

St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



'Together in Faith, Working as One'

Mission Statement

This policy is written to reflect and support our school mission statement:

‘Together in Faith, Working as One’

Introduction

St. Paul’s is a caring, Catholic school community, which seeks to live out the values of Jesus Christ - founded on His commandment to, ‘Love one another.’ We are committed to the Catholic Faith, recognising and valuing every individual as unique, created in the image and likeness of God. We believe that liturgy and prayer in a Catholic school celebrates God’s presence in our lives and 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.

As a Catholic school, we are fully committed to providing opportunities for all children to know, love and serve God, in such a way that will enrich their own lives and help them to understand their Catholic faith traditions, in an ever-changing world and within the multicultural society that we all live in.

Through prayer and liturgy, we support our children to live out our Mission Statement and school values daily. Our principal aim is that children leave St. Paul’s Catholic Primary School with a living and personal faith in Jesus Christ, allowing them to know and love God so that they are inspired to put that faith in action as they walk on their journey through life.

Aims and Principles

The overall aim of the school in partnership with parents is to create a caring, well-disciplined environment where children can learn academic skills, social graces and Catholic Christian values to enable them to cope successfully in the world in which they live. We also aim to work with parents and clergy to develop the spiritual life of the child and to encourage the children to live and work in a Christian manner in the community. In the religious and social development of our children, St Paul’s seeks:

- ❖ To enable the children to acquire an understanding and involvement of prayer, worship and liturgy in the practices and beliefs of their Catholic faith.
- ❖ To help the children become aware of God’s presence in their lives.
- ❖ To respond to God’s invitation to enter into a personal relationship with him.
- ❖ To foster and deepen the children’s faith.
- ❖ To enable the children to reflect on their own experience and for them to explore the beliefs, values and way of life of the Catholic tradition.

To this effect, we believe that prayer and liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all children 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 positive attitude to those of other cultures and faiths
- ❖ To develop a common ethos and shared values
- ❖ To enrich religious experience
- ❖ To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- ❖ To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- ❖ To participate fully
- ❖ To take time to grow close to God in the stillness of His presence
- ❖ To take to develop a sense of 'awe and wonder'

All acts of prayer and liturgy take place daily and will:

- ❖ Give glory and honour to God
- ❖ Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- ❖ Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

To achieve this, prayer and liturgy will be a personalised experience, accessible to all, appropriately paced, and include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and settings.

We will continue to foster and deepen the children's personal relationship with God our Father in daily 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, through prayers of silence, spontaneous prayer, praying through gesture or action, formal/traditional prayer, meditation, song.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

A central message of the Catholic Faith is that although we are all different, God loves each one of us equally, regardless of background, gender or ability. It is therefore vital that we recognise and cater for the individual needs of children, acknowledging that all children have different talents and gifts and that these should be celebrated. Each child is recognised as unique, a child of God, with individual needs which we accommodate in the organisation of our prayer and liturgy activities.

Context

This policy has been written in line with the model policy for prayer and liturgy contained within The Prayer and Liturgy Directory [PLD] 'To love you more dearly' (pgs. 69-72)

'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 requirements

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.

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 feedback 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.

Overview of Prayer and Liturgy provision

We use the language 'Prayer and Liturgy' in place of the previous term 'Collective Worship' in our daily life, practices and policies.

At St Paul's Catholic Primary School, prayer and liturgy takes place daily for all pupils and staff. A weekly pattern of prayer and liturgy is offered at whole school, key stage, and individual class level and includes weekly attendance at Mass in St Paul's Church every Friday with Fr Michael.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
PRAYER & LITURGY WHOLE SCHOOL [followed by celebration assembly]	PRAYER & LITURGY CLASS	PRAYER & LITURGY PS2/EY/KS1 – CLASS Y3&4/Y5&6 - KEYSTAGE	PRAYER & LITURGY CLASS	MASS WHOLE SCHOOL

We have whole school dedicated retreat days at the start of Advent and Lent and parents and parishioners are invited to a celebration in church. Our whole school, St Paul's retreat mornings each month provide pupils with further prayer and liturgy opportunities focusing on St Paul's scriptures, our school mission, catholic social teaching principles and include singing worship.

Masses are celebrated across the year, including the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist, First Holy Communion, holy days of obligation, feast day celebrations and other special liturgies.

All liturgies follow the structure of Gather, Listen, Respond, Send (Go forth/Mission), which is modelled on the principle liturgical pattern of the Eucharist [PLD pg.88]. St Paul's school prayer and liturgy planning proforma follows this simple structure, and is used by staff and pupils to plan collective worship.

All pupils participate fully during prayer and liturgy and have opportunities to plan, lead and evaluate aspects of prayer and liturgy in an age appropriate way. Prayer and liturgy themes follows the liturgical seasons and include Sunday Gospel scripture readings. Our prayer and liturgy progression guidance sets out expectations for appropriate levels of pupil leadership at each age phase using an incremental approach, from our youngest children making choices to decorate the prayer table to our older pupils planning and leading class worship.

As part of the wider prayer life of St Paul's, our pupils hear and recite a range of common prayers as set out in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory [7.10, 9.5]

Age phase	5–7 (KS1)	7–9 (Lower KS2)	9–11 (Upper KS2)
Prayers	• The Sign of the Cross • The Lord's Prayer • Hail Mary • Glory be • Grace before meals • Grace after meals	• The Apostles' Creed • An Act of Contrition • Angel of God • Come, Holy Spirit • The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester	• Morning Offering • The Rosary • The Magnificat • Act of Faith • Act of Hope • Act of Love

Pupils are taught a range of traditional prayers throughout their time at St Paul's and by introducing class specific prayers, we ensure that when our pupils leave us at the end of key stage 2, they know, off by heart, a repertoire of prayers to use in their future lives.

Year Group	Class Prayers
PS2	The Sign of the Cross St Paul's school mission statement
F1/2	Grace Morning prayer Home time prayer
Y1/2	The Lord's Prayer Hail Mary
Y3/4	Glory Be Eternal Rest
Y5/6	Angel of God Come Holy Spirit

Each class has a designated Saint and their own St Paul scripture quote, this further enhances pupils' prayer life, their understanding of our mission and our call to put faith into action.

Year Group	Saints	St Paul
PS2	St George, St Patrick, St Andrew & St David	You are God's work of art
F1/2	St Anthony & St Teresa	
Y1/2	St Ignatius & St Rose	Live as children of the light
Y3/4	St Francis & St Clare	God loves a cheerful giver
Y5/6	St Thomas & St Cecilia	Have a loving and understanding heart

Whole School Prayer and Liturgy

Our weekly prayer and liturgy, each Monday, provides an opportunity for the school community to join together in listening to scripture and responding to the Word of God and praising Him in prayer and song. Children are encouraged to be quiet and reverent during times of reflection, to actively participate in spoken prayer and to be active participants in sung prayers and action songs in a joyful and appropriate manner. This Gospel Celebration of the Word focuses on the Sunday Gospel reading and is led by the Headteacher. It includes time for prayer, scripture, reflection and singing worship - hymns. This is followed by our general assembly celebrating children's achievements.

Holy Mass is the source and summit of our faith - celebrating the Sacrament of the Eucharist through Holy Mass is an important part of our Catholic Life and identity. Each Friday the whole school attends Mass at St Paul's church with Fr Michael and our parish family. Pupils take an active role in Mass by reading scripture, responsorial psalms and bidding prayers, take part in the offertory procession. Pupils make gifts for parishioners and create artwork for display inside church for holy days of obligation, feast days, memorials and Solemnity.

There are additional whole school prayer and liturgy assemblies that take place throughout the year in response to the liturgical calendar or special events such as –

- ❖ Mission day (Conversion of St Paul and Ss Peter and Paul)
- ❖ Remembrance
- ❖ Harvest
- ❖ Fundraising or appeals
- ❖ Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
- ❖ Visitors – CAFOD, Mary's Meal's, St John's Hospice, Wirral Food Bank

Class Prayer and Liturgy

Each class has a dedicated prayer space and a travelling altar/focus table for class prayer and liturgy sessions. Classes have a range of age appropriate liturgical resources such as a crucifix, images, Good News Translation Bible, cross, candle or other items that are used as a focus for reverence. Cloths and religious symbols/artefacts are changed according to the liturgical seasons, calendar of saints or to mark the months of Mary. Every class has nominated Prayer and Liturgy Leaders who lead daily prayer time in the classroom in different ways. Prayers are said daily in each classroom in the morning, before meals and at the end of the day. These are occasions for communal prayer and children are encouraged to engage in their own silent prayer and add their own spontaneous prayer. Each class has a set of traditional prayers to learn which form part of pupils' prayer progression. All children participate in planning for and leading acts of prayer. Classroom prayer can take place in a variety of ways including silent prayer, reflective prayer and meditation, song and celebration, sharing a scripture or thought for the day or a prayer session with a specific themed focus. Class prayer and liturgy sessions focus on the Celebration of the Word by following the well-established four-part structure: Gather-Listen-Respond-Send [Go Forth/Mission] allowing pupils to meet Jesus through scripture. Our children are given age-appropriate opportunities to set up, plan and lead classroom prayer and are active

participants at all ages. Each class has a prayer and liturgy-planning book and children are encouraged to evaluate and reflect upon their experience.

Home, School and Parish Partnership

We have worked hard to develop effective links between school, our families and our parish to enrich the faith of our children. Our Parish Priest, Father Michael Coughlan takes an active part in school life. The link between school, home and parish is visible in Mass preparation and through our 'With You Always' sacramental preparation. We invite our school and parish community to share their prayer intentions with us. Prayers are said during our whole school weekly prayer and liturgy. For each intention, a prayer ribbon is added to our prayer frame in the school foyer. We use half-termly RE and Catholic Life newsletters and daily updates on social media to keep our families fully informed of the prayer life of our school. St Paul's supports many charities locally, nationally and internationally with particular commitments to the Wirral foodbank, CAFOD, Mary's Meals and St John's Hospice.

Resourcing

Prayer and liturgy are central to our school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in 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 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 throughout the academic year (school CPD and diocesan training) 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 as part of the wider monitoring schedule 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.

Review

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

Glossary [PLD pgs. 62-66]

Celebrations of the word

This term is used in this Directory for celebrations, which are created for the school community and not directly taken from the liturgical books of the Church. These celebrations will take many forms, but the common element is the proclamation of scripture. These include assemblies, carol services, and other gatherings of all or part of the school community for special times and occasions.

Eucharist

Derived from the Greek word 'to give thanks'. It can refer to the consecrated bread and wine, as well as the whole of Mass (CCC 1328).

Holy Communion

The reception of Christ's Body and Blood under the form of the consecrated bread and wine (CCC 1331, 1415–17)

Feast

One of the ranks of liturgical days between a Solemnity and a Memorial. Many of the Apostles are celebrated as Feasts. On a Feast, the Gloria is sung and proper readings are found in the Lectionary. See the section 'Saints' in 6.3.

Holydays of obligation

Within the cycle of the year the Church recognises that some Solemnities celebrate core aspects of our faith. These holydays have such an importance that the Church 'obliges' all Catholics not only to celebrate them with Mass, but also to mark them with joy and due relaxation of mind and body

Memorial

One of the ranks of liturgical days below a Solemnity and a Feast. The majority of the Saints included in the liturgical calendar are Memorials. For celebration of Mass, the Memorial is either obligatory or optional. See the section 'Saints' in 6.3

Solemnity

One of the ranks of liturgical days above a Feast and a Memorial. Solemnities mark major festivals in the liturgical year (e.g., The Nativity of the Lord or Saint Peter and Saint Paul). On Solemnities, the Gloria and the Creed are said. See the section 'Saints' in 6.3

Lectionary

The book from which the readings in the liturgy of the word are proclaimed at Mass and other celebrations

Liturgical norms

The principles found in liturgical law.

Liturgical participation

The Church desires that participation in the liturgy should be 'full, conscious and active'. Fundamentally, to participate in the liturgy is to participate in the Paschal Mystery. Each time we celebrate, the Holy Spirit deepens our participation in Christ's redeeming work and gives us the grace to share daily in his life and mission.

Liturgical year

The annual cycle of the Church's liturgical year is centred on Christ and, in particular, on how he has made salvation possible for us. The year is, then, a sequence of seasons which brings into focus the various aspects of the one mystery of salvation in Christ, who is present in his Church.

Liturgy

The most familiar forms of the liturgy celebrated in school are the Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The liturgical books, such as the Roman Missal and the Lectionary, set out the structure to be followed, the words to be spoken, the gestures to be performed, and the symbols to be used when celebrating a liturgy. Other liturgies in school may include the celebration of parts of the Liturgy of the Hours, such as Morning Prayer and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The second main part of the Mass. It begins with the preparation of the gifts, then centres on the Eucharistic Prayer of thanksgiving, which leads into the Communion Rite, where all pray the Lord's Prayer and Holy Communion is distributed (CCC 1350–55).

Liturgy of the Hours

This liturgy offers a way of praying through the day and marking the various times. Morning and Evening Prayer, which are seen as the most important times, mark the beginning of the day's activities and their conclusion. At the heart of each liturgy is the recitation of psalms and the offering of prayer (CCC 1174–78.).

Liturgy of the word

The first main part of the Mass, which consists of readings from scripture leading to the proclamation of the Gospel. The homily and the Prayer of the Faithful, which flow from the scriptures, conclude the liturgy of the word (CCC 1349)

Mass

Also known as the celebration of the Eucharist, this is the most important action of the Church and from its celebration, the life of the Church flows

Prayer

Prayer has been traditionally described as 'lifting up of the hearts and minds to God', which means it involves our whole person – our head as well as our heart. This definition expresses a fundamental understanding that God is concerned and interested about what goes on in our lives; is due our expression of thanksgiving and gratitude; and responds to us when we express our needs

Roman Missal

The liturgical book, which contains the prayer texts for the celebration of Mass.

Explanatory Notes

Prayer

Prayer can have a variety of forms and styles and express different things. Prayer may be an individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.

Prayer consists of:

- Listening - being attentive to the voice of God in every moment of life
- Speaking - expressing our heart's deepest longings and desires to the One who knows and understands us better than we know and understand ourselves
- Reflecting - thinking about our relationship with God. Pondering on the actions of God in history and in the unfolding mystery of our lives
- Resting – simply being consciously in the presence of God, knowing that we are loved

Liturgy

Liturgy means, “work of the people”, and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action. Liturgy makes explicit the celebration deriving from and highlighting every instance of worship, which occurs in our daily lives. The liturgical celebration therefore should bring together all human symbols of expression - art, dance, poetry, music, gesture and stillness [see ‘Children’s Directory for Masses’]. The ‘Liturgy of the Word with Children. Guidelines’ [1996 The Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales] lists the General Principles of Liturgy as:

- Liturgy is the praise and worship of God
- Liturgy is the source and summit of the Church’s life and our lives
- It is the right and duty of all baptised, both children and adults
- The function of the liturgy is to build up members of Christ’s body, to strengthen us in preaching Christ
- Liturgy is action and symbol; it speaks to the whole person, it involves all the senses: sight, touch, sound, taste and smell
- Participating in liturgy forms our habits because we are ritual people and learn through repetition and copying
- In liturgy we discover the riches of prayer, through word and gesture, silence and stillness
- The purpose of adapting liturgy for children is to lead them into full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy of the parish
- Liturgy with children, as with adults, demands dignity, clarity and simplicity

Worship

Collective Worship is the acknowledgement that God is present and active in all authentic human experience. We already have a graced life and worship is naming and celebrating this reality in the Christian tradition. God is reached through the Word and adored within it. Creating a sacred space for worship is to create a space where the unity of God and creation is reverently symbolised and celebrated. Worship and the words and rituals we use should not sever us from the ordinary circumstances of our lives but rather unite us more closely to them. Worship remembers and celebrates the marvellous things God works in our lives. It celebrates God's presence in our lives. Worship should not feel like an interruption from a different world. It is a spontaneous response to life. Collective Worship 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. Worship will be at the very heart of every Catholic school and must reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities. All liturgies involve the praise, thanksgiving and adoration of God and are, therefore, acts of worship. However, not all worship will be liturgy, as it may not include symbol and action.

Assemblies

An assembly is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship but the difference between worship and assembly must always be clear. For example, a whole school assembly may have two parts. It may start with a prayer and liturgy session then move on to a general assembly focus but there needs to be a clear distinction between both parts.