The Federation of St Bernadette's and St. Patrick's Catholic Primary Schools

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Policy Reference:	PL 1-F
Responsibility:	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Designation:	Statutory (Diocese)
Reviewed by:	Alison Tong
This Review:	April 2026
Next Review Due:	April 2027
Cycle:	Annual
Ratified by Full Governing Body on:	
Signed:	
Gerard Owens	Chair of Governors

At our school, with Jesus in our hearts, we have:

The passion to learn;
The courage to fail; The strength to love.

With Christ as our guide and example we celebrate the uniqueness of the individual.

Together we will try to:
Learn from Jesus;
Love like Jesus;
Live like Jesus.

Introduction
The prayer and liturgy policy in the federation of St Bernadette's and St Patrick's supports the mission statements and charism values of both schools.

As a Catholic school, we recognise the need to ensure that prayer and liturgy are intrinsic to the daily rhythm and life of the school and that all members of the school community are to be supported in their spiritual journey, through the related experiences that we offer.

In light of our Catholic nature, our school will plan and deliver a range of prayer and liturgy experiences including: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.
(From the Prayer and Liturgy Directory: To Love You More Dearly, 2023)

Definition of Terms Prayer, Celebration of the Word 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:

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.*

Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school name celebrates God's presence in our lives. They are concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in a word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer and Liturgy are central to our Catholic ethos. They provide an opportunity for all to reflect on God's word and to celebrate and respond to the beliefs and attitudes, which characterise Christian life. We strive to provide a rich variety of prayerful experiences, which will deepen the pupil's sense of belonging to the faith community of our school and to the wider Church.

As a Catholic community, we provide a unique opportunity to present, in an authentic way, our tradition of Catholic prayer and liturgy while at the same time providing a welcoming environment for all pupils and staff.

Where appropriate, children take an active role in planning, leading and evaluating Prayer and Liturgy. We believe worship remembers and celebrates God's work in our lives. It celebrates His presence amongst us today and allows children and staff the opportunity to be joined with Him.

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.

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.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision
There must be daily acts of worship for all pupils. This will include, but is not limited to, acts of celebration of the word, prayers at the beginning and end of the day, grace.

Monday- Whole school celebration of the word reflecting on the Gospel from Sunday
Tuesday- phase celebration of the word
Wednesday- class or celebration of the word
Thursday- class or celebration of the word
Friday- Whole school celebration of the word. The opportunity to celebrate those who have lived out the charism values and the mission statement

Other acts of worship throughout the year will include;

- School Masses, including Holy days of Obligation and feast days specific to the two schools
- Penitential Services during Advent and Lent
- Sacrament of reconciliation during Advent and Lent
- Participation in parish Mass
- Masses to mark other important occasions across the schools such as to mark the beginning and end of the year and to mark patronal feast days.

Parents are encouraged and invited to participate in Mass and celebration of the word throughout the year. Both schools support the parish sacramental programmes of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion for the relevant feeder parish, Our Lady & St Dominic and Our Lady Help of Christians.

Parish and school initiatives are encouraged through reciprocal advertisements and contact is made with the Parish Priests or relevant Parish Pastoral Council to help maintain this continuity.

Classroom focal points - Each classroom has its own religious focal points; a prayer table that is covered with a cloth in the colour of the liturgical season. Prayer tables must not be cluttered, but appropriate artefacts that aid prayer and reflection may be placed there.

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 self-review of Prayer and Liturgy will be shared with governors through the Curriculum and Standards committee.