

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy Policy (Collective Worship)

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RE Leader: Miss Cunningham

Our Mission Statement

'Achieving excellence together, with God's love.'

At St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School we provide an environment for our community that enables each unique member to feel valued and become stronger as we embrace challenge and change.

We let God's love inspire us
and his Word guide us
as we grow together as a community
in our enthusiasm for excellence in all that we do.

Legal Requirements

The legal requirement is 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 understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said by either the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that prayer and liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering. At St Francis Xavier, responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy rests with the governing body after consultation with the Head of School.

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

We endorse the belief that prayer and liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all whom 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. Prayer and liturgy in this school is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Definitions

Prayer: 'A request for help or an expression of thanks from an individual or group to God'.

Liturgy: 'An act of public worship performed by a group'

The Aims of Prayer and liturgy

We believe that prayer and liturgy in our school community will provide a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationships with God and develop the following:

- contemplate the mystery of God;
- unite our worshipping Eucharistic community;
- develop the necessary skills of reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy, meditation which will enable our relationships with God to be deepened.

Full participation in our faith will allow us:-

- To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;
- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of prayer.

Implementation

Acts of prayer and liturgy should:-

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants;
- Give pupils meaningful opportunities to engage in the Sacramental Life of the Church

- Give pupils and students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family context in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.
- Promote pupils' understanding of and engagement with our school's Mission Statement

Liturgy

All liturgies within our school follow the following structure:

Gathering - how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet/ reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc);

Word - a reading from the Scriptures, breaking the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;

Response - a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme (gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers, etc);

Mission - the sending out from the celebration, giving the children something to hold onto from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

Celebration of the Eucharist

We celebrate Mass at least half-termly as a school, and always during Lent and Advent, within which children have the opportunity to receive the Eucharist.

Reconciliation

During both Lent and Advent pupils in year 4, 5 & 6 have the opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation in school in an age-appropriate manner with our parish priest.

Different liturgies take place throughout the week, with variations made for special events – see liturgical calendar

- Monday – Whole School Gospel Liturgy
- Tuesday – KS1 Liturgy (KS2 Class Liturgy)
- Wednesday – Class Liturgy
- Thursday – KS2 Liturgy (KS1 Class Liturgy)
- Friday – Class Liturgy

Prayer

Everyday children have the opportunities to take part in communal prayer with opportunities for individual prayer integrated throughout weekly liturgies

Prayer is a fundamental part of developing our pupils' relationship with God and in recognising God's presence in their life. Collective and personal prayer is observed throughout the school day in order to enable the school community to recognise God's presence amongst us and to have the opportunity for personal prayer. The key periods of prayer throughout our day are:

- At the start of the day
- Grace before/after meals
- End of each day
- During whole school and liturgy assemblies
- During Class Liturgies

Our School Prayers:

Morning Prayer

Oh My God you love me, you're
with me night and day
I want to love you always, in all
I do and say
I'll try to please you Father,
bless me through the day

Amen

Prayer Before Meals

Bless us O God as we
sit together,
Bless the food we eat
today
Bless the hands that
made the food,
Bless us, O God,

Amen

Prayer After Meals

Thank you God for
the food we have
eaten,
Thank you God for
all our friends,
Thank you God for
everything,
Thank you God,

Amen

End of day Prayer

Now the busy day is
done,
Father bless us
everyone,
Keep us safely through
the night,
and in the morning
send your light
Amen

We also introduce children to the traditional prayers of the church. Specifically:

- The Our Father
- The Hail Mary
- The Glory Be

Pupil Led Worship

Throughout the school pupils are given the opportunity and supported to lead acts of prayer and liturgy within their class, in their key stage and whole school.

Pupils who are involved in leading collective worship are given the opportunity to reflect upon and document the impact of their work. The chaplaincy team take responsibility for evaluating collective worship across the school on behalf of all pupils. Classes have age-appropriate opportunities to discuss collective worship and to provide their views.

Parents

- Parents are invited to attend whole school acts of collective worship and have access to the school's liturgical calendar
- Parents are invited to provide their feedback both formally and informally

Policy Monitoring and Review

The Governors are aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to prayer and liturgy, taking account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, Education Act 1996 and the school standard framework 1998. It is the overall responsibility of the Governance Committee, in consultation with the Academy Principal, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and opportunities for quality prayer and liturgy are being delivered. Those responsible will ensure that acts of worship are in accordance and consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church. This policy is monitored by the RE Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff every two years. The Governors should review reports on the prayer life of the school.

The following will be monitored:

- Time set aside for prayer and liturgy; (Liturgical Calendar arranged annually)
- Whether the observed practice is consistent with agreed policy;
- Whether prayer and liturgy is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc;
- Staff development on prayer and liturgy and its impact;
- Prayer focus and its effectiveness in drawing pupils into prayer;
- Impact on pupils and members of the school community;
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills to access worship and prayer;

- Records of themes and teachings of the Catholic Church covered in prayer and liturgy.

Observation and monitoring records should be kept and should form part of the self-review process. Outcomes of monitoring will be communicated to staff and the governors with recommendations for future action.

The Role of the RE Leader for Prayer and liturgy:

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:-

- Formulating a written policy;
 - Ensuring there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy;
 - Ensuring that 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 and is rooted in the Catholic teachings;
 - Organising themes for worship;
- Assisting the governors in carrying out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy Communication
- This policy will be communicated to:
- All members of the school community;
 - Parish priests or members of pastoral areas as appropriate;
 - New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
 - New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy.

Links to other policies:

- Religious Education