ST. PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission Statement: We Journey Together, Loving our Learning, Daring to Discover, Caring for All, With Jesus as our Guide

Policy Title	Prayer and Liturgy Policy
Approval Date	Spring Term 2025
Next Review Date	Spring Term 2026
Approver	Head / R.E. Governor

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)).

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, (especially the R.E. Governor – Sarah Green) 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 – Katie McAuley). Prayer team includes Charlotte McCabe and Martha Hall (support class-based Friday liturgy).
- 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, Hayley Townsend, 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 Education Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep
  updated with best practice.

4. **Overview of prayer and liturgy provision**

Masses

- Mass is an important part of the school timetabling. We understand that, for many Catholics, access to church may be limited and therefore want to model to the children the importance of attending church. Children lead the masses as timetabled in the APOP, with children taking part at each of the services related for the year groups.

Daily Assembly

- Mondays – Gospel Assembly – This uses the messages from the Sunday Gospel and shares this with the children, responding to the word of God and listening to the meaning of the stories and readings. It includes gathering, worship in song, Prayers of the Faithful, outreach about how we can support people around the world (often linked to Catholic Social Teaching - CST) and using the school Mission Statement. We gather together in the school hall, at the heart of the community.
- Tuesday – Key Stage Assemblies – Looking at Key themes in the church calendar
- Wednesday – Worship through singing and sharing the stories of the Bible through song
- Thursday – Thanking God for the wonderful opportunities which we have in school and praising the children's learning
- Friday – Class Liturgy – Shared by one of the class representatives who has been supported to hear the Bible messages and share their thoughts about it with the class. These children have worked with members of the prayer and liturgy team to be formed to deliver this role.

Reconciliation takes place at least once yearly, but often twice, at Advent and at Lent (depending on priests).

Every Monday, one of the Key Stage 2 classes attends Mass with the parishioners, rotated for the term and fitting with the school timetable. This enables the school and community to work together in partnership, nurturing one another through our actions and prayers.

Visitors will support assemblies throughout the year to help with the Catholic social teaching and link in with the school charities. Representatives will attend from Missio, Mary's Meals. Elmbridge Foodbank and African Vision Malawi.

Additional Masses will be attended to fit in with the Liturgical Calendar including Epiphany and All Saint's Day.

5. Our school context

The Headteacher, Hayley Townsend, overseas all religious instruction in the school and uses staff to ensure the policies in place are adhered to.

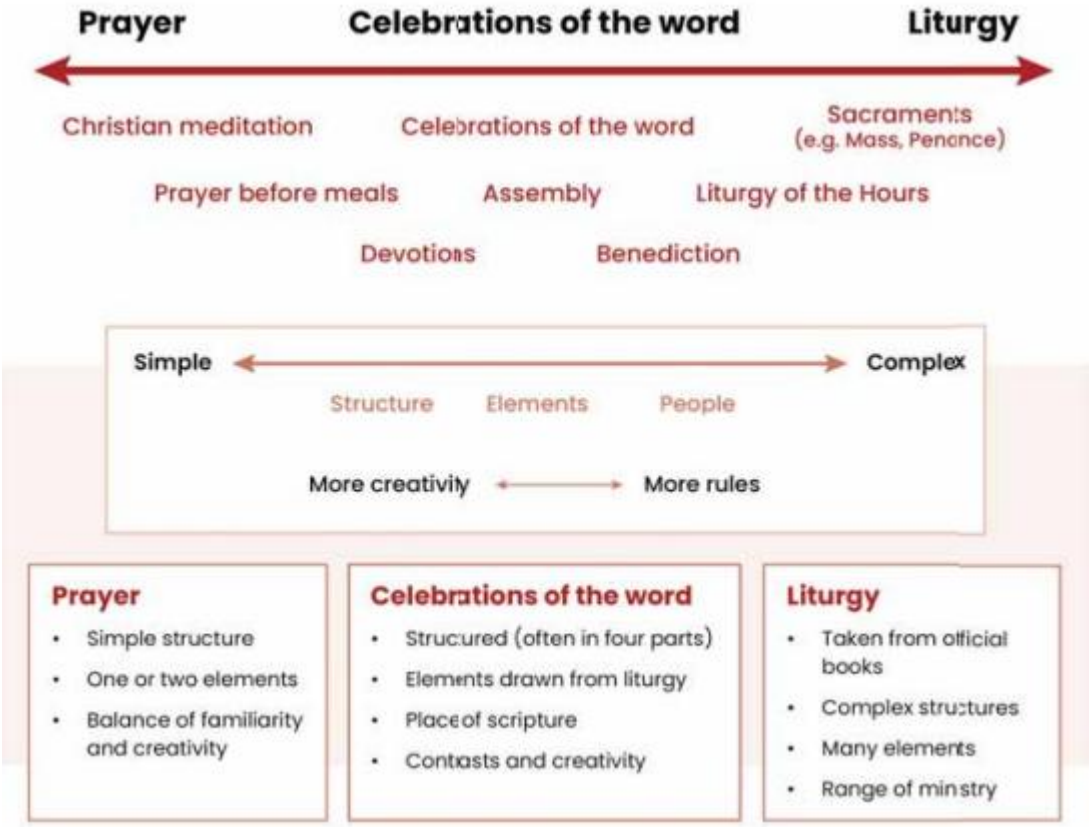
The R.E. Co-Ordinator (Alistair Widdop) must be Catholic and ensures the R.E. curriculum is delivered in the school. They lead on school based CPD and liaise with the diocese for other support in relation to the curriculum.

The Prayer and Liturgy Leader (Katie McAuley) leads on the delivery of Prayer and Liturgy. This is currently shared to make a Prayer and Liturgy Team – PLT (including Charlotte McCabe and Martha Hall)

Catholic Schools have a particular mission to reveal to the children in their care, who Jesus is and to teach them how to know Him (Knowledge), love Him (Discern) and follow him (Respond). As with all relationships, knowing and loving someone depends of spending time with them, speaking to them and listening to what they have to say. This is what is meant in participation in prayer.

Everyone in our school community is invited to participate in every aspect of prayer and liturgy. This participation begins with presence in the celebration and may progress to more active roles through engaging the senses or reflecting on the content in relation to their own experiences.

All baptised Christians are baptised priest, prophet and king; all who need to be ministered to at different times and as part of their journey, some may be called to minister to others. Pupils and staff who respond to the invitation to serve the community in this way will first be formed for their ministry so that they can enable others to meet Jesus from their own starting points.



Our school offers a rich diet of prayer and liturgical experiences for all of the children, on a continuum from least complex from simple prayer to the more complex including full participation in the Mass.

Prayer

- Everyone is invited to take part in communal prayer, for example in the classes at the beginning and end of the day or in meetings. Prayer can either be led by staff or

children, with appropriate formation. Children of other faiths are invited to participate respectfully as far as their own faith permits them. All children are expected to maintain a respectful presence at times of prayer.

Celebration of the Word Assemblies

- When proclaiming the Gospel we say “Glory to you O Lord” and end it with “Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ”
- Scripture in assembly will be proclaimed by Lectors who have been formed in the ministry of proclaiming the Word of God.

Mass

- The whole school community are invited to join with us at Holy Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. Our intention is to include everyone in prayerful silence, joyful sung praise and in listening to the word of God. We seek to make our actions prayful and deliberate so that they can be recognised by the youngest children in our school community. All members of the community are invited to receive a blessing from the priest.
- During Mass, scripture will be proclaimed by Lectors who have been formed in the ministry of proclaiming the Word of God. Mass readings will be taken from Universalis where possible and where appropriate; otherwise readings for the theme of the Mass will be drawn from the children’s R.E. learning (in accordance with the RE Directory) and where appropriate to the liturgical calendar.
- Alter servers will be drawn from those who have been formed in this ministry in their local parishes.
- Children who have made their First Holy Communion will be called to present the gifts of the Bread and the Wine for consecration on behalf of the congregation.
- Classes who have been linked to the Mass preparation will share symbols linked to the liturgy, year group or the school. They will be invited to participate through singing, Mass responses and through silent reflection.
- At Holy Communion, all members of the community are invited to receive a blessing from the priest. Children in YR to YR2/3 will receive a group blessing. Children in classes where the First Holy Communion has taken place and did not make this themselves are invited to come up for an individual blessing. They present themselves with arms crossed over their chest.
- Children who are receiving Holy Communion will be supported by class teachers to process up and receive, respond with ‘Amen’ and cross themselves.

Other Liturgies (E.G. Crowning of Our Lady; Adoration)

- Ministries in other liturgies will be carried out by children who have made their First Holy Communion (or baptised Catholic) and have been formed in their roles.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

- All children are invited to receive a blessing from the presiding priest, whether or not they have been prepared to receive the sacrament. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available to all children who have received their first reconciliation after a period of preparation by the parish. Reconciliation takes place at school during Advent and Lent.

Music

"Music is is integral to liturgy and celebrations of the word… Music highlights or gives prominence to the part of the liturgy where it is used. Therefore music matches the high points of the liturgy". (PLD 6.2)

- All children are invited to fully participate in leading music during Mass; either through playing instruments, leading actions or singing.
- Music should be chosen to ensure that the text and the music fit the context of the liturgy and offer variety to develop a rich musical repertoire.
- Priority is given to singing the liturgical texts at Mass which include the Gospel Acclamation and the Mass Setting.
- All music and hymns should reflect the Catholic teaching and understanding of faith.
- Secular music where the text is consistent with Catholic teaching may be used in some forms of prayer assemblies.

6. **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.

7. **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.

8. **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.

9. **Review**

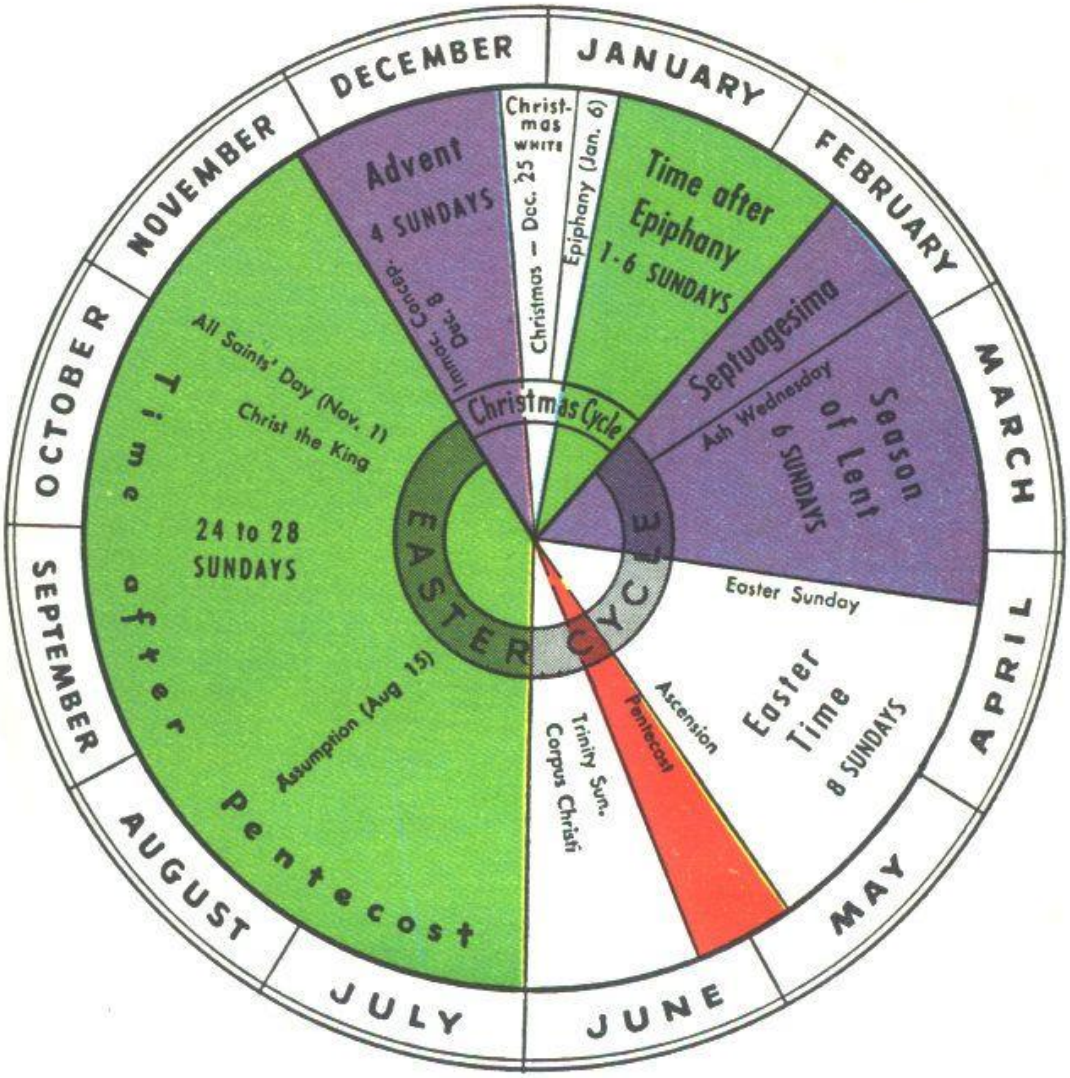
The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors.

Appendix 1: Annual Plan of Provision

Appendix 2: The Liturgical Colours of the Year

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Mass	* Beginning of year staff Mass/liturgy * Beginning of Year Mass (September Year 6) * All Saints Day * Advent Mass (December Year 5)	* Epiphany (Community) * Conversion of St Paul Mass (January 25th Year 2) * Lenten * Easter Mass (April	* First Holy Communion (Year 3) * End of Year (July Year 6)
	* Harvest Festival (All years participate) * Reconciliation (Advent and Lent) * Carol Singing (December Year 6)	* Way of the Cross (RE Council) * Reconciliation (Advent and Lent)	* Crowning Mary (Classes Mass)
In School Prayer and Liturgy - Children	* Morning prayer * Lunch Prayer * Afternoon prayer * Prayer tables in classrooms * Liturgical colour on tables and board * Access to the prayer garden	* Class Liturgy * Gospel Assembly * Worship Assembly * Prayer Club * Class prayers to begin RE lessons * Monday Mass 1/week in KS2 * Rosary Club * About the Mass session	* Reception Nativity * Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity
In School Prayer and Liturgy - Other	* Prayers at staff meeting * Prayers at phase meetings * Prayers at SLT * Prayers for governor meetings * Prayers at the Beginning of Year talks	* Remembrance Day silence * Prayers for the deanery * Prayers for the Year of …	
In School	* Mission Statement * 10% teaching time of R.E. * Display boards in entrance hall	* Importance of the Eucharist * Mary's Prayer corner * Mary's prayer garden * Catholic Social Teaching display	
	* Advent Wreath in entrance * Remembrance Day Display		
Out of School	• Deanery Mass		* Year 2 trip to the mosque * Year 3 trip to the Synagogue * Year 5 Visit to the Hindu Temple

THE LITURGICAL YEAR



Year	Liturgy	Prayer
YR	Recognising liturgical cloth colours Choosing a religious picture/statue/artefact for a prayer table	Making the Sign of the cross
Y1	Showing reverence and quiet when praying Closing eyes or hands together – beginning to recognise why we do this.	Joining in a traditional prayer e.g. Our Father Suggesting things to praise/ask for in prayer
Y2	Setting up a prayer table with appropriate liturgical cloth, religious artefacts, Bible and candle. Beginning to retell why we do this.	Learning one traditional prayer. Choosing and reading prayers from prayer books.
Y3	Choosing an appropriate theme for a Liturgy – based on the Liturgical year or world or class events. Showing Understanding of why this theme is appropriate. Choosing appropriate music or hymns for a liturgical theme	Learning a range of traditional prayers e.g. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be,
Y4	Choosing a scripture reading for a Liturgy **with adult training and support** based on a theme from a range of given options. Showing understanding of why it is appropriate. **Beginning to** lead parts of the Liturgy e.g. reading the scripture – after adult training and support. Showing appropriate reverence.	Beginning to lead or write spontaneous prayers.
Y5	Planning and leading **one part** of a Liturgy **with adult training and support** – Either - 1) **Gather** - A prayerful way to gather – possibly to music and in a different way to a lesson 2) **Listen** - A relevant piece of Scripture to be read – based on the theme. 3) **Respond** - Lead a planned appropriate response – e.g. a drama, piece of artwork, question and response, a reflection, a prayer, etc. 4) **Go Forth** - Plan and lead an appropriate Go Forth activity to hold onto the experience – including preparing resources and following up any further response. Beginning to Explain why they made these choices in relation to the purpose of the Liturgy.	Join in a traditional set of prayers e.g. a decade of the Rosary or Examen or Lectio Divina
Y6	Planning and leading **one** (or more) **part** of a liturgy **independently –** either:- 5) **Gather** - A prayerful way to gather – possibly to music and in a different way to a lesson	Leading a decade of the Rosary or a Lectio Divina or Examen Prayer.

	6) **Listen** - A relevant piece of Scripture to be read – based on the theme. 7) **Respond** - Lead a planned appropriate response – e.g. a drama, piece of artwork, question and response, a reflection, a prayer, etc. 8) **Go Forth** - Plan and lead an appropriate Go Forth activity to hold onto the experience – including preparing resources and following up any further response. Explain why they made these choices in relation to the purpose of the Liturgy.	
GDS Y6 or Trained Liturgy Leader groups.	**Independently** planning a **whole liturgy** using the Gather, Listen, Respond, Go Forth format. Planning each stage appropriately based on a theme. Including: - A prayerful way to gather – possibly to music and in a different way to a lesson - A relevant piece of Scripture to be read – based on the theme. - Lead a planned appropriate response – e.g. a drama, piece of artwork, question and response, a reflection, a prayer, etc. - Plan and lead an appropriate Go Forth activity to hold onto the experience – including preparing resources and following up any further response. Self- Evaluate their choices in response to engagement of participants.	Exploring and experiencing other Catholic prayer traditions e.g. Adoration, Divine Mercy, Visio Divina, Patron Saints.