



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

St Cross Catholic Primary School a part of **St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust**

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Ratified by:	The Local Governing Body of St Cross Catholic Primary School
Date:	November 2024
Signature:	W Boliver
Review Date:	November 2025
Circulation:	Governors All staff (on shared network) Volunteers (part of induction pack if appropriate) Parents on request School Website

1. The context of this prayer and liturgy policy

'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.' (Marcus Stock (2012), *Christ at the Centre*, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

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

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their 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 that are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To make time to 'wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'.

2. Statement of requirement

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, including those in the sixth form (Section 70, 1988 Education Act) that is in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schedule 20; Instrument of Government, clause 2). Academies in England are required by their funding agreement and Articles of Association to comply with similar requirements (*The Mainstream Academy and Free School: Supplemental Funding Agreement*, December 2020; *Model Articles for Catholic Academies*, February 2019).

The law requires all maintained 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)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)).

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.

All acts of prayer and worship in our school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its catholic character
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, ability and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for and develop their capacity to take part in the liturgical life of the Church.

In order to do this, celebrations will be:

- Kept small wherever possible or appropriate to personalize the experience
- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings
- Be well planned and resourced.

3. Responsibility

(a) 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 Coordinator);
- 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.

(b) 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;

(c) Teacher

We believe that leading pupils in prayer is a vital and essential part of Catholic education. It is expected that teachers will:

- Provide opportunities for pupils to pray
- Provide pupils with meaningful prayer experiences
- Assist pupils to develop the language of prayer
- Teach pupils the traditional prayers of the Church
- Help pupils to develop habits of prayer

Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

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 is an Annual Plan of Provision 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
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the headteacher 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.

4. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

We endorse the belief that Collective Worship 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.

We will continue to foster and deepen the children's personal relationship with God our Father daily in prayer. We do this by helping them become aware of God's Presence in their lives and of His love for them by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age, with their class prayer folders (see appendix 1). This may be in one of the following ways:

- Prayer of silence
- Spontaneous prayer
- Praying through gesture or action
- Formal prayer

Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship. Children are encouraged to pray in the morning and in the evening.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Organisation of Prayer and Worship at St. Cross

Daily Prayers

Prayers are said at a variety of times throughout the school day. They are:

- At the beginning of the school day.
- A variety of prayers in word and song are celebrated in daily assemblies.
- Grace is said by all in class.

- A prayer is said at the end of the school day.

Assemblies

- All assemblies begin with an act of worship.
- Children celebrate achievements in weekly celebration assemblies.
- Saint's days and festivals are celebrated through prayer.
- World religions are celebrated twice a year.

Class Liturgies

- The children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 share a Christmas Nativity with our children, governors, parish, staff and special guests each Christmas.
- Key Stage 2 children share the mystery of Christ's birth through our annual Carol concert.
- An annual 'Leaver's Celebration' day is held with a Mass and an afternoon assembly led by children.
- Stations of the Cross are celebrated through a special Stations of the Cross service in school.
- During May, a 'Crowning of Our Lady' service is held in the School Grounds. The children bring flowers to present to Our Lady.

There is always a religious element at the centre of our class assemblies in school, placing our faith at the heart of our celebrations.

Prayer tables

Prayer tables form a spiritual focal point for all classrooms.

- Each class must provide a focal point for prayer, a prayer table and display which provides a visual stimulus for prayer. Staff should take account of liturgical colours and each prayer table should have religious symbols linked to that time of year e.g. statues, rosary beads, bible etc.

- There is a prayer table and cross in the school entrance, which reflects the liturgical calendar.

Masses

Whole school Masses are held at the beginning and end of each term in school.

- Autumn- Welcome Back Mass
- Advent- Christmas Mass
- Spring- Feast of the Epiphany Mass
- Easter- Easter Mass
- Summer- Welcome Back Mass
- Summer- Leavers' Mass

EYFS, KS1 and KS2 Collective Worship and Prayer timetable

Day	am	pm
Monday	Celebration of the Word	Prayers in class
Tuesday	Prayer through Song	Prayers in class
Wednesday	Class Liturgy and Prayer	Prayers in class – led by Chaplaincy Team
Thursday	Chaplaincy Celebration	Prayers in class
Friday	Celebration assembly	Prayers in class

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Worship is usually planned and led by the Head Teacher. Assemblies take into account:

- Scripture is used as a focus for most acts of worship.
- The themes of our assemblies reflect and build on topics that we teach as part of the school curriculum.
- Involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies.
- With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and wider community.
- To develop in pupil's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Liturgical Calendar

Children learn about the Liturgical life of the church through curriculum R.E, assemblies, involvement in displays and prayer spaces, Masses and prayer services, Wednesday Word power points, Bible stories etc.

Saint's Days

Each member of staff is provided with a calendar of saint's days to ensure that they are able to pray to, celebrate and learn about saints throughout the year. Each class is named after a special Saint and come to school in their own clothes to celebrate their Saint's feast day.

World Religions

Each year group covers a world religion in the spring and summer terms. Parents and speakers are invited to share knowledge and practise of these religions with the children.

Parental Involvement

- All parents are invited to our weekly celebration assemblies
- Parents are all invited to Mass
- Our 'Leaver's Day' celebrations are planned with parents being central to this important celebration.
- Parents are invited to our Nativity plays, Carol concert and our end of year production.
- All prayers are available for access through our [Website](#)

5. 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 and available resources, including staff time, chaplaincy provision, 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 will be furnished and maintained as such, and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season. Staff training and formation costs will be funded separately to ensure that all staff are able to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

6. 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 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.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

8. Review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors at the LGB November 2025.