

St Catherine's Catholic Primary School



'Let your Light Shine' Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Date reviewed: 10th January 2024

Date of next review: February 2026

Date ratified by the Governing Board: February 2024



Introduction

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

(From the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory, September 2022)

In any school there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.

Prayer

Liturgical Prayer

Liturgy

Christian meditation

Service of the Word

Sacraments:

Prayer before meals

Assembly

Liturgy of Hours

Mass

Penance

Devotions

Benediction

Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	Structured (often 4 part)	Taken from official books
One or two elements	Elements drawn from liturgy	Complex structure
Balance of familiarity & creativity	Places of Scripture	Many elements
	Contrasts and creativity	Range of ministry



In Catholic terminology 'worship' is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God's world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 there is a statutory duty to inspect and report on denominational education (that is religious education) and collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character. For this reason, the term 'Collective Worship' has been kept as the headline judgement by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate but throughout the framework it is referred to as prayer and liturgy. This model policy addresses the shift in vocabulary and is an interim response to the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory. When the Directory is published it will contain a model policy which the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle will adapt for schools.

St. Catherine's Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission Statement

St. Catherine's Catholic Primary School is a special learning community which strives for excellence, where everyone knows they are loved, where they feel happy and secure and have a positive self-image. As a Catholic school, based on the Gospel and teaching of the Church we recognise the equality and dignity of all people in the eyes of God.

The school's Catholic ethos, which brings a deeper understanding of the Gospel values of trust, respect and dignity, permeates our educational endeavours. We aim to create an environment in which Gospel values are exemplified and lived out:

- for the children and adults in our school community to achieve their full human potential in all aspects of school life, particularly as one of God's family.
- to develop and encourage effective partnerships and create meaningful interaction between home, school, parish and the wider community.
- to promote equal opportunities and the appreciation of cultural diversity.
- to provide a framework for a way of living within and outwith the classroom.
- by celebrating achievement at every level, so that all may feel valued as unique creations of God and recognise their self-worth.

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.’

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.

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 Come and See RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St. Catherine’s 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. Catherine’s 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. Catherine's 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. 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, Come and See, 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 staff at St. Catherine's are a diverse community of multiple faiths and beliefs. However, they are all committed to live out and be a role-model of the mission of the Church. Therefore, the staff always pray at the beginning of the staff meetings as well as morning briefings.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Monday – Whole-school Celebration

Tuesday – children-led class-based liturgy

Wednesday – teacher-led class-based liturgy

Thursday - Key Stage liturgies (Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 separately) led by class teachers.

Friday – class-based liturgy

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. All class teachers lead a Key Stage liturgy which happens weekly. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.



Recording

Prayer and liturgy are recorded on the system with a photograph and short description of the theme.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is monitored so that all classes are observed at least once a year.

All teachers are observed leading prayer and liturgy over the course of a year.

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

Please see Appendix 2

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

Resources

The children have access to different worship resources (images, statues, bible, rosary etc.) that are managed by the class teachers. These should be accessible to children to independently plan and resource their planned liturgy. Some resources are stored in the hall and should be accessed by children with adult supervision. If required, the children have access to the Spiritual Garden, St. Catherine's Garden available both for individual prayer and classroom liturgies.

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 Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Other opportunities

Throughout the year, the RE Co-ordinator will plan and organise a Mass in our Parish Church, St. Dominic's and Holy Name Jesmond for important events and feast (i.e. Lent, St. Catherine's Feast).

Eucharist

All children are invited to experience and take part in Eucharists organised throughout the year in accordance with their own religion and beliefs. The children are encouraged to participate through being present, especially when they are not Catholic or are not able to participate fully.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Mrs Jaworska-Hayes, the Co-ordinator, has responsibility for leading, managing and supporting the delivery of and training in Prayer and Liturgy. See appendix 1.



Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the RE Co-ordinator 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.

Policy Reviewed: January 2024

Next Review: January 2026



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 school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising in-service 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

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]



Appendix 2

Liturgical Prayer Monitoring Sheet

Date	Time	Year group
Theme:		
Provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Attention to mood and setting o Theme/message clear and appropriate o Theme message appropriate for time of liturgical year o Use of Scripture o Opportunities for pupils to lead and participate o Opportunities for spiritual growth o Quiet reflection o Spontaneous prayer o Traditional prayer o Appropriate music o Use of art/artefacts o Standard of organisation o order 	Evidence:	
Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o participation in prayer o engagement o respect o awe and wonder o interest and concentration o behaviour o developing a sense of belonging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o students undertake ministries with confidence. 	Evidence:	
Time spent on this activity in mins:		

