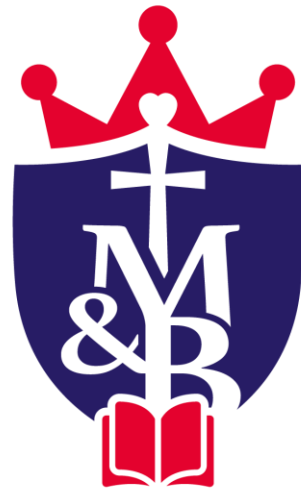


PRAAYER & LITURGY POLICY



**St Mary's &
St Benedict's**
RC Primary School

**Together in God's family, we grow in
faith, knowledge & love to reach our full
potential, and to become the people that
we are created to be.**

Policy Agreed: **March 2024**

Review Date: **March 2026**



**St Mary's
& St Benedict's**
RC Primary School

we pray; we learn; we serve

Together in God's family, we grow in faith, knowledge and love to reach our full potential, and to be the people that we are created to be.

We are open & welcoming: we reach out to others with forgiveness & compassion.

To inspire and motivate, we embrace challenges to strive for excellence.

St Mary's & St Benedict's Roman Catholic Primary School's Prayer and Liturgy Policy

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school names and 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.

'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.'¹

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is 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 will always be made clear.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

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 revised RE curriculum. (R.E. Directory, entitled: "To know You more clearly")

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Mary's & St Benedict's Roman Catholic Primary School

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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

Prayer and liturgy in St Mary's & St Benedict's Roman 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 prayer in St Mary's & St Benedict's Roman Catholic Primary 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 prayer times;
- 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 Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Holy Days of Obligation, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

There is a daily act of worship, as H.M. Government requires, but the nature of this varies, although it is consistently Catholic in character.

Monday mornings are the start to the secular week and school begins with Whole School Worship for ALL staff and pupils and is based on the Liturgy of the Word from the previous day's Mass, unless the Monday is a Holy Day of Obligation or a day of special significance to our school.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are all class-based worships where there will be a mix of teacher-led and pupil-led worship – this will often be based on Ten:Ten's online resources. As pupils get older, it is expected that more worship would be pupil-led.

Individual teachers have autonomy over when to fit worship into their day but add information/photographs or feedback into their class's floorbook.

Fridays are our day for Celebration Worship – they usually start at 9am and parents/carers are specifically invited to see their child(ren) receive an award. These acts of worship are well attended and children enjoy sharing their enjoyment with family members.

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is monitored using prayer and liturgy monitoring form.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Resources

Our school's physical resources are all located within the 'Mezz' and we have a wide range of resources to support prayer and liturgy – such as statues, icons and crosses. Virtual resources are stored on the school's server.

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'³

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

Other opportunities

As a school, we are blessed to have our parish church so close and without need to cross any roads. As a result, it is easy for our school to attend Mass. One class goes to Mass each Wednesday morning and this is published on the school's website (to allow familial members to join their child at Mass) and it's also published each week on the Parish newsletter.

Eucharist

As St Mary's Church is so close, we rarely celebrate Eucharist within school, but we are well resourced to do so, thanks to the generosity of former staff, alumni and their parents.

Our Mass altar cloths were donated by the family of a previous Headteacher, who tragically died in post during the 1980s. Our silverware was donated by the family of a former pupil, who died heroically in service to our country. He was awarded a posthumous medal of valour by H.M. Elizabeth II and we treasure these gifts. Here there are in our KS2 hall:



Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Headteacher and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors, in particular, will play a most important role in ensuring that the Catholic Bishops' Conference's standards are complied with.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

Appendix B

Prayer and Liturgy Monitoring Record

What is the impact of the Prayer and Liturgy on the school community?

In what ways and to what extent is Prayer and Liturgy inclusive, invitational and inspiring?

In what ways and to what extent is Prayer and Liturgy an expression of the schools' Mission?

Date/time	Leader Joined by:	Theme/Bible link
How was it inclusive? For pupils, staff, those of other or no faith, SEN, EAL	How was it inspiring? Variety of creative experiences used to encounter God (liturgy, music, drama, deep wondering questions, stillness, prayer, reflection.	How was it invitational? Opportunities for pupils to take part without compulsion

PRESENCE

Is the room and the leader ready to welcome pupils and staff? Did the greeting make everyone feel welcome? Are the participants alert, engaged and active within the worship?

ENGAGING

How was the theme shared? What strategies were used to make it inspiring, inclusive, and invitational? Were there opportunities to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible and its relevance to today's world?

REFLECTING

How were the participants challenged to consider their experience? Have they reflected on what the message means to themselves in their own lives?

RESPONDING

How were prepared to leave? Was the key message understood by all? Have participants gone out ready to make a tangible change in their lives and the lives of others around them?

Reflect upon the impact of the act of Prayer and Liturgy on the school community.

Reflect upon the views of pupils to the act of Prayer and Liturgy.

Reflect upon the extent to which the act of Prayer and Liturgy was inclusive, invitational and inspiring.

Reflect upon the ways in which and to what extent the act of Prayer and Liturgy is an expression of the schools' Gospel Values

Reflect upon any action to be taken following the Prayer and Liturgy observation.