



St Joseph's Catholic  
Primary School

# Prayer & Liturgy Policy

Autumn 2023

Signed Chair of Governors : *Mrs M Hughes*

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

# PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

'One of the most powerful forces on earth, is the prayer of a child'

Wess Stafford

He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Mark 10:14

## **Introduction**

Prayer and liturgy at St Joseph's Catholic School is an integral part of school life and central to our Catholic tradition. All prayer and liturgy is Catholic in character and has Christ at its centre.

Prayer and liturgy in our school, celebrates the presence of God in all our lives. It is an invitation to all our children, staff and families to enter into a relationship with God, which is personal and unique.

Prayer and liturgy in our school takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those from supportive Catholic homes
- Those for who school may be their first and only experience of Church.
- Those from other Christian backgrounds
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

## **The Aims of Collective Worship;**

- ✓ To provide an opportunity for children to worship God.
- ✓ To reflect spiritually and morally.
- ✓ To respond to and celebrate life.
- ✓ To respond to and mutually support each other during difficult times.
- ✓ To enable children to explore and deepen their own faith and beliefs.
- ✓ To encourage participation and response.
- ✓ To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.
- ✓ To introduce children to important aspects of the Gospel message, reflect on and celebrate the Word of God at their own level of understanding.

To fulfil these aims we will provide opportunities to:

- ✓ Celebrate life and learning
- ✓ Give worth to experiences
- ✓ Wonder at God's creation in the world and in each other.
- ✓ Contemplate the mystery of God
- ✓ Know that they are loved and precious to God
- ✓ Pray together
- ✓ Sing and dance together
- ✓ Follow in the footsteps of Jesus
- ✓ Follow the liturgical year

### **Legal Requirement**

We acknowledge 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 year or class groups.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time and is not to be subsumed under any part of the curriculum including religious education.

### **Organisation of prayer and liturgy**

In order to this, celebrations will;

- ✓ Be short and appropriately paced: 3-5 minutes for foundation stage and 5-7 minutes for key stage one, 6-10 minutes for Key Stage 2.
- ✓ Be simple, including a range of experiences, offered in a variety of groupings and a variety of settings.
- ✓ Give glory, praise and thanks to God.
- ✓ Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of our school and its Catholic character.
- ✓ Give children positive experiences, appropriate to their age and stage of development.

### **Guidelines for Prayer and liturgy**

Prayer and liturgy in our school will be;

- ✓ Properly planned
- ✓ Adequately resourced
- ✓ Recorded
- ✓ Monitored
- ✓ Evaluated.

Prayer and liturgy should be spiritual in nature and may include the following;

- ✓ A time for stillness and reflection
- ✓ A time for all participants to feel calm, relaxed and secure
- ✓ A time for all participants to feel included
- ✓ A time for all participants to feel enriched and nourished.
- ✓ A time for song, dance and movement

### **Planning for Prayer and liturgy**

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure which references to the liturgical year, the seasons, Come and See, significant national and international events as well as the wider curriculum.

Weekly themes, alongside scriptural references, are provided by the RE leader.

Planning will be flexible to respond to the changing situations within school and the wider community as well as local, national and global events.

A weekly planning sheet will be completed. Planning will reflect the four part process as outlined below;

#### Gather- Creating a Sacred Space

- There should be a sense of order and respect.
- It may include a procession or movement from one area to another.
- A prayer atmosphere should be created. This may be done with music, a song or a moment of silence.
- Everyone should be made to feel welcome.
- There should be an appropriate focus.
- The focus should be explained and understood.

#### Listen- Hearing God's Message

- The Word of God must be treated with reverence.
- The chosen scripture should be age and stage appropriate. It should be chosen from God's Story.
- The reader should be well prepared.
- The listener should be engaged and listen attentively.

### Respond- Personal response

- There may be opportunity to reflect in silence.
- There may be opportunity to pray/ respond.
- Response should be wholehearted.
- There should be maximum participation
- Adults present should be good role models.

### Go Forth- Word in Action

- All participants should be enabled to take God's message away with them.
- This may include something to think about, do or take away.
- The prayer and liturgy should conclude appropriately.
- Participants should leave in a suitable and orderly manner.

## **Forms of Prayer and liturgy**

### 1. Daily prayer and liturgy in class

Each class gathers for a daily act of prayer and liturgy when there are no key stage or whole school assemblies or celebrations planned. This takes place as part of the class timetable and is planned as described previously. All classes have a focus table, a liturgy cloth and various resources to support this.

### 2. Daily prayers

Each class will say daily prayers. These will take place in the morning, at the end of the school day as well as before and after lunch.

### 3. Whole class assembly

The whole school gathers for assembly on Friday each week. Part of each assembly will be prayer and liturgy. Key stage classes also gather together separately on a Wednesday.

### 4. Whole school celebrations

The school year is punctuated by whole school celebrations. These include;

St Joseph's Feast Day

Advent services

Christmas celebrations

Holy Week services

Easter celebration

### 5. Stay and Pray

Each class invite parents and family members into class once a year for a 'Stay and Pray.' Parents are invited to join a class act of prayer and liturgy.

## 6. Staff/ Governors prayer and liturgy

Each staff and governors meeting begins with prayer often related to an event, the liturgical year or feast day.

At least twice a year, INSET training begins with a liturgy.

### **Monitoring**

Prayer and liturgy is monitored at least annually as part of the school cycle of monitoring and evaluation. This is led by the RE leader and other senior leaders.

Training about prayer liturgy is part of staff induction.

This policy has been presented to the governing body and will be reviewed every two years.

### **Conclusion**

Collective Worship (Prayer and Liturgy) at St Joseph's provides opportunities for pupils and staff and wider community to come together to worship God. These opportunities are but steps on our journey so that all involved in our community might come to.....

**'Have life - life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)**

We firmly believe that Prayer and Liturgy is a central feature in the life of our school. Through helping our children to celebrate shared values, by fostering a commitment towards God, it is intended that Prayer and Liturgy should act as an integrating and enriching element within the whole school community and beyond.

## **Appendix 1**

Traditional prayers are introduced to children in line with the *Come and See* guidance as follows:

### **Foundation Stage:**

Sign of the cross

Morning and evening prayers

Our Father

Hail Mary

Prayers before and after meals

Greeting the Gospel (acclamation)

Simple litanies of thanks and praise Prayerful reflection on the day

### **Key Stage 1**

**As above plus:**

Glory Be to the Father

Morning offering

Grace at Meals

Some Mass responses

Prayers used at Baptism

Simple examination of conscience / review of the day

### **Key Stage 2**

I confess

Angelus

Eternal rest

Act of Contrition

The Mysteries of the Rosary

Stations of the Cross

Prayers at Mass: Penitential rite

Glory to God (Gloria)

Offertory prayers

Holy, Holy, Holy

Lamb of God

Rite of dismissal

Litany of the Saints

Prayers used for sacramental rites

Prayers from the liturgy for special feasts

Blessing and giving of ashes

Children are encouraged and given the opportunity to make up their own prayers, either as individuals, group or whole class. Teachers use reflective music in order to create an appropriate atmosphere. Each class is also provided with a range of resources for their specific focus area for worship within the class.