



St. Charles Borromeo
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND NURSERY

Policy for Prayer and Liturgy

This prayer and liturgy policy has been approved and adopted by the governing body in Autumn Term 2025 and will be reviewed in Autumn Term 2027.

Signed by the Chair of Governors

Signed by the Head of School

St Charles Borromeo Mission Statement

We will **grow** in our Catholic faith by praying and worshipping together.

We will work hard so that we can **learn** and be the best that we can be.

We will **work** together in our families, school, and parish and with those both near and far to make our world a better place for us all.

We will **follow** the example of Jesus and his teachings in all that we say and do.

In keeping with our Mission Statement above, we believe that Christian liturgy in a Catholic school 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.

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.)

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)).

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 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) Head of School

The Head of School, 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 Lead

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 feeds back into planning for future liturgies
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the Head of School 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 Education Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that prayer and 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 develop the skills of: reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy and meditation
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding.
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

We have an Annual Plan of Provision (APOP), which shows our provision in more detail – see Appendix A.

Our weekly Prayer and Celebration of the Word timetable is as follows:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Key Stage 1	Whole School Gospel Celebration of the Word	Class Prayer	Whole School Celebration of the Word	Assembly	Class Prayer
Key Stage 2				Class Prayer	Assembly

The timetable of liturgies is as follows:

Autumn Term
Beginning of Term Mass
St Charles Feast Day Mass
Advent Reconciliation
End of Term Mass
Spring Term
Start of Term Mass
Ash Wednesday Mass
Lent Reconciliation
End of Term Mass
Summer Term
Start of Term Mass
Year 3 Holy Communion Mass
Year 6 Leavers' Mass

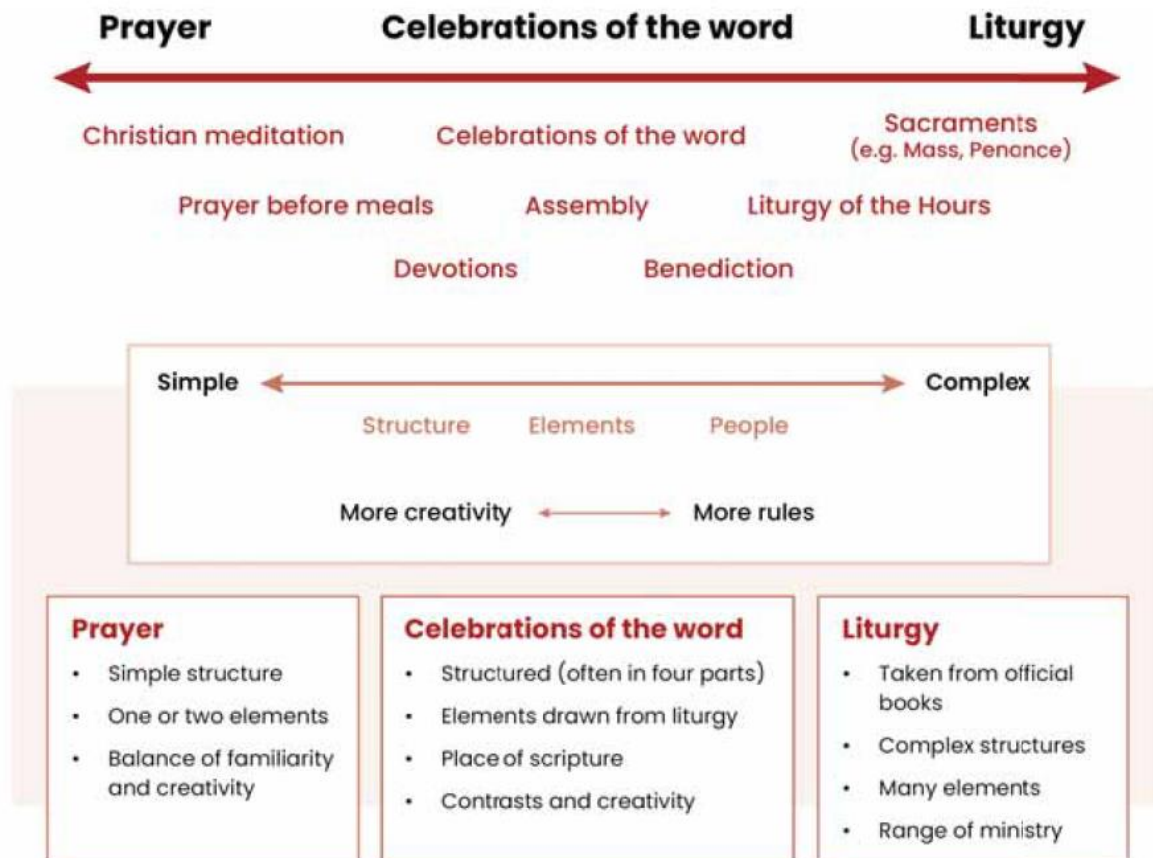
In addition to this, we also take part in the Parish Masses for Holy Days of Obligation, which fall on school days.

Implementation of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that we have a particular mission to reveal to the children in our care, who Jesus is and to teach them how to know Him, love Him and follow Him. As with all relationships, knowing and loving someone depends on spending time with them, speaking to them and listening to what they have to say to us. This is what is meant by participation in prayer. Everyone in our school community is invited to participate in every aspect of prayer and liturgy. This participation begins with presence in the celebration and may progress to more active participation through engaging the senses or reflecting on the content in relation to their own experiences. We use diocesan guidance on progression of skills for prayer and liturgy to ensure that the children are participating at age and stage appropriate levels – see Appendix B.

All baptised Christians are baptised priest, prophet and king; all need to be ministered to at different times and as part of their journey, some may be called to minister to others. Pupils and staff who respond to the invitation to serve the community in this way will first be formed for their ministry so that they can enable others to meet Jesus from their own starting points.

Our school offers a rich diet of prayer and liturgy experiences for all children, on a continuum from least complex (spontaneous prayer and individual reflection) to more complex (Celebration of the Word assemblies) to most complex (liturgies including the Mass, as the source and summit of Christian life). As children progress through our school, their ability to engage with the following:



Prayer

Everyone is invited to take part in communal prayer, for example in classes at the beginning, before and after lunch, at end of each day, or at the beginning of meetings. Prayer can be led either by staff or children, with appropriate formation. Children of other faiths are invited to participate respectfully as far as their own faith permits them. All children are expected to maintain a respectful presence at times of prayer.

Celebration of the Word Assemblies

- When proclaiming the Gospel we always acclaim it liturgically – Alleluia / praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory. Children use the action of tre crucem (three crosses). End with Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ
- When other Biblical scripture – introduce as per first reading / psalm. End with Thanks be to God
- Scripture in assembly will be proclaimed by readers who have been formed in the ministry of proclaiming the Word of God.

Mass

- Our whole school community are invited to join with us at Holy Mass in our parish church. Our intention is to include everyone and to invite them to participate with us in prayerful silence, joyful sung praise and in listening to the Word of God. We seek to make our actions prayerful and deliberate so that they can be recognised by the youngest children in our school community.
- During Mass, scripture will be proclaimed by Lectors who have been formed in the ministry of proclaiming the Word of God. Mass readings will be taken from Universalis where possible and appropriate; otherwise readings for the theme of the Mass will be drawn from the children's RE learning (in accordance with the RE Directory) and appropriate to the liturgical calendar.
- Altar servers will be drawn from those who have been formed for this ministry in the local parish
- At Holy Communion, all members of our community who have not yet made their First Holy Communion, or who are not of the Catholic Faith, are invited to receive a blessing from the priest or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. They are invited to cross their arms over their chests to indicate that they would like to be blessed. All children in Y4-6 (and Y3 after their First Holy Communion) are invited to approach the priest or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion in readiness to receive Holy Communion (if they have completed the First Holy Communion preparation in their Catholic parish). Class teachers will support and remind children of this process before each Mass.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

- All children will be given a blessing by the priest, whether or not they have been prepared to receive the sacrament. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available to all children who have made their first reconciliation after a period of preparation in their Catholic parish. The children are invited to this sacrament with the school community during Advent and Lent.

For liturgies and Sacraments celebrated during the school year, parents and parishioners are warmly welcomed. This is communicated through the school newsletters and announcements in the parish, through the parish priest.

All liturgies in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality experience, 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.

Music in Prayer and Liturgy

“Music is integral to liturgy and celebrations of the word...Music highlights or gives prominence to the part of the liturgy where it is used. Therefore, the use of music matches the high points of the liturgy”. (PLD 6.2)

We encourage the children to recognise that there is a long tradition of sung prayer in the Church and that raising our voices, using religious music, is a form of prayer in itself. As St Augustine said, ‘Those who sing well pray twice’.

During liturgies and celebrations of the word, all are encouraged to participate through singing. We teach the children music from the liturgical texts at Mass as well as hymns and songs. In addition to this, through the singing of prayers and responses, the children are more likely to commit them to memory.

In considering what to sing we consider the following factors:

- To ensure that any texts sung reflect Catholic teaching and understanding of the faith.
- To make use of recommendations by the diocese
- To choose settings of the parts of the Mass linked to what is sung in the parish, to allow the children to participate more widely outside of school
- To co-ordinate and share with the parish to allow for similar repertoires.
- To ensure that the children are exposed to a variety of styles of music.
- To expose the children to traditional chants and hymns as well as contemporary compositions.
- To allow the children to experience access the Church’s rich tradition of Gregorian chant in Latin or in English.
- To ensure that the text and the music fit the context of the liturgy.
- To ensure that secular music i.e. music which was not written for use in the liturgy or more widely in Christian worship should not be used in the Mass or other liturgies. (There may be opportunities to use secular music in some forms of class prayer and celebrations of the word).

Planning of Prayer

Prayer is are planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church’s seasons, significant dates and the curriculum
- scripture will be the focus of Celebration of the Word whole school gatherings
- involving consultation with the PSHE Lead, staff 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 pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

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.

Teacher resources, assembly books, assembly plan are located in the staffroom. In each classroom, the children have access to a range of resources including:

- Cloths in the colours of the Liturgical year
- Candles
- A variety of objects and artefacts e.g. stones, shells, statues
- Music/CDs can be accessed in the media cupboard. John Burland's music is on Sharepoint.
- Prayer bags for children with additional needs for Mass and Celebrations of the Word.

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.

8. 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.

Review

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