

ST WILLIAM OF YORK



Catholic Primary School

Brockley Park, Forest Hill, SE23 1PS

Prayer & Liturgy Policy

Introduction

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

In any school there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

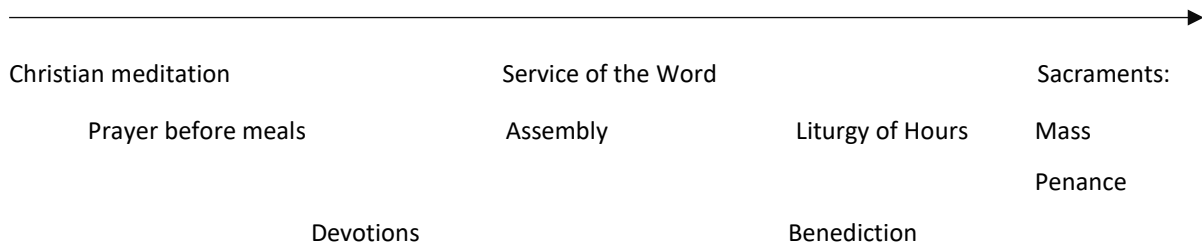
Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.

Prayer

Liturgical Prayer

Liturgy



Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	Structured (often 4 part)	Taken from official books
One or two elements	Elements drawn from liturgy	Complex structure
Balance of familiarity & creativity	Places of Scripture	Many elements
	Contrasts and creativity	Range of ministry

In Catholic terminology ‘worship’ is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God’s world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 there is a statutory duty to inspect and report on denominational education (that is religious education) and collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character. For this reason, the term ‘Collective Worship’ has been kept as the headline judgement by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate but throughout the framework it is referred to as prayer and liturgy. This policy addresses the shift in vocabulary.

St William of York's Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission Statement

The purpose of St William of York Catholic Primary School is to educate children in an atmosphere of Christian love.

We respect and rejoice in the uniqueness of each child, and aim to make learning a happy and positive experience for everyone in our community.

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It 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 relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

'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.'¹

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered 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. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

The 'act of worship' is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Headteacher and RE Leader; planning will also be shared with the Governing Body, who will support in the monitoring and evaluation of the provision for collective worship.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured, within Come and See RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St William of York Primary School

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. 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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St William of York Catholic Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All acts of prayer in St William of York Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, Ten Ten, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations. A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

- Whole school collective worship Mondays and Fridays
- Whole school hymn practice Tuesdays
- Class assemblies Wednesdays
- Key stage assemblies Thursdays
- Rehearsals for Family Mass/Liturgy (Fridays)
- Family Mass on Sundays (1st Sunday of every month)

Special prayer celebrations throughout the year:

Autumn:

- Induction staff mass
- Welcome Assembly
- St George's Cathedral mass
- Harvest Liturgy
- Remembrance mass
- Advent mass
- Advent Friday fundraising (every Friday in December)

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

- Weekly attendance at weekday parish masses (2 x classes per week)
- CAFOD Assembly focused on Catholic Social Teaching

Spring

- Epiphany blessings
- Ash Wednesday
- Reconciliation Service
- Annunciation Mass
- Stations of the Cross
- Palm Sunday Mass

Summer

- Month of Mary focus
- St William of York Feast Day
- International Celebration Mass
- St Peter and Paul Mass
- Leavers' Mass

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age. We also include the Prayer Monitors in planning for leading class in prayer. They also help to update the prayer spaces in the classroom to ensure they are relevant.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in children's exercise books and on our school website. It is also reflected in classroom prayer spaces. It is also planned and recorded in our liturgy planner.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is monitored on a termly basis through a variety of different means. This is recorded by the RE subject lead and shared at SLT meetings and with governors. This includes:

- Cross school moderation with Holy Cross and St Augustine's
- Key stage partners collaborative moderation and discussion
- Book looks
- Learning walks
- Bitesize CPD
- Termly RE Staff Meetings

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

Resources

There are a variety of resources accessible.

- Class sets of bibles stored centrally
- Prayer space boxes of resources for each month
- Other faith resources stored in the staff room
- God's Story and Church's Story text books stored in staffroom
- Book of children's prayer in each class
- Whole school rosary

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'. Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Retreats

- Key stage two trip to St George's Cathedral
- Pilgrims of Hope day - whole day of prayer
- Yr2 trip to St Paul's Cathedral

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Zoe Thorn is the coordinator for prayer and liturgy. Please find details of her role in Appendix 1.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith 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 principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy

- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the parish priest
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

The planning for collective worship will involve the RE Leader working collaboratively with relevant stakeholders. This may include: the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, pupils and members of the parish. Plans for collective worship will be shared with the Governing Body each term and they will support with monitoring this.