

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



Date of last review:	September 2026	Date of next review:	September 2027
Type of policy:	School	Approval:	LGC September 2026

Mission Statement

Striving for excellence in the light of God,
Treasuring each person's unique worth and gifts.
Journeying together in love, faith and hope,
Open to every challenge and opportunity we face.
Shaping proud individuals,
Empowering all to grow, learn and lead.
Promoting values that build a stronger community,
Hand in hand, we walk in faith and friendship.
Serving others with compassion, courage and joy.

School Motto

Striving for excellence in the Light of God.

At St Joseph's we have adopted the KCSP Statement of Curriculum Intent:

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full (John 10: Chapter 10. V 10).

Inspired by Jesus Christ's example and the Gospel values of love, joy and compassion, we nurture and develop the whole child so that each unique individual grows constantly in confidence, and has the knowledge, skills and self-esteem to achieve their true potential. All children will access a rich, ambitious, challenging curriculum; one that is broad, balanced and relevant, fostering curiosity, creativity and a lifelong love of learning. It will prepare them well for each stage of education, employment or training and enable them, as educated citizens, to contribute to creating a better world.

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

The context of this prayer and liturgy policy

‘The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.’ (Marcus Stock (2012), Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

Statement of requirement

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, including those in the sixth form (Section 70, 1988 Education Act) that is in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schedule 20; 70 9.4 Model prayer and liturgy policy Instrument of Government, clause 2). Academies in England are required by their funding agreement and Articles of Association to comply with similar requirements (The Mainstream Academy and Free School: Supplemental Funding Agreement, December 2020; Model Articles for Catholic Academies, February 2019).

The law requires all maintained schools to recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children up to the age of 16 from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)). The school’s provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil pupils’ entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which pupils in the school will be familiar.

Prayer and liturgy are not designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education.

Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.

Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	Structured (often 4 part)	Taken from official books
One or two elements	Elements drawn from liturgy	Complex structure
Balance of familiarity & creativity	Places of Scripture	Many elements
	Contrasts and creativity	Range of ministry

In Catholic terminology ‘worship’ is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to

open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God's world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 there is a statutory duty to inspect and report on denominational education (that is religious education) and collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character. For this reason, the term 'Collective Worship' has been kept as the headline judgement by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate but throughout the framework it is referred to as prayer and liturgy.

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The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

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.

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'¹

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 Come and See RE curriculum.

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil pupils' entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which pupils in the school will be familiar. Prayer and liturgy are not designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education.

Responsibility

(a) Governance

The governors, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- 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(s) 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.

(b) 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 leader(s) 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
- there are suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

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 Model
- 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 take 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, parishes and the Diocese.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St Joseph's Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to 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

All acts of prayer in St Joseph's Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations such as class celebration of the word and class mass.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The regular Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:50am		Class led prayer and liturgy	Pupil led prayer and liturgy in class		Whole School Pupil led Celebration of the Word or Whole School attend Class

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

					Celebration of the Word to Parents (rota)
10:00am				Classes attend Mass in the parish church (rota)	
1:00pm	Whole School Celebration of the Word	KS2 Hymns	KS1 Hymns	Whole School Celebration of the Word	

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy, supported by the senior leadership team and RE leader. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in various places including in class big books, pupil books. There may be photographic and video evidence.

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.

Training and Formation

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.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'³

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference The Way, the Truth and the Life topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Other opportunities

Children take part in Parish events such as the Parish celebrations and the Christmas Nativity and Carol concert.

Eucharist

Children regularly attend Eucharist services both in school and church. Children celebrate mass for Holy Days of Obligation in church/school where Parishioners are invited to join.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Laura Bourne Coordinator

Theresa Austin - Parish Liaison Coordinator

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Appendix 1- Common Prayers

Prayers to be known by phase	Age Phase	4-5 (EYFS)	5-7 (KS1)	7-9 (Lower KS2)	9-11 (Upper KS2)	11 – 14 (KS3)
	Prayers	The Sign of the Cross	Morning Offering - KS1	Morning Offering – KS2	The Rosary	The Benedictus
		The Lords Prayer	Grace before meals – KS1	Grace before meals - KS2	The Magnificat	The Angelus
		Hail Mary	Grace after meals – KS1	Grace after meals – KS2	Come, Holy Spirit	Hail Holy Queen
			Prayer at the end of the day – KS1	Prayer at the end of the day – KS2		The Memorare
			Glory Be	The Apostles' Creed		Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you
				An Act of Contrition		Eternal Rest
				Angel of God		Diocesan Prayer for Vocations
				The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester		
				Act of Faith		
				Act of Hope		
				Act of Love		

The Sign of the Cross

*In the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

The sign of the cross is both an action and a statement of faith. A physical reminder of our redemption in the cross and an expression of faith in the Trinity.

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.*

*Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

The Lord's Prayer 'is truly the summary of the whole of the Gospel'. (CCC 2761.)

The Hail Mary

*Hail, Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

*Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.*

The first part of the Hail Mary is biblical, drawn from Gabriel's greeting to Mary at the Annunciation and Elizabeth's greeting at the Visitation. The second part of the prayer has its origins in 15th-century Italy.

Glory be to the Father

*Glory be to the Father
and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning is now,
and ever shall be world without end. Amen.*

The doxology is a short expression of praise of the Trinity dating back to the early Church. It is used extensively in the Liturgy of the Hours and in devotions such as the Rosary.

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.

Grace after meals

Dear God, thank you for our food today, for those who fed us, Lord we pray, Thank you God for food and prayer. Teach us how to love and share. Amen

The Apostles' Creed

*I believe in God,
the Father almighty
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,*

At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.

*who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,*

*the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.*

Based on baptismal documents of the 8th century but related to texts of an earlier origin.

Act of Contrition

*O my God,
because you are so good,
I am very sorry that I have sinned against you,
and with the help of your grace
I will not sin again.*

One of the forms of the Penitent's Prayer of Sorrow found in the Rite of Penance.

Angel of God

*Angel of God,
my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.
Amen.*

The prayer is based on one by Reginald of Canterbury in the early 12th century.

Come, Holy Spirit

*V. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
R. And kindle in them the fire of your love.
V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
R. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

*Let us pray
O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit,
did instruct the hearts of your faithful,
grant that by that same Holy Spirit,
we may be truly wise,
and ever rejoice in your consolation,
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

This prayer is a compilation of a number of liturgical texts drawn from the Mass and Office of Pentecost and the Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of St Richard of Chichester

*Thanks be to you, my Lord Jesus Christ,
for all the benefits which you have given me,
for all the pains and insults which you have borne for me.
O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother,
may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day.
Amen.*

Morning Offering

*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 will try to please you Father, Bless me through the day. 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.*

The Rosary

For each mystery or decade, one Our Father, ten Hail Marys and the Glory be is recited.

The Joyful Mysteries (Recited Monday and Saturday)

The Annunciation (Luke 1:26–38)

The Visitation (Luke 1:39–45)

The Nativity (Luke 2:1–7)

The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:22–35)

The Finding in the Temple (Luke 2:41–52)

The Mysteries of Light (Recited Thursday)

The Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:13–17)

The Wedding Feast of Cana (John 2:1–12)

The Proclamation of the Kingdom, with the call to Conversion (Mark 1:14–15; 2:3–12)

The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28–36)

The Institution of the Eucharist (Matthew 26:26–29)

The Sorrowful Mysteries (Recited Tuesday and Friday)

The Agony in the Garden (Mark 14:32–42)

The Scouring at the Pillar (Matthew 27:15–26)

The Crowning with Thorns (Matthew 27:27–31)

The Carrying of the Cross (John 19:15–17; Luke 23:27–32)

The Crucifixion (Luke 23:33–38, 44–46)

The Glorious Mysteries (Recited Wednesday and Sunday)

The Resurrection (Matthew 28:1–8)

The Ascension (Acts 1:6–11)

The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1–12)

The Assumption (1 Thessalonians 4:13–19)

The Coronation of Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth (Revelation 12:1; 14:1–5; Isaiah 6:1–3)

Prayer concluding the Rosary

[Hail, Holy Queen, etc. as above]

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

*O God, whose only-begotten Son, by his life,
death and resurrection,
has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life,
grant, we beseech thee,
that meditating on these mysteries of the most holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise,
through the same Christ our Lord
Amen.*

The Magnificat

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour,
for he has looked upon his handmaid in her lowliness;
for behold, from this day forward,
all generations will call me blessed.*

*For the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is from age to age for those who fear him.*

*He has made known the strength of his arm,
and has scattered the proud in their conceit of heart.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones
and has exalted those who are lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and has sent the rich away empty.*

*He has helped his servant Israel,
mindful of his mercy,
even as he promised to our fathers,
to Abraham and his descendants for ever.*

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen.*

Mary's song of praise was first sung to her cousin Elizabeth (Luke 1:46–55). It is sung daily at Evening Prayer.

Act of Faith

My God, I believe in you

*and all that your Church teaches,
because you have said it,
and your word is true.*

Act of Hope

*My God, I hope in you,
for grace and for glory,
because of your promises,
your mercy and your power.*

Act of Love

*My God, because you are so good,
I love you with all my heart,
and for your sake, I love your neighbour as myself.*

Appendix 2

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]