



English Martyrs' Catholic Primary School



Prayer & Liturgy Policy

CONTENTS

Policy for Prayer & Liturgy

Mission Statement
The Nature of Prayer & Liturgy
Legal Requirements
The Place of Prayer & Liturgy in the Life of our School
The Aims of Prayer & Liturgy
Principles
Organisation
The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer & Liturgy
Recording
Monitoring and Evaluation
Resources
Voluntary Worship and Retreats
Eucharist
Policy Monitoring and Review
Appendices

Policy for Prayer and Liturgy

Mission Statement

Our children are all unique, beautiful **individuals** but together we are a **masterpiece**, brothers and sisters in **Christ**.

As witnesses of Christ, working together as a **Team**, we strive to promote the **Gospel Values** and Teachings of Jesus by providing a **caring, stimulating environment**, with **nurture, trust, love** and **tolerance** through our spirituality, learning and play. By making connections with Jesus, we promote **high ambitions** and **confidence** to achieve our goals.

This policy should be read in conjunction with *To Love You More Dearly, The Prayer and Liturgy Directory*

The Nature of Prayer & Liturgy

Just as Our Lord Jesus Christ is at the heart of all our prayer and liturgy, so too he is at the centre of every Catholic school. His Gospel is the reference point for its ethos and values; he offers the definitive example of the educator. Joining Christ in praise of the Eternal Father and united by the Holy Spirit in making intercession for the world through prayer and liturgy lies at the heart of the daily life of the school. The quality of the prayer and liturgy in school not only gives honour to God but forms the spiritual and ethical life of pupils and staff alike.

To ensure that the Lord Jesus Christ is at the centre of a Catholic school, prayer and liturgy must be at the heart of its community life. They are essential to the school's Catholic life and mission. The Catholic school is well aware that the community that it forms must be constantly nourished and compared with the sources from which the reason for its existence derives: the saving word of God in Sacred Scripture, in Tradition, and above all in liturgical and sacramental Tradition, enlightened by the Magisterium of the Church.¹⁰ The community of a Catholic school will generally be inclusive of people who are not Catholics or Christians. This context provides Catholic schools with 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. In order to respond to this most fruitfully, we are called to understand the tradition of the Catholic faith and maintain an approach that respects the integrity of all members of the school community.
(*To Love You More Dearly, The Prayer and Liturgy Directory*).

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.¹ (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.) We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or

¹ Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Prayer & Liturgy. However, given the importance of Prayer & Liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to 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.

everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that Prayer & Liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two 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.

As a rule, Prayer & Liturgy will take place on the school premises. However, the Governing Body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, “on a special occasion” and for class Masses.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Prayer & Liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

The Place of Prayer & Liturgy in the Life of our School.

We endorse the belief that Prayer & 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship at English Martyrs’ Catholic Primary School is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

The Aims of Prayer & Liturgy

We believe that Prayer & Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils 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 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 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 Prayer & Liturgy in this school will:

- raise our mind and heart to God

- celebrate the presence of God in our life and school community
- be a high quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- support learners' spiritual development
- give learners positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds. In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - be short and appropriately paced (learners' attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life, that is 5-6 mins for Key Stage 1 and 7-10 mins for Key Stage 2);
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings;
 - seek to involve learners at all times in preparation and leadership.

Organisation

- Monday: Whole school Prayer and Liturgy.
- Tuesday: KS2 individual class Prayer and Liturgy /KS1 Prayer and Liturgy
- Wednesday: EYFS/KS1 class Prayer and Liturgy.
- Thursday: Whole school Celebration assembly ~ Shining Stars
- Friday: EYFS and KS1 individual class Prayer and Liturgy/KS2 Prayer and Liturgy

KS Prayer & Liturgy and Class based/ Child Led Prayer & Liturgy follows 3 main themes:

Autumn Term ~ Old Testament stories

Spring Term ~ Parables

Summer Term ~ Miracles

Daily worship in class including child led worship at KS2 and child centred worship at KS1 and Foundation Stage

Regular Liturgies celebrating RE topics in Curriculum RE and the Life and Liturgical year.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer & Liturgy

All staff follow and use *To Love You More Dearly*, *The Prayer and Liturgy Directory*.

Prayer & Liturgy is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the church's seasons, Curriculum RE, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- in consultation with appropriate parties and with reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in learners skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Recording

Prayer & Liturgy is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, learner groupings and resources

- through displays, a portfolio of examples, collections of learners' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc. (See Appendix 2)

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all learners and whether learners are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Resources

Each class has their own prayer books and Bibles. Liturgical CD's are also held in the Hall. Prayer & Liturgy resource books are kept centrally by the Subject Coordinator in her classroom for all to use as they wish.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

Reconciliation for whole school
Reflection for whole school

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with learners whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for learners to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to ***"The Welcome Table. Planning Masses with Children"*** which contains the complete text of the Church's ***"Directory on Children's Masses"*** as a basis for our practice.

We believe that learners are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

In school, therefore, the **'Liturgy of the Word'**, rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

At **Key Stage 1** worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word

At **Key Stage 2** worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass or the Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer & Liturgy Co-ordinator 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.

Date of adoption by Governing Body April 215

Renewal date September 2017

Reviewed September 2017: Amendments: Change of title from Collective Worship to Prayer and Liturgy throughout

Renewal date September 2018

Reviewed November 2022 (delay as a result of Covid19 Pandemic): Amendments to times of P&L

Reviewed September 2024: Additional quotes and references made to *To Love You More Dearly, The Prayer and Liturgy Directory* following its introduction.

Appendix 1

School Statement on Prayer & Liturgy

It is the responsibility of every Catholic school to provide for all its members a vital experience of liturgy, worship and prayer which:

- ❖ names and celebrates God present and active in authentic human experience
- ❖ is educative
- ❖ is within our Catholic tradition

The purpose of these experiences is:

- ❖ to raise our mind and heart to God
- ❖ to develop the school as a community of faith
- ❖ to assist learners in developing their relationship with God, creation and the community of the Church
- ❖ to witness to the community and the wider world

Prayer & Liturgy in our schools will be:

- ❖ properly planned
- ❖ adequately resourced
- ❖ recorded
- ❖ monitored
- ❖ evaluated

in order to ensure that the Prayer & Liturgy experienced within the school is a relevant, meaningful and positive contribution to the religious, spiritual and moral development of all members of the community.

Appendix 2



Year

Prayer and Liturgy Plan



Date: _____

Led By: _____

Theme/Scripture:

Gather:

Listen (Scripture):

Respond:

Going Forth (Message to take away):

Resources

Hymn

Prayer