St John Evangelist Catholic Primary School

PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

Mission Statement: To love, to learn with God in our hearts

Policy revised: July 2026 Review Date: July 2027

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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.)

2. Statement of requirement

The law requires all Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils (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; 70 Instrument of Government, clause 2).

The law requires all 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)). 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.

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 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) 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

Liturgy shapes prayer and worship to enable all pupils to have a conscious, active, meaningful and fruitful participation. (Christ at the Centre, 2012)
Acts of prayer & worship at St John Evangelist Catholic Primary School take place in a variety of forms. These are supported by the learning environments around the school, which reflect the school's Catholic identity and mission.

<u>Daily Prayers</u>
The daily routine of school involves time for prayers:

- Each morning begins with a Morning Prayer
- Grace before children go for their lunch
- End of day prayer

Prayers are also said during other acts of prayer & worship. Spontaneous prayer is encouraged responding to the needs of the children and the wider community.
Alongside our school prayers, we recognise that prayer is individual for each person, and a variety of ways of prayer offered throughout the year.

Mass
As Catholics, we believe the centre of our faith is the Eucharist. Through this Sacrament we are joined in communion with Christ. We celebrate Mass in our Parish Church on Holy Days of Obligation, during significant times of the school year and on a weekly class rota. Mass is celebrated as a whole school, as classes, and in phase groups. Children are responsible for reading the first and second reading and psalms. They write their own bidding prayers. Children are trained how to read during Mass.

Child Led Worship
Central to supporting children in growing in their love and knowledge of Christ is the opportunity to plan and lead acts of worship. Children from across the school are supported to plan and lead their class in a time of worship. Prayer & worship planned and led by the children takes place in each class at least twice a week. The worship is linked once a week to the half termly Catholic Social Teaching theme.

Teacher Led Worship
Each teacher will plan and lead an act of worship with their class once a week. These are often planned using TenTen prayer resources or Mark10 Mission. The teacher will also plan and lead a traditional type of prayer each week so that children's opportunities to pray in a variety of ways is encouraged e.g. the Lectio Divina or The Examen.

Phase / Whole School Worship
Each week, the school gathers in phases to come together for prayer & worship in an assembly. Teachers take turns to lead this once a week (on a Tuesday or Thursday). They involve children in the planning and delivery of the assembly.

Hymn Practice
A teacher leads weekly hymn practice where children learn a variety of songs and hymns, both contemporary and traditional. The liturgical year guides the choice of music used for worship. Each class have a class hymn to learn Teachers have a timetable of hymns to practice during hymn practice to ensure children have a wide range of experience of hymns.

Whole School Worship / Gospel Assembly
On a Monday morning, the whole school comes together for prayer & worship / Gospel Assembly. St John Evangelist Catholic Primary School uses a paid resource, Ten Ten Resources, who provide an assembly each week linked to Sunday's Gospel which supports this assembly. Father Jakub regularly joins the Monday assembly and shares the Sunday Gospel with the children.

Reconciliation
Reconciliation services planned during the seasons of Advent and Lent are led by the Parish Priests and provide the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation with a priest.

Other Liturgies
Throughout the year, we celebrate different liturgies linked to the life of the Church such as the Carol Service, Harvest Liturgy, and Stations of the Cross etc. Children from different year groups are involved in the planning and preparation of these.

Staff Prayer

Catholic schools are committed to communal prayer, and as such, Staff at St John Evangelist Catholic Primary School begin the morning meeting with a collective prayer. Staff meetings always begin with a time of prayer and Governors also pray together at the beginning of their meetings. Teachers attend a whole staff Mass at the beginning of the school year with other schools in Islington.

Prayer Tables

Prayer tables are there to support prayer & worship and the Catholic Life of the school. Each classroom has a prayer table and crucifix in a central location. The prayer table will be covered with a coloured cloth matching the liturgical year. On the prayer table, there will be a prayer that the children have collectively written as their 'Class Prayer'. Children are encouraged to use the prayer table individually as well as for collective worship. Resources will be available on the prayer table for children to engage with.
Around the school, prayer tables and focal points are provided to enhance worship and allow children to explore their faith further.

Home school links

Links with home to support prayer & liturgy are important. Parents are invited to join certain acts of worship in school. Once a month, our Parish Priest leads a prayer and coffee morning for families. Parents are invited to join their child's class at Mass and prayer resources are shared with parents.
Children have a weekly prayer to practise as part of their homework, according to their year group. Each class also has a prayer book which children take home on a Friday and return the following Monday with a prayer they have written with their family.

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. There is a dedicated prayer space in the infant and junior playground. 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. Faith leaders are trained to support children in the planning of prayer & worship sessions.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

The RE Subject Lead will monitor the delivery of collective worship at St John Evangelist Catholic Primary School. Worship planning sheets, photographs and evidence of the

children’s prayers and reflections are collated in the classroom collective worship book which are monitored throughout the year. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate. Monitoring also allows opportunities for good practise to be identified, shared and celebrated. Governors attend the school termly and will visit some prayer & worship sessions.