



# ST ETHELBERT'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

## Prayer and Liturgy Policy

**Date of Review: September 2025**  
**Date of Next Review: September 2026**

## **Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

**At St. Ethelbert's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that Jesus is our greatest teacher. Following Jesus' example, we strive for our school to be a place where everyone is equally respected and unconditionally loved.**

As a Catholic school, the gospel values provide the foundation of everything we do and have shaped this prayer and liturgy policy. We strive to create an environment where every member of our community feels safe, loved, valued and respected and this is underpinned by our mission statement: ***Learning, achieving and growing together with Jesus***

### **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 maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, including those in the sixth form (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; Instrument of Government, clause 2). Academies in England are required by their funding agreement and Articles of Association to comply with similar requirements (The Mainstream Academy and Free School: Supplemental Funding Agreement, December 2020; Model Articles for Catholic Academies, February 2019).

The law requires all maintained 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)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)).

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(s) 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**

Prayer and worship are at the heart of all we do. Prayers are said each morning, before lunch and at the end of the day. In addition, adults and pupils are encouraged to make spontaneous responses to situations through prayer when they feel the need arises. Each classroom has a prayer table or focus for prayer and personal reflection, showing a clear sign that Christ is among us. Tables must be covered in the appropriate liturgically coloured cloth:

Ordinary Time- Green

Advent/Lent- Purple

Christmas/Easter- White

Pentecost- Red

Items displayed on the prayer table can include an open bible, a candle, a living thing, prayers and other artefacts that represent the Christian faith.

Pupils should be encouraged to take ownership of this area and may provide meaningful items that they would like displayed to support their prayers and reflection.

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, the school community celebrates Celebration of the Word assemblies.

Pupils work in small groups to plan and deliver Child- Led Collective Worship at least once a week for their class using the four sections of the Mass- Gather, Word, Response and Mission.

Year groups celebrate Mass once a half term at Holy Redeemer Church on a Tuesday with the parish. Mass is also celebrated by the whole school community in the school hall at the

beginning and end of the school year as well as on Holydays of Obligation and during Advent and Lent. All events can be found in our Annual Plan of Provision.

There are opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation for our pupils during Advent and Lent too.

The school endeavours to encourage parents to foster the prayer life of our families by:

- Inviting parents to share in liturgical celebrations
- Encouraging parents to see themselves as part of our worshipping community
- Monthly newsletter to parents on prayer, linked to the Liturgical Year and topics from school
- Termly letter to inform parents about the RED topics
- Masses at Holy Redeemer church for each year group
- Nativity play and Christmas celebrations for all year groups
- Passion play held at school at the end of the Easter term
- Rosary prayers during October and May
- Parent workshops on prayer throughout the year with prayer sheets to go home

## **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. 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.

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

## **8. Review**

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors.

