

# **ST. GEORGE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY**

## **Prayer and Liturgy Policy** **'Celebration of the Word'**



**2025-2026**

## **St George's Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

### **Mission Statement**

***'To learn with kindness, respect and friendship through God's love.'***

#### **1)To enable every individual (made in the image and likeness of God) to learn, grow and reach their full potential.**

We will do this by:

- Providing high quality, engaging lessons and learning experiences.
- Encouraging individuals to excel in all areas of school life.
- Valuing, sharing and celebrating all achievements - (Weekly celebration assemblies)
- Providing extra-curricular activities to extend learning to outside the classroom. (Sports, Music clubs, Forest School etc)
- Providing the opportunities for assessment to enhance future learning. (Self assessment, peer assessment.)

#### **2)We aim to be a loving Christian family living the values of the Gospel.**

We will do this by:

- Providing positive role models and giving opportunities to highlight and reward good examples of living a Christian life from the children. (Award assemblies)
- Providing opportunities to focus on a weekly Gospel value through well planned, daily, collective worship sessions.
- Regularly reinforcing expected behaviours throughout the school and encouraging children to reflect and challenge their own behaviours. (Behaviour support, Buddy systems, peer mentoring.)

#### **3)To seek to make a difference through developing caring relationships with the local and wider community.**

We will do this by:

- Valuing our link with the parish family and supporting the delivery of the 'With you Always' program.
- Providing regular school liturgies and celebrations. To further the link with the Parish.
- Engaging with parents to make them feel welcome and supported. (PTA, celebrations)
- Continuing to fundraise for both local and global charities in a variety of ways - shoe boxes, sponsored events, food bank collections etc.
- Participating in MADCOS events. (Maghull and district cluster of schools) - Training events, sporting events etc.

## **The context of this prayer and liturgy policy**

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for Prayer and Liturgy at St George's Catholic Primary School. We have now adjusted the term 'Collective Worship' into 'Celebration of the Word' as advised by the Archdiocese. It has been developed through a process of consultation with teaching staff. It will be reviewed each year by the whole school in consultation with the Governing Body. Prayer and Liturgy in St George's Catholic Primary School is an integral part of school life. While respecting diversity of belief and commitment, it is Catholic in character and has Christ at its heart. It celebrates God's presence in our lives and is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It reflects the tradition of the Church and its belief in the Holy Trinity.

*'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.)

## **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; 70 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.

## **The Purpose of Prayer and Liturgy – Celebration of the Word**

- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- To promote spiritual, cultural and moral development.
- To provide opportunity for children to share and express their thoughts and feelings.
- To give glory, honour, thanks and praise to God. Aims of Prayer and Liturgy.
- Foster a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer and action
- To develop spirituality and enable 'communication' with God.
- Provide different opportunities for pupils and staff to worship God
- Reflect on spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs.
- To reflect on values and concerns of the school community and the wider community it serves.
- To enable children to gain insight into ways in which people express themselves within their faith commitments and to be sensitive to those different ways of responding.

- To deepen and widen a child's emotional and spiritual response.
- To encourage participation and response, through active involvement in the planning and presentation of worship.
- To develop community spirit and encourage a sense of belonging, promoting a common ethos and shared values which reinforce positive attitudes.

### **Objectives of Prayer and Liturgy**

#### **To develop a sense of:**

- Awe, wonder and mystery.
- Interdependence with the natural world.
- Pattern, sequence and order.
- Self-worth and value of others.

#### **To develop awareness:**

- That life involves choices of belief, attitude, behaviour and relationships.
- That there are issues of meaning, purpose and value in life.

At St George's, all Prayer and Liturgy is based on the principles that it will be:

- Spiritual.
- Reflective.
- Inclusive.
- Relevant.

Prayer and Liturgy – Celebration of the Word sessions, also contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children. They are seen as special times, concerned with the glory and honour of God. Children feel secure and relaxed in a friendly, prayerful atmosphere which fosters positive feelings and a sense of community. Children are encouraged to participate in all areas of the preparation and delivery of Prayer and Liturgy throughout the school.

### **Principles of Prayer and Liturgy**

#### **All acts of worship in St George's will be inclusive:**

- Pupil centred, related to pupils' own experiences and relevant to their lives.
- Acknowledge diversity.
- Involve pupils as active participants.
- Match the needs of pupils.
- Foster a sense of community.

#### **They will be spiritual:**

- Time for stillness and reflection.
- A special time – conducive to worship.
- Children will feel calm, relaxed and secure.
- Include a variety of words, music and images.
- Provide opportunities for children to take part in a variety of spiritual opportunities.
- Provide opportunity for children to take an active part in worship.

#### **Prayer and Liturgy could be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain:**

- Related to learning experiences across the curriculum.
- Related to pupils' own life experiences.
- Celebrate educational achievements and talents.

## **How Prayer and Liturgy is organised.**

In order to achieve a sense of belonging and a common ethos, we try to involve as many of our school community as possible. Teachers plan and enable our 'Celebration of the Word' to take place each day.

Occasions for worship include prayer times, assemblies, circle prayer, sharing assemblies, Masses both at Church and at school.

During our celebrations we try to:

- Make our Prayer and Celebration of the Word, appropriate for our children
- To include all who are attending by ensuring the possibility of conscious active participation of all present
- Encourage children to lead where appropriate
- To use a balance of quiet reflection, silent prayer, responses, prayer, music, songs, dance, drama, short address.
- Provide a focus using artefacts, candles, symbols and lighting.
- Provide opportunities for Pupils and staff to pray for their own intentions and encourage spontaneous prayer.

Prayer and Liturgy - Celebration of the Word, will always include the following 4 sections:

**Gathering together** - circle time, to music, light a candle etc

**Listening** - scripture

**Response** - silent time to reflect on .....

**Going forth** - singing/playing music, to enable the children to take the message with them

## **Places for Prayer and Liturgy**

Celebration of the Word, as a rule take place on the school premises; however, we do discretely organise Prayer and Liturgy elsewhere on special occasions.

- The School Hall
- Classroom
- Outside
- Church

## **Times for Prayer and Liturgy**

The Timing of the Act can be flexible and can be at any time of the day, so as to ensure it is a meaningful and prayerful opportunity for all participants.

### **Formal**

Whole school – Prayer and Liturgy takes place on a Monday morning in the school hall (9:05 – 9:30)

This is a Celebration of the Word based on (where appropriate) the Gospel readings for the week, helping the pupils to make links between the Gospel and how Christians can live out the Gospel values in their daily lives. There is also a focus on using elements and language from the Mass through carefully selected prayers and responses.

There is a more reflective Prayer and Liturgy on a Friday afternoon (2:50-3:10) and can be key stage or whole school as appropriate. This is an opportunity to reflect on the Gospel value or theme of the week, think about their own responses and actions and to celebrate any special achievements from the pupils.

### **Informal**

On the other days it is the class teacher's responsibility to choose the timings of the worship.

- Prayerful images
- Appropriate music
- Suitable lighting
- Comfortable posture
- Atmosphere of peacefulness

Prayer Table – Each classroom has a designated area for prayer. The prayer table contains a cloth linked to the liturgical year, a candle, a bible, a crucifix and a focus for that topic.

Focus for Prayer – A prayer table would contain a small selection of the following:

<b><i>Candles</i></b>	Candles remind us that Jesus is amongst us and is the Light of the World
<b><i>Bible</i></b>	The word of God will be given prominence on the prayer table
<b><i>Flowers/Plants</i></b>	Greenery is a reminder of God's beautiful world and of the gift of creation
<b><i>Sacred images</i></b>	Crucifix, statue, pictures of Jesus and Mary
<b><i>Interesting objects</i></b>	A variety of stones or shells give a good focus for prayer
<b><i>Meaningful pictures</i></b>	Pictures or photographs appropriate to the Theme
<b><i>Prayer/story/poetry books</i></b>	Have one open that reflects the topic being studied
<b><i>Oil burners</i></b>	Aromatic smells are relaxing for prayer

Each class has a 'Prayer' box that holds a variety of artefacts, prayer cards, materials etc for the children to select when they are to lead.

A Celebration of the Word calendar has been sent by the R.E. Coordinator to support staff.

Throughout the year special celebrations are held which encourage the children to share and quietly reflect on important events in the Church's year such as the Nativity, an Advent service, a Palm Sunday celebration or The Stations of the Cross.

### **Liturgies in School**

Mass is celebrated throughout the school year, and on Feast days and Holydays. KS2 classes contribute to Mass by planning one significant section; the music, readings, bidding prayers or the offertory. Children attend Morning Mass with the Parish on a Thursday morning at 9.30am on a rota basis throughout the year.

### **Conclusion**

The experience of stillness, peace, awe, wonder, mystery, celebration, reverence and belonging are of central importance in promoting spiritual development. Such values will be explored, celebrated and reflected upon in Prayer and Liturgy in a manner that compliments the way they are taught in the classroom and communicated through the ethos in St George's Catholic Primary School.

### **Review**

This prayer and liturgy policy has been approved and adopted by the Headteacher and Head of RE in September 2025 and will be reviewed September 2026.

Reviewed September 2025 by  
Pete Chapman Headteacher

