

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Author/Person Responsible	Gemma Cullimore
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Related Policies	Pastoral RE Relationships and Sex Education Spiritual and Moral
Chair of Governor's Signature	<i>Tracey Turri</i>

Mission Statement

Our School Mission Statement states:

ALWAYS OUR BEST FOR GOD, EACH OTHER AND OURSELVES.

The mission of our school is to grow as a community through our faith in God, giving love and respect to all.

The aim of this policy is to clearly communicate to staff, parents and pupils the manner in which Prayer and Liturgy will be delivered in this school.

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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 a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Prayer and Liturgy is crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupil's moral and spiritual development.

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement 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 school groups.) We acknowledge that prayer and liturgy assemblies are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear. We acknowledge that parents have the right to withdraw their child if they wish and ask for this to be put in writing to the Headteacher.

In Holy Family School, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Prayer and Liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Holy Family Catholic Primary School

We endorse the belief that 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. It helps to build community cohesion but creating a structure around the core values and symbols of Christianity.

Worship in Holy Family School is more than just a legal requirement; it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

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

- to contemplate something of the mystery of God
- to deepen relationship with 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 which are part of the Catholic tradition
- to reinforce positive attitudes
- to participate fully
- to develop a sense of awe and wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ
- to develop the skills of: reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy and meditation
- to pray together

Principles

All Acts of Prayer and Liturgy in Holy Family School will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the church.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- Be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise 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.

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy at Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the RE scheme (The Way, the Truth and the Life), the PSHE scheme (Jigsaw), significant dates in the liturgical year and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most Prayer and Liturgy.
- 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.
- To develop in pupils, skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Organisation of Prayer and Liturgy at Holy Family Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy takes place daily in each class throughout the day; this can be formal or informal and can be organised and led by the pupils. It also takes place formally each week:

Monday – whole school assembly led by the Head or Deputy based on the Gospel of the previous day or the Chaplaincy Team on a theme they are working on; during Advent and Lent there will be whole school reflections led by the pupils.

Tuesday – whole school musical worship led by the Music coordinator.

Wednesday – Prayer and Liturgy in class planned and led by the pupils. Chaplaincy Team to plan and lead in Key Stage One.

Thursday – Key Stage assemblies led by staff based on 'Twelve Baskets'.

Friday – whole school celebration assembly led by the senior leadership team, or class assemblies led by pupils.

During the year, there are opportunities to be part of National Assemblies led by CAFOD, these lead into other aspects of school life as well as a focus for Prayer and Liturgy.

Recording

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos, etc
- Planning sheets made by the pupils for in-class Prayer and Liturgy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Over the academic year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated by the Chaplaincy Team and SLT to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Resources

Resources are centrally kept in a cupboard in the staffroom, although resources are kept in classrooms as well. These are regularly updated.

The resources for Prayer and Liturgy include a variety of Bibles, stories with a biblical theme, Prayer books, posters, artefacts, ideas for services and assemblies. The RE Subject Leader is always willing to help teacher's select suitable resources.

In each classroom there should be:

- A focus for prayer/class assemblies /worship – prayer table.
- A copy of the Jerusalem Bible
- A cross
- A selection of religious books – including for example, God's Story, The Church's Story, books on the lives of Saints etc.
- A cloth reflecting the liturgical colour of the season on the prayer table/area

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

There is an annual retreat for Y4 pupils who join with other schools from the Newman Partnership for this day. There is an annual retreat for the Y6 to reflect on their time at Holy Family School and to look forward to their future.

Year 5 will attend an annual retreat during Advent, visiting Kintbury. The children spend 3 days at Kintbury and have different workshops and activities which help them to reflect on Advent but also themselves, giving them time to pray and meditate.

Occasionally, whole school reflection days are held, for example, a Nativity day in Advent and the Lenten Trail in Lent. There are also opportunities through Building the Kingdom and Catholic Social Teaching activities to reflect and discuss aspects of the whole world, looking at issues that affect us and other peoples around the world and how God's word is reflected in all issues raised or discussed.

Every classroom has a prayer area, which is prepared for the season of the liturgical year with religious artefacts and prayer books; these are used as a focus in Prayer and Liturgy but also for pupils to use for voluntary worship.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in Holy Family School will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. 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.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

At Foundation Stage and Year 1 worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety.
- Prayer and Liturgy led by the school's Chaplaincy Team every week.
- Occasional liturgies reflecting the introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word.
- Each class will celebrate an annual class liturgy
- Once a year each class will celebrate Mass at Holy Family Church with a focussed session lead by our Parish Priest, learning about an aspect of the Mass which reflects our scheme.

From Year 2 upwards worship includes:

- Short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- Prayer and Liturgy led by the school's Chaplaincy Team every week in Year 2.
- Prayer and Liturgy which is child planned, resourced and led in Years 3 – 6.
- Occasional liturgies reflecting any one part or more of the Mass: The Introductory Rites; The Liturgy of the Word; the Eucharistic Prayer and/or the Communion Rite.
- Each class will celebrate an annual class mass.
- Once a year each class will celebrate Mass at Holy Family Church with a focussed session lead by our Parish Priest, learning about an aspect of the Mass which reflects our scheme.

Whole school worship includes:

- Mass celebrated in school or church at the beginning and the end of each term (old terms) and at the church on Holy Days.
- Crowning of Mary service in May.

- Other services throughout the year identified by staff or pupils.

Members of the school community – parents, governors, parishioners – are invited and are always welcome to attend our School masses and services.

Co-ordination of Prayer and Liturgy at Holy Family Catholic Primary School

The Lead for Prayer and Liturgy is Miss Gemma Cullimore.

The role of the Co-ordinator:

- Formulating a written policy for Prayer and Liturgy
- Ensuring that when appropriate there is a development plan for Prayer and Liturgy which may be part of the School development plan
- Ensuring Prayer and Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it
- Organising themes for worship
- Assisting the governors and Senior Leaders to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Prayer and Liturgy
- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing, on occasions, acts of Prayer and Liturgy
- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of acts of Prayer and Liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors regarding matters of concern and development
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Prayer and Liturgy
- Informing newly qualified staff of school policy regarding Prayer and Liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors, and the parish community
- Liaising with the Parish Priest
- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Prayer and Liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for Prayer and Liturgy.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors annually. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Signed: G. Cullimore

Reviewed: May 2023

Next review date: May 2025