



United Through Jesus in Faith, Love and Learning

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TRACKED CHANGES:	Standard policy on the back of the prayer and liturgy directory.		

Office use only:

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

School Mission Statement

United through Jesus in Faith, Love and Learning.

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.

At St Paul’s, prayer and liturgy form the heart of our Catholic identity. Rooted in the Gospel and the person of Jesus Christ, we recognise that worship is our loving response to God’s invitation to encounter Him. Our community lives by the Gospel values of truth, love, respect, forgiveness, and justice, seeking always to recognise Christ in everyone. Through worship, we support every child and adult in developing their spiritual, academic, social, creative and physical potential.

We affirm that worship is central to school life and is not merely a statutory obligation but an expression of our Catholic mission.

2. Statement of Requirement

As required by English law and Church teaching, the school:

- Provides a **daily act of collective worship** for all pupils.
- Ensures that all acts of worship are in accordance with the **rites, practices, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church**.
- Distinguishes clearly between **assembly** and **collective worship**, even when they occur in a shared gathering.
- Recognises that prayer and liturgy are **not part of the curriculum time** for Religious Education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship, though as a Catholic community we hope all will choose to participate in this essential part of school life.

The school also commits to ensuring pupils experience:

- The richness of the Church's liturgical year.
 - A shared repertoire of traditional Catholic prayers.
 - Opportunities to encounter Scripture, silence, contemplation, and sacred music.
 - The celebration of the Sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation.
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3. Responsibility

(a) Governance

Governors ensure that:

- Prayer and liturgy remain central to the Catholic life of the school in accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.
- A named **Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator** oversees worship across the school.
- This policy reflects diocesan expectations and is reviewed annually.
- Funding, resources, and training needs related to worship are adequately supported.

(b) Headteacher

The headteacher, as spiritual leader of the school:

- Ensures prayer and liturgy reflect the Catholic mission of the school.
- Works closely with the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator.
- Promotes high-quality prayer and liturgical celebration.
- Ensures staff receive appropriate training and that high-quality resources are available.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

The coordinator:

- Plans and oversees the **Annual Plan of Provision** for prayer and liturgy.
- Ensures **daily prayer** is age-appropriate, meaningful, and rooted in tradition.
- Provides guidance and formation so pupils can take increasing responsibility in planning and leading worship.
- Ensures resources, Scripture texts, and liturgical items are appropriate and available.
- Supports induction for new staff.
- Carries out regular monitoring and evaluation, including pupil voice.
- Reports to the headteacher and governors.
- Works collaboratively with parish clergy and diocesan advisors.

4. Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision

Our pattern of prayer and liturgy reflects our identity as a Catholic school and is rooted in the liturgical year.

Daily Prayer

- Children pray at the start and end of the day and before lunch.
- Traditional prayers, including the Sign of the Cross, Hail Mary, Our Father, and school prayers, are used regularly
- The **Angelus** is prayed by the whole school each Friday.
- Staff and governors begin meetings with prayer.

Celebration of the Word

- **Monday:** Whole-school Celebration of the Word, rooted in the Sunday Gospel.
- **Tuesday–Friday:** Class-based Celebration of the Word, prepared by staff and often led by children.
- **Wednesday** – Worship through hymns.
- Weekly **phase or key stage worship**, with classes taking turns to prepare and lead.
- Scripture is always at the heart of these celebrations.

Liturgy and the Sacraments

- One class attends a weekly **weekday Mass** at the parish church.
 - Whole-school Masses are celebrated:
 - At the beginning of each term.
 - On Holy Days of Obligation.
 - On key feasts such as the Conversion of St Paul and SS Peter and Paul.
 - **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is celebrated in Advent and Lent.
 - Special liturgies take place during significant seasons (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, Easter).
 - Parents are invited to join Masses and school liturgies.
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5. Resourcing

As a Catholic school, we invest in:

- Dedicated funding for prayer, liturgy, and chaplaincy support.
- Attractive, well-resourced sacred spaces and prayer areas.
- Religious images and artefacts displayed throughout the school.
- Resources for Celebration of the Word, Mass preparation, and seasonal displays.
- Time for staff formation and planning of worship.

Prayer spaces are updated to reflect the liturgical seasons and provide children with opportunities for quiet reflection.

6. Training and Formation

All staff receive training in:

- Leading communal prayer.
- Preparing and celebrating the Word.
- Supporting children to lead worship.
- Understanding liturgical norms and the liturgical year.

New staff are given induction on prayer and liturgy expectations. At least one **annual CPD session** is dedicated to prayer and liturgy for all staff.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring includes:

- Review of planning documentation.
- Observation of worship.
- Pupil voice and engagement.
- Feedback from staff, clergy, governors, and parents.
- Evaluation of pupils' development in liturgical leadership.

Findings are used to inform future planning and to ensure worship meets the needs of all pupils.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the governors' cycle of policy review.

Associated Policies: Religious Education Policy · RHE Policy · Equal Opportunities Policy · Safeguarding Policy

9. Additional Guidance for Excellence in Prayer and Liturgy

To ensure this policy represents *outstanding* Catholic practice, the school commits to the following enhanced expectations and standards:

a) Ensuring High-Quality Worship Experiences

Outstanding prayer and liturgy will be characterised by:

- **A clear theological focus** rooted in Scripture and the teachings of the Church.
- **Carefully prepared environments**, including focal points with appropriate symbols, colours, and artefacts.
- **Well-chosen liturgical music**, reflecting the Church's rich tradition of chant, hymns, and contemporary Catholic worship.
- **Reverence and ritual**, taught and modelled by all staff.
- **Inclusive participation**, ensuring all pupils can encounter Christ meaningfully regardless of background or ability.

b) Pupil Formation and Leadership

To nurture pupils as future leaders of the Church, we commit to:

- Teaching pupils the **skills of planning, preparing, and leading** prayer and liturgy using the *Gather–Listen–Respond–Go Forth* model.
- Establishing pupil groups such as **Mini Vinnies** to support worship.
- Offering regular opportunities for pupils to read Scripture, compose prayers, lead responses, choose music, and prepare worship spaces.
- Providing age-appropriate formation on:
 - Scripture handling
 - Sacred silence
 - Symbol and ritual
 - Gesture and posture in liturgy
 - Understanding the Mass

c) Building a Prayerful School Culture

The school fosters an atmosphere of prayer through:

- Prayer corners in every classroom with liturgical colours, Bibles, candles, and icons.
- Seasonal displays throughout the school.
- Staff modelling prayerful behaviour.
- A calm, reflective ethos supported by silence, prayer intentions, and moments of stillness.
- Regular opportunities for voluntary or extended prayer such as:
 - Rosary groups (October and May)
 - Stations of the Cross (Lent)
 - Advent reflections
 - Eucharistic Adoration
 - Prayer trails or spiritual garden events

d) Deepening Parish Partnerships

To strengthen the school's identity as part of the parish community:

- Parish clergy will be invited to lead, advise, and support liturgical formation.
- The school will actively participate in parish life (e.g., feast days, charitable works, joint liturgies).
- Families will be supported in their role as primary educators of faith through:
 - Prayer workshops
 - Invitation to school liturgies

- Home–school liturgical activities (e.g., Advent wreaths, Lent challenges).

e) Evaluating Impact

Outstanding practice involves measuring not only provision but **spiritual impact**. Therefore, evaluation will consider:

- How worship deepens pupils’ relationship with Christ.
- How well pupils can articulate the meaning of Scripture and liturgical signs.
- Evidence of growing reverence, participation, and leadership.
- Pupil and parent feedback indicating spiritual growth.
- Alignment with diocesan inspection benchmarks.

Tools used in evaluation may include:

- Learning walks
- Liturgy observation forms
- Pupil interviews
- Governor visits
- Review of planning folders and pupil contributions
- Reflection journals or prayer books

f) Commitment to Continuous Development

The school seeks continual improvement by:

- Regularly reviewing and developing its repertoire of music, prayers, and liturgical resources.
- Engaging staff in diocesan formation opportunities.
- Reviewing worship in light of diocesan inspection frameworks.
- Sharing best practice with local Catholic schools and diocesan advisers.

10. Conclusion

At St Paul’s prayer and liturgy are not simply routines: they are **encounters with Christ**, shaping the spiritual, moral, and communal life of the entire community. Through this policy, we commit to excellence in worship, ensuring every pupil grows in faith, feels a sense of belonging, and develops the desire to know, love, and serve God.

Our vision is that every act of prayer and liturgy reflects the beauty, depth, and joy of the Catholic faith — forming disciples who recognise Christ in everyone and help transform the world.