



Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Our Mission Statement :

'Love One Another As I Have Loved You' (John 13:33-34)

Agreed by Governors on: January 25th 2023

Signed

Chair of Governors

To be reviewed : January 2024

Safeguarding Statement :

Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of all children and expects all staff, parents and volunteers to share this commitment.

Our School Vision

As a Catholic school that puts Christ at the centre, we are committed to developing independent, successful and confident children who have high aspirations, who gain a sense of achievement and leave our school with a wealth of happy memories.

Our Values and Ethos

We believe that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God and we value the equality of all, reject discrimination of any kind, and welcome the diversity of different cultures.

Introduction to Prayer and Liturgy in our Catholic School

Prayer and Liturgy in a Catholic school is concerned with the revelation of God's presence so that praise, honour and thanksgiving may be given to Him. Prayer and Liturgy should strengthen this eucharistic community, which is called together to give witness to Jesus Christ. Prayer and Liturgy is this community's response to God, which invites us to enter into a loving relationship with Him, made possible by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

This policy is to support the liturgical life of the school by providing guidelines for various acts of worship from the individual, to class prayer times, to Masses with the parish and the wider community.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy is an integral part of our daily school life and fulfils all legal requirements. We believe that prayer and liturgy:

- provides a quality experience and is fundamental to the life of the school.
- provides the opportunity for pupils to pray and give glory to God.
- allows time to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore beliefs.
- encourages participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of liturgy or through listening to and joining in the liturgy offered.
- develops community spirit, promotes a common ethos and shared values, and reinforces positive attitudes.
- experiences a sense of belonging and develops community spirit through planned opportunities throughout the year.
- gives pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age.
- develops children's skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead prayer.

Implementation

All acts of prayer and liturgy should:

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants;
- Be clear in their liturgical focus and varied in their delivery;

Prayer and liturgy in our school may follow the pattern or variation of the pattern detailed below:-

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

Listen - a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), sharing the word, time to reflect on suitable prayers, including the four main types of prayer i.e Thanks / Asking / Praise / Sorry

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

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

Planning

When planning prayer and liturgy, it should reflect the theme or liturgical season of the church where appropriate. (For example, omitting Alleluia during a Lent worship, or have a lively upbeat service for a reconciliation service that has a reflective undertone.)

Allow the children to feel differences in the mood of the liturgical calendar and to experience different prayer and liturgy to further their spiritual self. As the children grow in age and confidence, they can take a more active part in the planning of liturgy.

Children should be encouraged to prepare and lead the prayer service as appropriate to their age.

Throughout Early Years, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two children are encouraged to develop their individual prayer life through practice and participation in morning, before and after lunch, and home time prayers.

EYFS

Children from Foundation, can prepare the focus- e.g. selecting the right liturgical colour of cloth, placing a candle and a Bible in the centre, with the adult placing any additional props.

Key Stage 1

Children in Key Stage 1 can prepare the prayer focus, write simple prayers that can be used, they can help to choose the songs sung with guidance so they fit in the theme of the liturgy. Children can choose the artefacts needed and the correct liturgical cloths as a teaching point or reinforcement.

Key Stage 2

Children in Key Stage 2 can plan simple acts of liturgy, reflecting on the four aspects Gather, Listen, Respond and Go. The children can think about the type of response that would be the most appropriate, e.g. John the Baptist, using holy water and inviting each child to bless themselves in response to a meditation read. They can lead through playing musical instruments and using recorded music through their prayer.

Celebration of the Eucharist

As the Mass is the centre of the liturgical worship in the Catholic Church, it has an established place in the life of the school. A timetable for each term is planned by the Headteacher and Parish Priest to include commitment/enrolment Masses and parish links. The children are involved in the planning and the celebration of Mass and family and friends are invited to attend.

Every fortnight, on a Tuesday morning, the school attends Mass at 9am. The children lead the welcome, the readings, bidding prayers and offertory. Each class leads Mass in our parish church on a rolling programme throughout the year. We firmly believe in the importance of celebrating the Mass by:

- Encouraging all our school members to go to Mass on a weekly basis.
- Providing opportunities for School, parish and home Masses throughout the academic year.
- Celebrating Holy Mass on Feast Days and Holy days of Obligation.
- Having Mass celebrated in school or on the grounds of the school.
- Celebrating Masses as part of the sacramental programme.
- Celebrating Mass at the key times of the school year e.g. blessing of the school year and a leavers' Mass for Year 6.
- By teaching the structure of the Mass to the children
- By basing all our assemblies, meetings and gatherings on the four part model of the Mass.

Assemblies

Monday morning mission assemblies are usually liturgical in nature and are taken by the Headteacher or a member of SLT.

Friday assemblies are celebration assemblies but always begin and end with prayer and hymn singing. The whole school attend the above assemblies.

Special Liturgical celebrations

Foundation Stage & KS1 perform a Christmas play. This reflects the story of the Nativity. Parents, families and parishioners are invited.

Key stage 2 pupils are involved in the presentation of the passion, the death and the resurrection of Jesus. Year 4 lead the Easter Reflection. It is a deeply moving and spiritual experience for all and is used as a teaching tool during Holy Week.

Right of Withdrawal:

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from R.E. lessons and from prayer and liturgy. Alternative provision will be made. However, parents and prospective parents need to be aware that Religious Education impacts on the rest of the curriculum and daily life within the school. Therefore, it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Prayer and Liturgy:

The co-ordinator will be responsible for:-

- Formulating a written policy;
- Ensuring that the development of prayer and liturgy is included in the RE development plan;
- 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 liturgy;
- Assisting the governors and Headteacher 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 via the school website
- Parish priest
- New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
- New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy.

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