



PRAYER & LITURGY POLICY

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School



Mission Statement

LEARNING TO LIVE OUT OUR CALLING WITH
COMPASSION AND LOVE

Rationale

Within our school, prayer and liturgy is far more than a statutory requirement. It is an essential part of our distinctive ethos; a way of celebrating our faith and deepening our relationship with God through prayer, reflection, praise and celebration. Our staff ensure that children are provided with opportunities to develop their spirituality and a close relationship with God through acts of worship. In developing a deep sense of spirituality, our children are prepared to live out their lives in accordance with their vocation.

Legal Requirement:

It is a requirement that there is a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. Collective worship is not designated under any part of the curriculum time, but there is timetabled period where an extended period of collective worship takes place during the week. It is used to enhance and enrich spirituality across the school.

Collective worship involves:

- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of the Church.
- Those from other Christian backgrounds – or none.
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

Aims:

The purpose of Collective Worship:

- To give glory, honour and praise to God.
- To develop the school as a community of faith.
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- To assist pupils in developing their relationship with God, creation and the community of the Church.
- To give positive liturgical experiences to our pupils.
- To bare witness to the community and the wider world.
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues.
- To develop shared values and a common ethos.

Mission:

'Christ has no body on earth but ours; ours are the hands through which He heals; ours are His eyes, His feet, His lips; ours are the hearts through which He loves.'

As part of our calling to carry out God's work on earth, we seek to draw our inspiration from periods of worship and reflection. These spiritual moments are essential to build the strength needed to carry out our vocation in today's world.

Prayer and liturgy refers not only to whole school gatherings but to those acts of worship which take place in a number of different settings and groupings of people in and around the school:

Assembly

An assembly is a gathering of people. Strictly speaking, it is not a religious activity and is a means of communicating information to a group of people.

Liturgy

Liturgy is the worship lived and practiced by the Church. Liturgy encompasses all of the seasonal elements of the Church's year (The Liturgical Year), the structure of daily prayer, specific rites such as the Funeral Mass and the celebration of the Sacraments. For schools, Liturgy is worship which incorporates elements of the rites and rituals, signs and symbols of the Church.

Mass

For Catholics, the Mass is central to practice of the faith. At Mass, the Last Supper is remembered but also recreated. Bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ. This belief (transubstantiation) is what distinguishes us from many other Christians. This sacrament is above all others because as members of the Church, "We receive the Body of Christ and are increasingly being transformed into the Body of Christ."

Prayer

Deepen a personal relationship with God, prayer will help the pupils to become aware of God's presence in their lives and of His love for them, by leading them to respond to Him.

Expectations for Prayer & Liturgy:

As a Catholic school, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life. All pupils are educated in the beliefs and devotional practices of the Catholic Church. Participation in daily act of collective worship remains at the helm of every morning, before lunch, within RE lessons and at the end of each day.

- Every class will have a focal point, which is given prominence in the room. This focal point must be treated with reverence. It must be liturgically correct and follow the church's year. Focal points must not be untidy.
- Every class prepares and leads Mass once a term, with parents, families and parishioners warmly welcomed.
- Daily prayers are said at the start and end of each day, other prayers such as grace before and after meals are said.
- Over the course of the week, a whole school Gospel assembly, led by the Headteacher, takes place. These are evaluated by the children, whose feedback is considered for future assemblies.
- Hymn practice is celebrated each week which is led to enrich prayer and liturgy.
- Class liturgies which are planned for as part of the curriculum, have a specific theme such as reconciliation and forgiveness during Lent.
- Stay and Pray sessions, which parents take part in, take place during Advent and Lent.
- During the months of May and October, the school hold a lunchtime Rosary Club for pupils and staff. Additionally, there are liturgies after school for parents, pupils and staff during Advent and Lent.
- Penitential services are carried out during Lent for the whole school. Children receive ashes on Ash Wednesday as a Mass/Service.

Planning:

Liturgies in our school follows the pattern of:

- Gathering – how we come together, the environment (quiet, reflective music, lighted candles, statues). Sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience.
- Listening – a reading from the Scriptures, time to reflect on this and prayer to fit into this theme.
- Responding – a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme.
- Mission/going forth - the sending out from the celebration, giving the children something to hold onto from their experience of the liturgy that they can take into their lives.

Teachers will plan their liturgy on a template as suggested by the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Inclusion:

All children have equal access to the RE curriculum, regardless of religion, gender, culture or special educational needs. Full participation in all aspects of RE is expected.

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Parents and carers are advised that, in desiring a Catholic education for their child, it is expected that all pupils will participate in RE lessons. Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children, although this is strongly discouraged, and parents will be required to supervise their children during this period, as adult supervision is not available in school.

Monitoring:

The school's provision of prayer and liturgy will be evaluated annually to consider how it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school. The RE Leader will evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy as part of a termly monitoring schedule by conducting informal evaluations, with the permission and consultation with staff members throughout the school year. Monitoring and evaluations are also carried out by the children (RE Leaders).

Policy Reviewed by: C. Wrigley, J. Bridgewater, D. Mellor

Date: 8/10/20

Signed:

Headteacher

Date: 9/10/20

Signed:

RE Lead

Signed:

Worship co-ordinator

Policy to be reviewed: July 2020