



Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

2024 - 2026

Coordinator: Miss Austin

Updated: January, 2024

To be reviewed: January, 2026

Our Mission Statement:

A Place where we Love, Pray, Learn and Grow

Star of the Sea school is dedicated to the education, growth and development of the whole child based on the partnership of pupils, staff, parents, governors and parish. The school affirms Gospel values through Christian Catholic teaching, prayer, liturgy and worship.

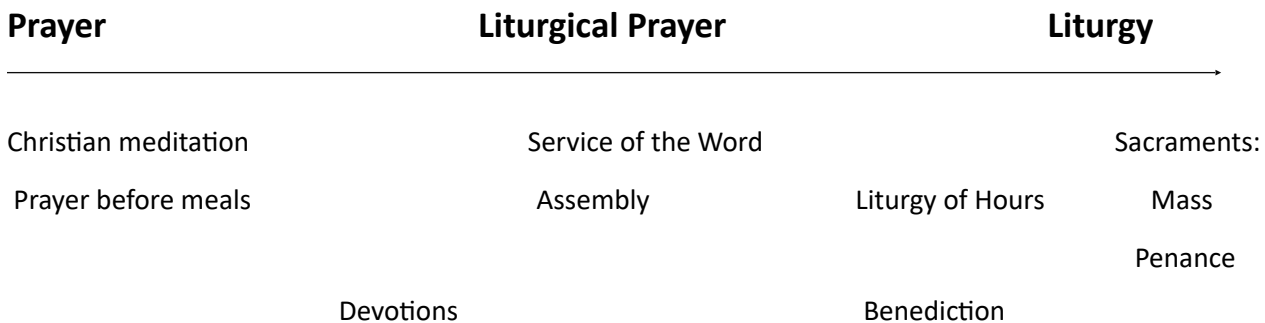
Introduction

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
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 model policy addresses the shift in vocabulary and is an interim response to the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory. When the Directory is published it will contain a model policy which the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle will adapt for schools

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 Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

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 Star of the Sea 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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in Star of the Sea Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- 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 Star of the Sea 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, 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.

Staff prayers take place during the morning briefing on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. A short prayer or reflection is planned by different members of staff.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Phase Liturgical Prayers - Teacher lead, following a rota.

Wednesday: KS2 - 09.00 - 9.15

Wednesday: KS1 and EYFS - 15.00

Whole School Liturgical Prayer

Monday morning at 09.00 as part of our whole school Good News Assembly. This is led by the children and focuses on that week's Statements to Live By.

Daily Prayers are shared in every class.

Liturgical Prayer takes place daily in the classroom except on days when it is their Phase Liturgical Prayer or the Whole School Liturgical Prayer. These are planned and led by the children. Class based worship sometimes take the form of liturgies but also incorporate other formats including; quiet reflection, prayer journaling, reflection on images/artefacts. At the end of each 'Come and See' topic, each class will also plan and lead their own Liturgy in class.

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher ensures that Prayer and Liturgy is a constant, working closely with the RE lead. The class teacher supports the children to plan and lead prayer and liturgies.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in Class Liturgical Prayer files and the Whole School Liturgical Prayer floor book.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgical prayer is monitored termly through Learning Walks and through termly scrutiny of Class Liturgical Planning files. This is carried out by the RE lead and members of the SLT.

Prayer and liturgy is monitored using prayer and liturgy monitoring form.

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

Resources

School has recently purchased a considerable amount of resources to support Prayer and Liturgy.

Mr Bailey (Mrs Hughes father) has made lots of beautiful crosses and wooden toys to support creative prayer.

The RE lead and staff have been creating creative prayer bags to enhance prayer. These are kept outside Y3KA.

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'³

Focal points in each classroom and our Sacred Prayer Spaces which are spread throughout the school will reflect the liturgical seasons, reference Come and See topics and will focus on our Star of the Sea Values In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Retreats

Year 6 pupils visit the Youth Village during the Summer term.

Year 4 pupils visit the Youth Village for a two night residential during the Summer term.

Other opportunities

All year groups attend Wednesday morning Mass at Immaculate Heart with the parish community. This takes place during the summer term.

Monsignor Andrew Faley also celebrates Mass in school during key liturgical seasons of the church's year. At the end of the school year we celebrate Mass outside where all of our school community is welcomed.

Eucharist

All pupils participate in Mass with Monsignor Faley both within school and at Immaculate Heart..

Pupils make the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist in Year 4.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

The coordinators are Kathryn Dimambro (Headteacher) and Katharine Austin (RE lead)

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.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

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 school chaplain
- 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

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]