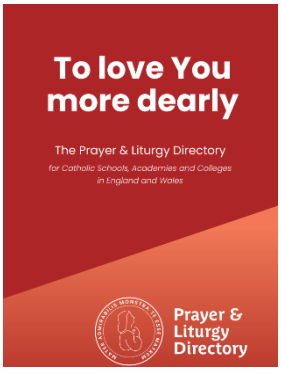
St Joseph the Worker
Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy
Policy

Mission Statement

With Jesus
We learn,
We care,
We listen
We share
so that He might be seen in the people that we are and the things that we do.

Date: October 2025
Ratified by governors:
Review Date: October 2027



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.)

As a Catholic school, our aim is to make the person of Jesus Christ known and loved by our children, our staff and our community. We place Him and the teachings of the Catholic Church at the centre of all that we do. We believe that worship celebrates God's presence in our lives. It 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.

Whilst we respect the diversity of belief in the world and are committed to the teaching of other faiths; we are dedicated to creating a school which is Christ-centred in character. We encourage the children to experience worship and liturgical celebrations in a relevant and meaningful manner. Our Prayer and liturgy take account of the religious and educational needs of all who share it.

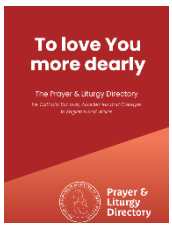
Statement of requirement

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)). 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.



Legal requirements (4.1)

Within maintained schools and academies, there is a legal requirement for an act of collective worship to take place daily. Those responsible for the governance of schools with a religious character are legally required to ensure that collective worship is provided and is in accordance with the trust deed or religious designation of the school. In Catholic maintained schools and academies, this daily requirement will be fulfilled variedly as described in this Directory. In schools where this legal requirement holds, parents can choose to withdraw their children up to Year 11. Sixth-form pupils can themselves choose to withdraw. Within our Catholic schools In all Catholic schools (maintained, academies, independent, non-maintained special, sixth-form colleges), prayer and liturgy are integral to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Taking part in daily prayer and liturgy helps build community cohesion by creating a consistent structure around the core values and symbols of Christianity. Prayer and liturgy are, therefore, an important part of a Catholic school's distinctive character. They are integral to the Catholic identity and life of the school, and they would take place in all Catholic schools, whether or not schools were required by statute to provide collective worship. Notably, too, pupil participation and engagement in prayer and liturgy are crucially important criteria in the diocesan inspection of Catholic education. Therefore, we have replaced the term 'collective worship' with the phrase 'prayer and liturgy', which more fittingly describes its role in a Catholic school. The bishop entrusts his responsibility for prayer and liturgy to the governors and headteachers. It is their responsibility to ensure that it is in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.

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 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
- 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 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
• 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 planned prayer for all pupils, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the **Prayer Progression 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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy at St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:
• To contemplate the mystery of God
• To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
• To explore personal beliefs
• To respond to and to celebrate life
• To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
• To develop a common ethos and shared values
• To enrich religious experience
• To grow in liturgical understanding and development
• To pray using 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 acts of worship within the school will:
• Give glory and honour to God;

• Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
• Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead worship;
• Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.2
In order to do this, celebrations will:
• Be kept short and appropriately paced
• Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings
• Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Planning, content and celebration
Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, our RE curriculum, class and school feast days and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, International Day of Peace and Holy Days of Obligation. Parish and parents are invited to participate in many celebrations.
At St Joseph the Worker, we believe that it is important that children lead some prayer and liturgy. We teach children the skills to enable then to prepare, organise and lead celebrations. The chaplaincy team in Year 6 help to plan and lead whole school liturgies and prayer services. In each class, children take turns to plan and lead celebrations of the word and prayers. We also have a Mini Vinnies group who plan and lead some of our worship.

A variety of prayer styles is used, appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The format for prayer and liturgy for our school:



Gather – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music,
lighted candles, icons etc.)



Word – most liturgies will centre around at least one text from the bible. The Word of God will be proclaimed from the Bible or lectionary whenever possible.



Respond – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, drama, art, poetry etc.) We place our needs before God. (Intercessory Prayers)



Mission – giving the children something to hold onto from the experience of the liturgy that they take into their lives.

Overview of Prayer and Liturgy provision				
Monday	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
Whole school Celebration of the Word led by HT Focus: Sunday's Gospel	Morning Prayer in class R – Y6	Morning Prayer in class R – Y6	Morning Prayer in class R – Y6	Whole school Celebration/class assembly. Pupil led Collective Worship

Grace before meals in class R – Y6	Grace before meals in class R – Y6	Grace before meals in class R – Y6	Grace before meals in class R – Y6	Grace before meals in class R – Y6
Grace after meals in class R – Y6	Grace after meals in class R – Y6	Grace after meals in class R – Y6	Grace after meals in class R – Y6	Grace after meals in class R – Y6
Response to whole school Celebration of the Word	Class meditation eg Examen, Lectio or Visio Devina Pupil led Focus: Liturgical year	In class spontaneous prayer. Pupil led	Celebration of the Word in class Pupil led Focus: /RED topic or Liturgical year	Class formal prayer linked to liturgical year
Evening prayer in class R – Y6	Evening prayer in class R – Y6	Evening prayer in class R – Y6	Evening prayer in class R – Y6	Evening prayer in class R – Y6

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Parents
Whole school Masses								
Holy Days of Obligation								
Class Masses (Autumn term)								
Reconciliation Y4 -Y6 (Advent and Lent)								

	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Parents
Nativity								
KS2 Carol Concert								
KS2 The Easter Story								
Whole school May Procession								
Rosary service								
Stations of the Cross								

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 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 are 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.

Chaplaincy Team

At St Joseph the Worker we have a Chaplaincy Team made up of the headteacher, Mrs Poulter, the RE lead, Mrs Gander and six Year 6 pupils. The Chaplaincy Team are

responsible for planning and leading Collective Worship across the school, evaluating and monitoring liturgical prayer, gathering pupil voice and auditing liturgical prayer and resources.

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference RED topics. In this way, they will be an outward sign of the schools' ethos.

The Sacrament of the Eucharistic

The Eucharist is central to our school. It unites the community, fosters spiritual growth by strengthening faith and love for Jesus Christ, and serves as a source of grace and wisdom. The sacrament is celebrated regularly and forms a very important part of our Prayer and Liturgy strategy. Opportunities for children to participate are maximised and parents and other members of the Parish community are encouraged to attend.

We celebrate the Eucharist at:

- Whole school Masses at the beginning and end of terms
- Class Masses
- Holy Days of Obligation
- Going Forth Mass – for the children who have just received their First Holy Communion
- School Feast Day Mass
- Leavers' Mass

Retreats

Children in Years 4 and 5 take part in retreats led by the Chaplaincy Teams at New Hall School and Walsingham House respectively. These are whole days set aside for prayer and reflection which end with the celebration of the Mass.

We also hold a whole school retreat day in the Spring Term to which we invite the whole school community as well as a range of different speakers and visitors to enhance the day.

A Progression of Prayers

Children are taught many prayers during their time at school and by the end of Key Stage 2 we would expect our children to know the prayers stated in the Diocesan publication 'Prayer in Primary and Secondary Schools" Which can be found on our website. Whilst it is preferable (especially in KS1) to have a 'class prayer,' other prayers must be taught throughout the school year.

Children learn the following prayers:

5-7 (KS1)	7 -9 (Lower KS2)	9 – 11 (Upper KS2)
• The Sign of the Cross • The Lord's Prayer • Hail Mary • Glory be • Grace before meals • Grace after meals	•The Apostles' Creed •An Act of Contrition •Angel of God •Come, Holy Spirit •The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester	•Morning Offering • The Rosary • The Magnificat • Act of Faith • Act of Hope • Act of Love

Prayer time will also include an extended period of reflection (silence)

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.

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.