



'Our community, growing and learning together with Christ'.

Prayer & Liturgy Policy

Approved by: LGB

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"I used to believe that prayer changes things but I now know that prayer changes us and we change things."

St. Teresa of Calcutta

"Prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for God"

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2560

"Prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy."

St. Therese of Lisieux

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1. Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, we aim to provide quality Collective Worship to which pupils respond well and participate in. We believe that prayer and liturgy in our school community will provide a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationships with God and develop the following:

- contemplate the mystery of God;
- unite our worshipping community;
- the necessary skills of reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation,
- empathy;
- meditation which will enable our relationships with God to be deepened;
- Full participation in our faith will allow us: To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural, vocational and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;
- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of prayer and our responses to it and being inspired into action, in line with our mission statement;
- To develop the skills to plan and lead our own acts of Collective Worship.

2. Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. For Catholic schools this requirement is made explicit within the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham which states:

"Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church. At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. What is Prayer and Liturgy?

What is Prayer?

- Prayer is conversation with God, the angels and the saints.
- Prayer should be experienced as a living relationship with God, in and through Jesus Christ.
- All forms of prayer are God's gift.

What is Liturgy?

- Liturgy is a communal act in which we praise and worship God.
- Liturgy is the source and summit of the Church's life and our lives.
- All good liturgies involve the telling of the story of Christ and his Church.
- Liturgy is action and symbol; it speaks to the person, it involves all the senses: sight, touch, sound, taste and smell-as guided by the Holy Spirit.

For the purposes of this policy, Liturgy refers to all acts of Collective Worship held within school and Mass in church.

4. The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School and Community

4.1 Organisation of Prayer and Liturgy:

An Act of Collective Worship, appropriate for the liturgical season, takes place each day and can be celebrated as a whole school, key stage or class. Collective Worship throughout the week is usually organised as follows:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Gospel Assembly	Staff prayer Pupil led class prayer service	Musical praise and prayer	Mass	Present and Praise celebration assembly.

During weeks in which there is a Holy Day of Obligation, Mass days are rearranged accordingly and all children celebrate these Masses.

Alongside this weekly cycle there are also termly Acts of Prayer and liturgy. All members of the community are invited to attend.

These include:

- Service of Welcome and Belonging for Reception and Year Six
- Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Mary's birthday
- One Million Children Pray the Rosary
- Service of Remembrance
- Advent Service
- Blessing of the Bambinellis
- EYFS Nativity
- Carol Service and Christmas reflection
- Epiphany Stars and Crowns Service
- Candlemas
- Ash Wednesday – Lenten Service
- Holy Week and Stations of the Cross Service
- Easter celebration
- May Procession
- End of Year Mass

Children say the designated prayers at the start and end of each day and a grace before and after meals (see appendix 1).





4.2. Prayers which should be known:

To ensure pupils have an awareness of a range of traditional prayers, the Birmingham Diocese have identified prayers which should be known: (see appendix 2)

Learning these prayers includes teaching children the meaning, as well as how to pray them. Each year group has a different group of these prayers to focus on. Children have a class prayer book that is kept in their tray and can be used to support prayer daily.

4.3 Planning for Collective Worship

Elements of Collective Worship, which must be used when planning, are:

<p style="text-align: center;">GATHER</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Bringing everyone into the holy space (for example by playing music, sitting in a different way/space, lighting candles)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">LISTEN</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sharing scripture to proclaim God's word (for example by listening to scripture set to music, reading scripture, scripture through actions)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">RESPOND</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Responding to God's word through prayer, action or song (for examples, see Birmingham Diocesan Education Service's [BDES] 'Practical Prayer Ideas for the Classroom')</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GO FORTH</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Sharing the message of the scripture for people to think about and act upon</p>

4.4 Classroom expectations

There should be a sacred space (prayer area) in every learning room. This should be placed in a prominent position and reflect the current liturgical season. Sacred spaces should be clutter-free and be set up in a manner which inspires prayer.

During liturgy (acts of Collective Worship), a prayer focal point should be created. For example, use of the Altar Table in the hall, appropriately dressed; or using the additional wooden tables in the classroom.

Pupils should develop the skills necessary to plan and lead collective worship with growing independence across the phases. This journey of progression is explicitly mapped out for our staff and pupils.

Staff are expected to model high-quality prayerful acts of Collective Worship and then support and facilitate opportunities for pupils to plan and lead their own.

4.5 Mass

Mass For Catholics, the Mass is central to practice of the faith. At Mass, the Last Supper is remembered but also recreated. Bread and wine are transformed into the body & blood of Jesus. This belief (transubstantiation) is what distinguishes us from many other Christians. This sacrament is above all others because as members of the Church “we receive the Body of Christ and are increasingly being transformed into the Body of Christ”.

Mass takes place every week in the school hall or church and is prepared and led by a class, a school group or staff. The Mass must be prepared in advance and shared with the Parish Priest so any amendments can be made.

4.6 Links with the Parish and School Communities

All parents, parishioners and governors have an open invitation to our weekly Masses and celebration assemblies. We also invite our school community, including parishioners, to special services, such as our Harvest Festival, Stations of the Cross or our May Procession. Throughout the year, classes hold their own class assemblies and we celebrate Our Lord’s Nativity in our Christmas play and carol service- we invite all our school community, including parishioners, to these.

At the beginning of each year, pupil leaders review and create prayer bags for each class which children take home and share with their families once a week.

5. Expectations for our school community

5.1. Pupils are expected to:

- Participate enthusiastically in all acts of Prayer and Liturgy
- Be active listeners and action the messages in Collective Worship to the best of their ability
- Take part in the evaluation of liturgy and prayer

5.2 Pupil Leaders are expected to:

- Be role models for the school’s Catholic Ethos
- Be role models for planning, leading and participating in acts of prayer and liturgy
- Be responsible for maintaining and evaluating sacred spaces across the school, including prayer tables in classes, feeding back to the Principal or Assistant Principal when needed
- Take notice of and act upon areas for improvement, in conjunction with the Principal and Assistant Principal
- Take an active part in all other areas of prayer and liturgy across the school, when required

5.3 Parents and carers

We ask that parents and carers support the importance of Prayer and Liturgy by:

- Attended and participating in Masses, assemblies and services where possible
- Support children in practising their readings, when applicable
- Where applicable, attend sacramental Masses of commitment

- Help the school evaluate the effectiveness of prayer and liturgy by completing surveys when available
- At home, where appropriate, support children to access and understand prayer, by, for example, using school prayer bags together

5.4 Staff

We ask that staff support the importance of Prayer and Liturgy by:

- Be role-models in attending and actively participating in acts of Prayer and Liturgy
- Lead high-quality prayer and liturgy, which act as excellent exemplars from which pupils are able to plan their own
- Support pupils in planning and leading acts of prayer and liturgy
- Provide pupils with meaningful prayer and liturgy experiences, including appropriately supporting those with SEND Assist pupils to develop the language of prayer and liturgy
- Teach pupils the traditional prayers of The Church (as identified by Birmingham Diocese)

5.5 Subject leader

The R.E. subject leader, in liaison with The Principal will be responsible for:

- Formulating and reviewing a written Prayer and Liturgy policy
- Coordinating rotas, timetables etc. for acts of prayer and liturgy, including collective worship
- Monitoring the appropriateness and effectiveness of prayer and liturgy, including collective worship
- Providing training to new staff and/or where training needs are identified
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the Catholic teachings
- Liaise with the Parish Priest and the Parish Secretary with regard to the preparation and celebration of liturgy, prayer and Mass
- Ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place for religious visits, including visiting church
- Assisting Governors, including the R.E. link governor in carrying out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy

5.6 Governors

The governing board will:

- Review this policy and ensure it is appropriate for our school's context
- Place the highest priority on the evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy
- Ensure prayer and liturgy is embedded in the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements.
- Ensure provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when setting budgets and allocating resources

6. Links to other policies

This policy is linked to our:

- Religious Education policy
- SMSVC Policy

APPENDIX 1 - DAILY PRAYERS

Morning Prayer

Father in heaven, you love me,
you are with me night and day.
I want to love you always in all I do and say.
I'll try to please you, Father, bless me through
the day.

Amen

Grace before meals

Bless us, O God, as we sit together.
Bless the food we eat today.
Bless the hands that made the food.
Bless us, O God.

Amen.

End of Day Prayer

God our Father, I come to say
thank you for your love today.
Thank you for my family
and all the friends you give to me.
Guard me in the dark of night
and in the morning send your light.

Amen.

Grace after meals

Thank you, God, for the food we have eaten.
Thank you, God, for all our friends.
Thank you, God, for everything,
Thank you God.

Amen.

APPENDIX 2 - PRAYERS WHICH SHOULD BE KNOWN

- Grace before Meals
- Grace after Meals
- Morning Offering
- Prayer at the End of the day
- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Sign of the Cross
- Act of Faith, Hope and Love
- Glory Be
- Prayer to the Guardian Angel
- Act of Faith
- Act of Love
- Eternal Rest
- Act of Sorrow (contrition)
- The Angelus
- The Luminous Mysteries
- Prayer to the Guardian Angel
- Prayer of St. Richard of Chichester
- The Joyful Mysteries
- The Sorrowful Mysteries
- The Regina Caeli
- The Magnificat
- The Glorious Mysteries
- Prayer of St Francis of Assisi
- The Memorare
- The Sorrowful Mysteries
- The Regina Caeli
- The Magnificat
- The Glorious Mysteries
- The Diocesan Prayer for Vocations
- Hail Holy Queen
- The Prayer to the Holy Spirit
- Stations of the Cross