



Our Lady's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Produced by	Our Lady's Catholic Primary School
Date approved and adopted by Governing Body	24/06/2025
Review Date	June 2027
Date Amended	

Mission Statement

The aim of our school is:

To provide a loving Catholic environment which will help each individual member of the school family grow morally, spiritually and academically in the love of Jesus Christ.

This means we aim to meet our children's needs in the light of the Good News of Jesus Christ that God loves us all. This is found in the life of the school through:

- The quality of relationships based on love, care, respect and trust.
- Prayer, reflection and celebration
- Learning and teaching that enables children to reach their full potential.
- Partnership between home, school and parish.

"LIVING AND LEARNING IN FAITH"

This Prayer and Liturgy Policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body in June 2025 and will be reviewed in June 2027.

Signed by the Chair of Governors: *C A Gould*

Signed by the Headteacher: *A M Core*

1. 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.)

2. 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;

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.

3. Responsibility

(a) Governance

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(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.

- 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 and parishes
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

3. Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision

As a school community, we foster and deepen the children's personal relationship with God our Father, daily, in prayer. We do this by helping them become aware of God's Presence in their lives and of His love for them by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age. This may be in one of the following ways:

- Prayer of silence
- Spontaneous prayer

- Praying through gesture or action
- Formal prayer
- Singing

Prayer is not confined to an act of worship. Children are encouraged to pray in the morning and in the evening. 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.

Collective Worship is organised as follows:

Monday	Whole School Gospel Assembly led by Senior Leaders.
Tuesday	Infant Assembly led by Class Teachers. Class-based Celebration of the Word in Key Stage Two
Wednesday	Key Stage Two Assembly led by Class Teachers Class-based Celebration of the Word in Infants
Thursday	Class based Celebration of the Word led by class teacher and children.
Friday	Key Stage Hymn Practice

Prayer and Liturgy take the form of:

Prayer

Children at Our Lady's have a natural aptitude for prayer. They respond to joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world around them.

Children are introduced to a variety of forms and styles of prayer:

Prayer	Example
Class Prayers	These may vary. Time is spent praying in the morning, before lunch and at the end of the day.
Praying the psalms	'I thank you for the wonder of my being' (Psalm 139)
Traditional prayers	Glory be to the Father, Our Father, Hail Mary
Meditation	Scripture reflection with use of imagination
Gesture	Sign of the cross, sign of peace, raising hands in praise, bowing, genuflecting, dancing
Prayer of the heart / Centring	Stillness to listen to God: 'Be still and know that I am God.'
Contemplation	Looking at a natural object or an icon
Hymns	Traditional and modern
Music	Listening to reflective, quiet music, sacred music
Processions	Gospel procession with sung 'alleluia'

Liturgy	Formal and spontaneous prayer included
Prayer walks	Find own outdoor space to pray

From the beginning, the children are encouraged to compose their own prayers (in line with our Prayer Progression document). Children are inherently good at it, they enjoy it and it helps them to understand that prayer is more than saying prayers.

At Our Lady's we encourage the community, adults and children to pray, through the prayers that we compose ourselves and through the traditional prayers of the church.

The adults in the school gather for prayer throughout the week at staff meetings.

Gestures

Sign of the cross – Children understand that this is a prayer in itself.

Sign of peace

Signing to a variety of hymns

Hymns

Traditional and modern hymns are sung and are in keeping with the Liturgical cycle. Hymn practice takes place weekly and hymn meanings and spirituality are explained to the children and singing is used when appropriate.

Liturgy

Liturgy is the term used to describe the established pattern or form used for public worship within the church. The liturgy of the Catholic Church includes the Mass, the sacraments and other rites and daily prayer. Liturgy celebrates faith using symbols, movement, music and gestures/actions as well as words. By offering the children an established pattern of prayer we give them that which will sustain them, and us, in good times and bad.

The agreed form of liturgy other than Mass is as follows:

Gathering: Opening responses; Opening words; Song; Opening prayer

Word of God: Invitation; for readings other than the Gospel ***A reading from...*** and after the reading ***The Word of the Lord*** , and then ***Thanks be to God***; for Gospel readings greet with Alleluia, unless we are in Lent, then ***A reading from the Gospel of Saint...*** and after the reading, ***The Gospel of the Lord*** and then ***Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ***.

Response to the Word: ritual action (different in each liturgy); intercessory prayer.

Send (Mission): The action that we are going to complete throughout the week / day to remind us of the Word we listened to.

Celebration of the Word

Celebration of the Word is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons in the Liturgical Calendar, The Way, the Truth and the Life/The Vine and the Branches, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- with reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of settings and in a variety of groupings in order to help personalise the experience.

Celebration of the Word takes place in the hall and classrooms. Each classroom has a designated prayer focus area which may include a display; this is changed regularly either by the teacher or by the children. The children are initially guided by the teacher to create a prayer focus area but

eventually are given the opportunity to select their own resources to create this space from the class liturgy box.

Celebration of the Word is recorded:

- on a planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources. Copies of this, along with pupil response, copies of the word and images are placed in the class Celebration of the Word book.
- through displays

4. 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.

Liturgy Box

Classroom Liturgy Boxes contain the following:

White, purple, red, green cloths, cross, candles, stones and glass beads.

There is a planning board for Gather, Word, Response and Mission and individual cards to enable the children to choose different ways of celebrating the liturgy. Word can be selected from the Bible or from the Word distributed by the Diocese. Word should be in relation to the Church calendar or Gospel for the relevant 'The Way, The Truth and the Life' / 'The Vine and The Branches' unit.

Each class celebrates a liturgy at least once weekly.

All staff have copies of the Wednesday Word and use this where appropriate to supplement their liturgies in class.

Focal Points for Prayer

The use of images, art, banners, displays, flowers, candles etc all enhance the experience of prayer.

Each classroom has a religious area that serves as a focal point for prayer. These quality focal points are interactive whenever possible and are changed regularly, with the themes and the colours used reflecting the Church's Liturgical season. Children are to be taught to respect their class focal point.

5. 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.

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