



St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission:

Our pupils and all members of our school community encompass, celebrate and live our values by:

Journeying together, The St Paul's Way.

Our Vision

An exceptional community where acceptance, compassion and diversity is valued. We will encourage and inspire our children to serve God for the good of all, to excel in their learning and be resilient and caring. Our community will recognise, celebrate and protect God's gift of the world through the provision of a creative, relevant and ambitious curriculum which enables our children to be confident and prepared for modern life.

Our Values:

Respect, Friendship, Perseverance, Honesty, Caring, Thankfulness and Confidence which are rooted in the Gospels of Jesus Christ and we support and encourage those values which form our modern British Society – Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance (value) of those of different faiths and beliefs.

Signed (chair):	Name:
Signed (Head):	Name:

Ratified by:
Governing Body on:

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices		Date	
EIA CARRIED OUT BY:		EIA APPROVED BY:	

Groups that may be affected:

Are there any concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly: issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		YES
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication).		YES
Trans Gender		YES
Marriage and civil partnership		YES
Pregnancy and maternity		YES
Racial Groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers)		YES
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)		YES
Gender (male, female)		YES
Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)		YES

Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.

Mission, Vision and Values

St. Paul's Catholic Primary School's mission is to provide an education that realises the full potential and talents of each individual in accordance with Gospel values and the teaching of our faith, thereby.....

'Journeying together, The Saint Paul's Way.'

An exceptional community where acceptance, compassion and diversity is valued. We will encourage and inspire our children to serve God for the good of all, to excel in their learning and be resilient and caring. Our community will recognise, celebrate and protect God's gift of the world through the provision of a creative, relevant and ambitious curriculum which enables our children to be confident and prepared for modern life.

Our mission and our vision, and everything we do within the life of St Paul's, is underpinned by the St Paul's Way and our values of Respect, Friendship, Perseverance, Honesty, Caring, Thankfulness and Confidence.

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy are central to the whole of school life in St Paul's Catholic Primary School and enables us to celebrate God's presence in our lives, 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.

Our vision is that prayer life is a natural part of our children's lexicon. They become used to talking to God and while this is part of their routine it is a meaningful experience each and every time. As a Catholic school we use Christian prayers but we recognise, accept and support other faiths within our community, acknowledging the value of all forms of prayer and spirituality.

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there must be a daily 'act of worship' offered for all pupils. (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.) Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer 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. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will 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 within the RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Paul's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and 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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

We aim to help each child recognise their own personal relationship with God and build on this daily. We understand that children need to be taught how to contemplate the wonder of God and his creation. They also need to be inspired to action, understanding their collective responsibility to look after God's creation which includes not just the physical world around them but each other and the school family and community as a whole. In ensuring they recognise this responsibility we are teaching them to be forward-thinking global citizens who care for all elements of humanity and where possible take actions against injustices of any kind, whether locally in school or on a wider global scale.

Principles

All acts of prayer in St Paul's Catholic Primary School will aim to:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Give everyone opportunities for personal reflection;
- Be a quality experience, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give children positive liturgical experience, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church. Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Liturgical Prayer

Liturgical prayer is the term used to describe communal prayer within our school which follows liturgical patterns. Our programme of liturgical prayer at St Paul's aims to embed daily patterns of prayer within school life and to reflect the rhythm of prayer life within the Church. It is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, RE curriculum, feast days and other significant dates. A variety of prayer styles are used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Liturgical prayer is planned:

- To develop in pupils the skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
- To be responsive and meaningful with emphasis on active participation.
- To engage children by using a range of different liturgical styles and approaches
- With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community.
- To have scripture at its heart.

The format for liturgical prayer within our school will be:

- Gather – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc).
- Listen – every liturgy will centre on at least one text from the Bible. The Word of God will be proclaimed from a Bible or lection.
- Respond – the response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, music, drama, art poetry, etc). We place our needs before God (prayers of intercession).
- Going Forth/Mission – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives, this often in the form of a challenge to complete such as remembering to be thankful or to look for God in others etc.

The parish community and parents, families and friends are invited to participate in some celebrations, and each week one class attends the regular parish mass.

The regular programme of prayer and liturgy is outlined below:

Whole School Liturgy

These liturgies are held every Monday afternoon. They are based on the Gospel of the week, and it is the intention that, through them, the children will develop their faith and it becomes a living part of their lives. These liturgies are usually led by a member on the Senior Leadership Team but occasionally led by a team from Regenerate, a schools and youth work charity formed of representatives from local Christian churches.

Daily Prayer in Classes

Each class has its own focal point for prayer within the classroom. Prayers are said regularly throughout the day, including:

- Morning prayer
- Grace before meals
- Prayers at the end of the day. (This usually takes the form of the school prayer on days without a whole school gathering.)

Morning prayers and prayers before lunch take on a unique character for each class and help keep our prayer life rich and varied.

Class Liturgy

This takes place weekly, usually every Thursday afternoon. The format is similar across all Key Stages. However, as children move through the school their involvement in the planning and delivery of these sessions becomes greater. In Reception and Year 1 the sessions are very much teacher led, in Year 2 they are teacher led but children offer their own prayers and will be given the opportunity to volunteer to read the Gospel and more formal prayers. By Key Stage 2, children will progress until they can lead these gatherings. Children can take resources from a variety of sources including the CAFOD website and the Collective Worship books by Patricia Ainge as well as the 'Wednesday Word'. Some homework diaries used by Years 5 and 6 also contain child friendly versions of each Sunday's Gospel and follow the liturgical calendar.

Celebration of the Eucharist

We believe that the Mass is the ultimate expression of our existence as a faith community and it therefore takes a central part in school life. Whole school masses are held in the parish church at the beginning of each full term and on special Feast Days and Holy Days. Each year group celebrates a class mass during the year, which is an opportunity for the children's families and the wider community to join in faith together. As with class liturgy, the level of planning and involvement in the mass grows with each year group going up through the school. In addition, one class goes to the parish mass each week on our adjoining church and are often engaged in sharing learning with the community by the Parish Priest.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

In Key Stage 1, children have time in class to reflect and say sorry to God. In Key Stage 2, emphasis is placed upon the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Parish Priest facilitates this within our school chapel, building an understanding of the sacrament in a familiar, comfortable setting for the children.

Advent and Lent

During Advent and Lent, purple bags are used to share our faith with our families. These contain a candle, a prayer book and a series of reflections and are intended to help children and their families to prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas during Advent, and to reflect on His Passion and Resurrection during Lent.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's provision of prayer and liturgy will be formally evaluated by the Prayer and Liturgy Lead and the Chaplaincy team (where applicable) to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring appropriate skills and abilities in organising and leading prayer and liturgy.

The Governor with responsibility for Catholic Life and Ethos will monitor the impact of the school's provision for prayer and liturgy on a regular basis throughout the year.

Any findings from these evaluations will be shared with the RE Co-ordinator and the Head Teacher, and with the Full Governing Body

Resources

Each class has its own collection of liturgical resources. A main supply is maintained by the RE and Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinators and is always available. Both Co-ordinators and other members of the Senior Leadership Team, together with the Parish Priest, are available to support staff in ensuring that liturgy is varied and engaging, and appropriate CPD opportunities are made available to all.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Lead and the Catholic Life and Ethos Governor and is reviewed and ratified by the Full Governing Body every 2 years.

Approved by Ethos, Environment & Enrichment Committee: 17th January 2024

Approved by FGB: 30th January 2024

Next Planned Review Date: Spring 2026

Signed: Head Teacher

Chair of Ethos, Environment & Enrichment Committee

Chair of Governors

Date: