



ST. MARY MAGDALENE'S
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
A CATHOLIC EDUCATION FOR ALL



St Mary Magdalene's Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Agreed by Governing Board on 20.09.2023

Policy will be reviewed by Sep 2024

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1 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 and is central to the religious life of our school. 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. We will continue to foster and deepen our pupils' personal relationship with God Our Father in these formative years as they journey through school.

2 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. Collective worship 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. 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 Collective Worship 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 Collective Worship 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.

3 The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School

Prayer and Liturgy in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

4 The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To deepen our relationship with God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore our own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce 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.'

5 Principles

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Begin with an element which gathers/ draws the community together
- Give glory and honour to God; -Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;

- 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.
- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.
- Conclude with a sense of renewed and deepened relationship with God

6 The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy

In order to ensure that worship is stimulating for our community, staff and pupils are encouraged to use a variety of the following forms of worship: silence, poetry, meditation, scripture sayings, singing, video, ritual dance, visuals using artefacts, gestures, drama, music, formal prayers, movement, sign of peace, class and school prayers

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the RE scheme, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community

Planning and Evaluating

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded on a liturgy planner. Notes of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources are maintained as well as collections of displays, pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs and videos etc.

7 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of Prayer and Liturgy will be completed on the school monitoring form. Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform our CSED.

8 Resources

Resources that can be used to stimulate or enhance collective worship are stored centrally in the staff room and resource corridor and are reviewed regularly. New resources are purchased frequently so that religious areas are stimulating and interesting. All staff also have access to an online subscription (Ten Ten Mark 10 Mission) which aids prayer and liturgy, especially within the classroom setting.

Formal prayers are taught and used throughout the school. These prayers form an important element of the school's life of prayer and worship

The learning environment

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.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats Prayer is at the heart of the school day at Saint Mary Magdalene's. The invitation and opportunity to pray is offered daily both in a variety of ways and settings. The Pupil Chaplains are developing their role to offer lunch time prayers, which reflects the liturgical year and is experienced by all the children in key stage one and key stage two.

9 Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will normally take place in St Mary Magdalene's church with the support of the Parish Priest. These will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with the whole school and the parish. The masses are celebrated every 3-4 weeks. St Joseph Parkhill are invited and share in participation. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised.

Eucharistic Celebrations include: Whole school Masses for:

- Induction -Season of Creation
- Harvest
- All Saints and All Souls
- Advent
- Christmas
- Epiphany
- Easter
- Feast Days
- Leavers' Mass

10 The Lead for Prayer and Liturgy

Mrs Bridget Loughran also has responsibility for RE Curriculum. Mrs Fleck and Mrs Austen also support this role.

11 Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the lead for Prayer and Liturgy 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

Appendix 1

The Role of the Lead 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 Worship
- 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 style

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Collective Worship

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 Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently