and experience different types of prayer.

The Prayer and Liturgy Leader, along with other staff, seeks to keep parents and carers informed about the prayer and liturgical life of the school, including key events. Through the school website and various social media platforms, the school provides resources to help parents and carers to make links at home with prayer and liturgy, and so help to build up the Domestic Church.

The Prayer and Liturgy Leader liaises with other leaders in the school to ensure that prayer and liturgy is celebrated in all its richness.

## Structure of Prayer and Liturgy

The Catholic tradition encompasses many different forms of prayer and liturgy.

The fundamental structure that recurs across prayer and liturgy is one of call and response: God speaks to his people in his word (the scriptures), and they respond. Their response may take many different forms: it could be praise, thanksgiving, or acknowledgement of the need to change.

However, the basic pattern holds; it is God who takes the initiative and who speaks, and we who listen and respond.

In the liturgy, this pattern is frequently expanded into longer structures.

This creates a four-part structure, which can be expressed as:

- Gather
- Word
- Response
- Mission

This four-part pattern is flexible. Each part can be as simple or as elaborate as required.

**Gather:** To gather, we light a candle (not battery operated, as this is not a natural form of light) make the sign of the cross, we sing and or be silent/reflective, or our gathering might be the Introductory Rites at Mass.

**Word:** We listen and reflect on a reading from the scriptures

**Response:** Those gathered have an opportunity to respond to the scripture and to pray together

**Mission:** Participants are encouraged to learn from the scriptures and to use these teachings in their daily lives

## Celebration of the word

*This is a celebration which focuses on God speaking to us through the scriptures, and which creates space and form for our response. The word of God is central to our prayer life.*

- To say that God still speaks to us in the scriptures today means that those responsible for devising and leading the liturgy seek to enable pupils to make connections with their own lives or with current broader issues through reflection, response, or prayer.
- The concluding section of the celebration reminds pupils that what they have heard and prayed impacts on their everyday lives. It also encourages them to think how this will make a positive difference on their lives.
- The proclamation of the word is central to all celebrations.
- The celebration of the word provides the model for a range of times of extended prayer

## Assemblies

The main purpose of this gathering is to pray together, to listen and respond to the word of God.

The themes are based around a celebration of the word. The Lectionary, the liturgical calendar and the Cycle of Prayer informs the planning of these 'liturgical assemblies'. Assemblies are also based upon a Catholic devotion, such as a reflection on the Stations of the Cross.

Our pattern of daily Prayer and Liturgy at St Joseph's is as follows: -

**Monday** - Class based Prayer and Liturgy

**Tuesday** - Whole school assembly, led by the Head Teacher, based on the previous Sunday's Gospel or the half termly Pupil Profile values.

The Bidding prayers include those offered by the children.

**Wednesday** – Whole school assembly led by Prayer and Liturgy leader and pupil Liturgy Leaders

**Thursday and Friday** – Class based Prayer and Liturgy. Teacher led or whole class led, Christian Meditation /The Examen

Monday – Friday – All classes will plan time for meditation, reflection and prayer, including the Examen

## Mass

Mass is celebrated as a whole school at the beginning and end of each term and on holy days of obligation. Parents and Parishioners are invited to join us in school on these occasions.

Classes attend weekly Mass at the Parish Church on a rota basis

Parents and parishioners are invited to participate in some celebrations, such as May Procession, Nativity Performances and Beginning and End of Term Mass.

## Prayer

Helping pupils to pray is a fostering of a relationship with God. We support them on their journey in faith. Pupils are given experience of personal and communal prayer by being encouraged to speak in their own way to God and by being introduced gradually to formal words for prayer at the appropriate level. A variety of prayer styles are used appropriate to the age, stage of development and the occasion.

The Morning Prayer, Before and after meals prayer and the End of Day Prayer are said in each classroom on a daily basis.

## Prayer Tables

Prayer tables are clearly visible and accessible within each classroom. Liturgical colours are used for any cloth or drape, e.g. purple during Advent and Lent, white / gold at Christmas, white / gold at Easter, red at Pentecost and green for ordinary time. Prayer tables often include something which reflects the topic e.g. Baptismal candle, Advent wreath, palm cross during Lent and / or other appropriate objects e.g. a cross, crucifix or statue. They always contain a candle and a Bible, open at a relevant page.

The following prayers are introduced to, and learnt by the children. Each phase builds on and includes the prayers from the previous phase.

<b>Age phase</b>	<b>5–7 (KS1)</b>	<b>7–9 (Lower KS2)</b>	<b>9–11 (Upper KS2)</b>
Prayers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Sign of the Cross</li><li>• The Lord's Prayer</li><li>• Morning Prayer</li><li>• Hail Mary</li><li>• Glory be</li><li>• Grace before Meals</li><li>• Grace after Meals</li><li>• End of day prayer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Apostles' Creed</li><li>• An Act of Contrition</li><li>• Angel of God</li><li>• Come, Holy Spirit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Morning Offering</li><li>• The Magnificat</li><li>• Act of Faith</li><li>• Act of Hope</li><li>• Act of Love</li><li>• The Rosary</li></ul>

## **Responses during Mass**

Responses to be said during Mass are also learnt (Key Stage 2): -

Introduction

The Penitential rite

Lord have mercy

I confess

The Gloria

The Liturgy of the Word (including response after each reading and before the Gospel.)

Apostle's creed.

Bidding prayer response (as above)

Offertory responses – Blessed be God forever, May the Lord accept...

Eucharistic prayer Holy, holy Acclamation of Faith Lamb of God

Response before Communion (if receiving) Rite of dismissal.

## **Staff Prayer**

Staff pray together before SLT meetings, staff meetings and briefings. Governors pray together before their meetings. Thus, offering the whole enterprise into the hands of God.

## **Recording**

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded and displayed in each Class's reflection area throughout the year as well as the RE subject leader's portfolio.

## **Monitoring**

Prayer and Liturgy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Leader, with the support from the Head Teacher and the school's RE advisor using the prayer and Liturgy monitoring form.











