

# ST. ANNE'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

## Mission Statement

Each one of us is unique  
Each one of us is special  
Because we are created by God's love.  
May God's love shine on our lives as we  
**CARE** and **SHARE** and **LEARN** together.



<u>Date Written</u>	May 2025
<u>Date Agreed</u>	June 2025
<u>Chair of Governors</u>	María Salt
<u>Head Teacher</u>	Daniel Linehan
<u>Date for Review</u>	June 2027

## The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

At St. Anne's, we believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving glory, honour and praise to God- HE is at the centre of ALL that we do. It is our loving response, in word and action to God's invitation to enter into a relationship made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. We aim to be a community which shows love of God and one another. We pray to God together and worship Him as a school and as part of our parish.

Prayer and Liturgy is integral to developing the children's relationship with Christ. Gospel values are embedded in all that we do with Christ at the centre. Prayer and liturgy is central to our Catholic ethos and we expect all staff to lead and model good practice in prayer. It provides an opportunity for all to reflect on God's word and to celebrate and respond to the beliefs and attitudes which characterise Christian life. We strive to provide a rich variety of prayer and liturgy, which will deepen the pupil's sense of belonging to the faith community of our school and to the wider church. Children take an active role in planning, leading and evaluating prayer and liturgy. We believe prayer and liturgy remembers and celebrates God's work in our lives. It celebrates His presence amongst us today and allows children and staff the opportunity to be joined with Him.

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. In our school, prayer and liturgy takes many forms including prayer, song, assemblies, meditation and liturgies. We strive to provide many opportunities for the children to develop their relationship with God. Children are encouraged to meditate and reflect deeply on the Gospel values and carefully consider how these will impact on their lives and the lives of others.

## Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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). We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said by either the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that Prayer and Liturgy 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. However, prayer and liturgy are more than just a legal requirement; they are essential to spiritual development and are therefore central to what we offer at St Anne's Catholic Primary School.

The law requires all academy 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)).

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.

**The five key principles of liturgy are that it:**

- i. gives glory to God and we are made holy;
- ii. is an action of the Holy Trinity;
- iii. calls us to full, conscious, and active participation;
- iv. is future-orientated and keeps our eyes on the Kingdom of Heaven;
- v. is an exercise of the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ to the Father.

## **The Place of Prayer, Liturgy and Celebration of the Word in the Life of Our School**

At St. Anne's, we aim to make prayer, Celebration of the Word and liturgy real and meaningful; something which contributes successfully to the development of the faith and spirituality of each individual in the school community. We endeavour to ensure that 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.

It is both a spiritual and an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. Worship at St. Anne's is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic tradition and ethos.

Worship is on a continuum with prayer at one end, liturgy at the other and between these are celebrations of the word.

# Responsibility

## 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.

## 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.

## **Prayer and Liturgy (including Celebration of the Word) 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 are yearly resources shared 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. This includes the evaluation of child led prayer and liturgy
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the head teacher 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 at St Anne's

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school community will provide a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationships with God and develop the following:-

1. To contemplate the mystery of God;
2. To unite our worshipping Eucharistic community.
3. To develop the necessary skills of:
  - ◆ reverence
  - ◆ contemplation
  - ◆ reflection
  - ◆ interpretation
  - ◆ empathy
  - ◆ meditation

which will enable our relationships with God to be deepened.

Full participation in our faith will allow us:-

- To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;
- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of prayer.

### To achieve our aims we:

- ◆ Make our liturgy, worship and prayer relevant to the appropriate age and development of the children.
- ◆ Offer support and guidance when needed.
- ◆ Build on the foundations, laid down by parents and parishes.

- ◆ Develop a deeper awareness of God in the activities and lives of the school community.
- ◆ Provide an atmosphere where the children and the school community can explore, question and reflect upon their own faith.
- ◆ Affirm the gifts and talents that we have.
- ◆ Foster an atmosphere of prayer and reflection.
- ◆ Value the faith of the individual.
- ◆ Foster an attitude of tolerance and acceptance of others.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for the children and the wider school community to continue their own faith journey.
- ◆ Involve clergy and visitors in prayer, worship and liturgy (both Eucharistic and Non-Eucharistic) within the school community.
- ◆ Value the children's prayer, worship and liturgical offerings.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for children to live out their faith, and as Christians, to be examples of Jesus Christ in their world.

**Provide opportunities for children to develop the virtues and grow to be:**

Eloquent & Truthful

Grateful & Generous

Learned & Wise

Attentive & Discerning

Curious & Active

Compassionate & Loving

Intentional & Prophetic

Faith-filled & Hopeful

Provide opportunities for children to develop the Catholic Social Teaching Principles: Stewardship and God's creation will be ongoing throughout the school year

Autumn 1 Family and Community

Autumn 2 Dignity of the human person

Spring 1 Rights and responsibilities

Spring 2 Option for the poor and vulnerable

Summer 1 The dignity of work

Summer 2 Solidarity and the common good.

Worship, both individual and collective, is a vital and deeply important aspect of the school's mission. Prayer is woven into the life of the school in such a way as to make communication with God part of the normal, everyday life of the school.

## Forms of Prayer and Liturgy

### Dedicated Class Time

- Prayers will be said in class four times a day (morning, before lunch, after Lunch and end of the Day). This follows the pattern of prayer within the Church. Children may be selected to lead prayers during this time.
- Special intention prayer times will be delivered by class teachers, when appropriate, to respond to the needs of the community or to a key event.

- Teacher Led Prayer and Liturgy sessions take place weekly in order for children to learn the traditional prayers allocated to their year group, see good role models for prayer and to have experiences of praying in different ways.
- Child-Led Prayer and Liturgy sessions take place weekly.

### **Assemblies**

- Monday Gospel assembly takes place for the whole school each week. This assembly provides the children with an opportunity to reflect upon the meaning of the Gospel from the previous Sunday.

The Gospel Assembly is led by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Assistant Head teacher (RE leader) The children leave with a 'mission' for the week which is reflected upon during daily end of reflection.

- Occasionally, guest speakers will be invited to lead assemblies.
- Phase assemblies take place in each phase every week. This assembly focuses on National initiatives, along with a continuation of the Gospel message and an opportunity to join together in prayer and song
  - On Friday, we celebrate in the 'God's Gift Assembly' rooted in the Gospel and teachings of Christ and celebrating God's Gifts for the week through celebration.

### **Mass**

- Throughout the year, there will be opportunities for the school and parish community to come together in worship and participate in the Mass.
  - A year group join Parish Mass every week where the children write and lead on the bidding prayers.
- Children will be given every opportunity to participate in the preparation and leading of Mass.
- Each Class is allocated Masses throughout the year to prepare and lead.
- Whole School Mass is celebrated at the beginning and end of each term and on Holy Days of Obligation.
- Each Class will also have class Masses.

### **Staff Prayer**

- Each week, there is an opportunity for staff to attend staff prayer. This takes place on a Friday morning during staff briefing.
- SLT lead this prayer each week and other staff are encouraged to take a lead, should they wish to.
- Prayer and reflection also forms part of the weekly staff and phase meetings.
- Extended prayer or the celebration of Mass is planned into INSET days.

### **Retreat Experiences**

- We aim to offer all children an off-site retreat experience during their time at St Anne's.
- When children are in Year 6 they attend Alton Castle for a 2 night Residential
- One Life Music visit school to lead a whole school retreat

### **Raising Awareness of Prayer and Liturgy**

- As a Catholic School we recognise the importance of positive role models and examples in the school community. As such it is important to promote, inform and report to stakeholders about Prayer and Liturgy.
- The Head teacher reports to governors at termly *Governor Meetings*.
- Staff use social media, such as X (formally Twitter) to celebrate the opportunities of Prayer and Liturgy presented to children.
- The weekly newsletter also highlights Prayer and Liturgy (along with Religious Education) for each year group, including examples celebrated within school.

### **Planning Prayer and Liturgy**

When planning any services, we use the *Gather, Word, Response and Mission* model. This model reflects the four parts of Mass and it is a good basis on which to plan Celebration of the word.

When planning prayer and liturgy, it reflects the theme, or liturgical season of the church where appropriate. (For example: not singing Alleluia during a Lent worship, or have a lively upbeat service for a Reconciliation service that has a reflective undertone.)

Staff allow the children to feel differences in the mood of the Liturgical calendar and to experience a variety of prayer and liturgical opportunities in order to further their spiritual self.

### **Child-Led Prayer and Liturgy**

As the children grow in age and confidence, they can take a more active part in the planning and delivery of prayer. Every week, a group of children in each class will lead an age-appropriate aspect of prayer and liturgy for their class with every child given the opportunity to lead (as part of a group) prayer and liturgy.

Children will learn how to choose a theme and lead a *Gather, Word, Response and Mission* format, however, creativity with their approach is encouraged, with the ultimate ambition that children are all given the opportunity to develop their relationship with God.

Expectations are progressive: each year group will build upon the knowledge that has gone before until children are confident to fully lead prayer and liturgy for their peers. Children can use a *Child-Led Liturgy Support Guide* to help them with planning.

### **Progression:**

#### **EYFS**

**Nursery** children will help choose items for the prayer focus and help to reverently set up a welcoming, prayerful environment.

**Reception** children choose items for prayer focus and set up focal point. More independent during Spring Term. Children choose a song to sing from a choice and are

beginning to choose a familiar prayer from a selection e.g. walk with me prayer, sorry prayer or a thank you prayer

### **KS1:**

Children will choose a song to sing during Prayer and Liturgy. Consider a reflection question linked to the Celebration of the Word- e.g. how can you share joy today, how do you show that you are grateful... Through led discussion then decide on a Mission (whether that's an action or whole class reflection at the end of the day) Children will also choose a prayer to say too.

In year 2, the children the candles on, read the reflection question, read the word of Pope Francis (taken from Wednesday Word), read the prayer and explain the go forth. Year 2 children will read the 'shortened' Gospel reading.

### **Year 3:**

When given a theme, children will choose a scripture reading or other relevant reading/source as part of the Word section of Celebration of the Word and under the teacher's guidance, will consider how to respond to chosen scripture. The children use resources to support them and where children are confident, they plan more aspects of prayer.

### **Year 4:**

Children will consider the liturgical year, current learning, holy days of obligation, feast days, saints' days, current news and values and virtues when selecting their theme, will consider how to respond to chosen scripture. The children plan all 4 areas of the prayer and liturgy using the Wednesday Word and other resources. The children lead on all four aspects and a smart is created to support them. They also set up the focal point.

### **Year 5:**

Under the teacher's guidance and working to become more independent, children plan all four aspects, with support on how to Go Forth.

### **Year 6:**

Children will independently plan and lead all four aspects of Celebration of the Word, including supporting prayer buddies.

## **Liturgies**

### **Whole School Masses**

On a number of occasions during the year, the school celebrates particular events or feast days with a whole school Mass. Parents, parishioners and other guests are invited to attend these Masses.

## **Class Masses**

These Masses are organised on a rota basis to ensure that each class at some point throughout the year has the responsibility of organising and planning a Mass. Other classes within the phase of the organising class also attend and support. Parents, parishioners and guests are once again invited to attend.

## **Parish Masses**

Each week, a year group will attend and participate in a midweek parish Mass.

## **Alternative Whole-School Liturgies**

In some circumstances, the nature of a particular celebration means that Mass is not appropriate. On these occasions, alternative liturgies are designed by members of staff. The afternoon Ash Wednesday Liturgy for KS1 is an example of this (KS2 attend morning Mass).

## **Community Cohesion**

As part of our mission we provide children with the opportunities to explore other faiths and cultures throughout the school year. This involves visiting places of worship, inviting in members of other religions to speak about their faith and studying aspects of other faiths in class.

## **Mission**

Liturgical developments, including Acts of Collective Worship will continue to develop and change at St. Anne's. Prayer is a dynamic, interactive experience, which must not be allowed to become stale and repetitive. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, bearing this principle in mind.

## **Common Prayers**

Children learn common prayers 'by heart'. Prayers are introduced gradually according to each key stage, with sensitivity to the age, personal development, and capacity of the pupils in the school.

## **Prayer Spaces**

All classrooms have attractive and purposeful focal points that include liturgical images, artefacts, school, and class prayers. These are updated in accordance with the Liturgical Year and children are encouraged to have an input. Our prayer garden provides a wonderful outdoor environment for prayer and reflection.

## **Prayer buddies**

Children in Year 5 and Year 6 have prayer partners in Rec and Y1 respectively. They attend whole school Masses together and join for other prayer sessions during different liturgical times of the year.

## **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; prayer and liturgy (and RE) are given priority funding, 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 are funded separately to ensure that all staff can fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

Each class has artefacts and cloth material suitable for all seasons of the liturgical year, statues, posters and age-appropriate Bibles. New resources are purchased when necessary.

### **Other resources are available include:**

- other faiths resources
- collection of RE reference books on a variety of topics (stored in the Prayer Room/Staffroom)

## **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 and formation 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 involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Termly reports are included in the Headteacher's Report to governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

The prayer and liturgy coordinator is responsible for producing an Annual Plan of Provision (APOP) before the start of each academic year and this is available in a separate document.

## **Review date**

This policy was adapted in Summer 2025 and will be reviewed on a 2 year cycle (Summer 2027).

Mr Linehan - Headteacher Prayer and Liturgy Lead

Miss Evans - RE Lead (while absent, Mr Linehan is the RE Leader)

Miss Roughneen - RE Team

Mrs Bernadette Cope - P+L Governor