



St Paul's Catholic Junior School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

'Learning from the example of Jesus, our school will be a place where everyone feels loved, valued and encouraged to be and do the best they can.'

Reviewed and agreed by governors	October 2026
Next review	October 2027
Headteacher	C. O'Callaghan
Chair of governors	M. Evans

1. 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 are at the heart of the daily life of our school. In accordance with *To love You more dearly: The Prayer and Liturgy Directory for Catholic Schools, Academies and Colleges in England and Wales*, all pupils are provided with regular and meaningful opportunities to encounter God through prayer, scripture, liturgy and the sacramental life of the Church.

2. 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; 70 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.

3. 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, ‘To love you more dearly’
- 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 *To love you more dearly*.
- they work in partnership with the leaders 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 *To love you more dearly*.
- 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.

3. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Our provision follows the rhythm of the school day, the school week and, importantly, the Church's liturgical year. It provides a balance of familiar patterns of prayer and opportunities to experience the richness and variety of Catholic prayer and liturgy. Provision is appropriate to the age, ability and experience of pupils and supports their progressive participation in planning, preparing and leading prayer and liturgy.

Daily Provision

Prayer is an integral part of each school day. Every class begins and ends the day in prayer, providing pupils with opportunities to offer the day to God, give thanks, reflect and place their needs and the needs of others before Him.

Prayer also takes place at appropriate points throughout the day, including grace before meals and opportunities for spontaneous prayer, silence and reflection.

Daily prayer draws upon a rich variety of Catholic traditions and may include:

- traditional Catholic prayers appropriate to pupils' age and stage;
- scripture and reflection;
- prayers of praise, thanksgiving, petition and intercession;
- spontaneous and pupil-composed prayer;
- contemplative prayer, meditation and periods of silence;
- music and sacred song;
- seasonal prayers and devotions; and
- opportunities for pupils to plan and lead prayer.

Traditional Catholic prayers are introduced progressively - each year group has a St Paul's Prayer Book, containing the prayers to be taught at different stages. Pupils with SEND are also catered for in daily prayer, according to our prayer progression document.

Class prayer spaces provide a visible focus for prayer and are maintained in accordance with the liturgical season. They include appropriate Catholic signs and symbols, including a cross, a candle representing Jesus as the Light of the World and the Word of God.

Weekly Provision

Across each week, pupils experience prayer and liturgy in a variety of groupings, including whole-school, year-group and class settings.

The weekly pattern includes opportunities for the school community to gather around the Word of God, particularly the Sunday Gospel, or linked to special days in the school calendar, and to reflect upon how scripture calls us to live as followers of Christ.

Alongside whole-school and year-group provision, classes participate in regular Celebrations of the Word, linked to their RE topics. As pupils progress through the school, they are increasingly supported to contribute to the planning, preparation and leadership of these celebrations, developing the skills and confidence required for full, conscious and active participation.

Weekly provision provides a balance between prayer led by adults and prayer increasingly planned and led by pupils. Prayer and liturgy should never become simply routine; opportunities are therefore varied in style and approach while remaining recognisably rooted in the Catholic tradition.

Annual and Liturgical Year Provision

The school's prayer and liturgy is shaped by the Church's liturgical year, enabling pupils to experience its seasons, feasts and celebrations and to develop an understanding of the Paschal Mystery at its heart.

An **Annual Plan of Provision for Prayer and Liturgy** is produced each year. This identifies the major celebrations, Masses, liturgies, sacramental opportunities and devotional practices that will form part of the prayer life of the school.

Throughout the year, provision includes:

- Masses at significant points in the school year and, where appropriate, on Holy Days of Obligation and important feast days;
- celebrations marking the beginning and end of the school year;
- prayer and liturgy reflecting the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter;
- opportunities to celebrate significant Marian feasts and devotions, including the Rosary;
- appropriate Lenten devotions, including the Stations of the Cross;
- opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, particularly during the penitential seasons where possible;
- celebrations of the school's patron saint and other saints and feasts significant to the school and parish community;
- prayer associated with significant events in the life of the school, Church and wider world; and
- opportunities for families, parishioners and the wider school community to participate in the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

Particular care is taken to ensure that the liturgical seasons are reflected not only in individual celebrations but in the wider prayer life and environment of the school through scripture, music, colour, symbols, prayer spaces and appropriate devotions.

Through this daily, weekly and annual pattern, pupils encounter both the familiarity and richness of Catholic prayer and liturgy. As they progress through the school, they are supported to move from participation towards increasing ownership and leadership, developing the knowledge, skills and spiritual maturity to engage meaningfully in the prayer and liturgical life of the Church.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly, and at least annually and will be fed back to SLT and to governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.