

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



"We learn, love and grow with God at the centre."

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Our Vision and Values

At St. Joseph's, we believe that each person is created and loved by God. As a Passionist Catholic school, we are rooted in the love of Christ Crucified and inspired by the charism of compassion, justice, presence and hope. Our mission statement, ***"We learn, love and grow with God at the centre"***, reflects the heart of our Passionist identity and reminds us that every aspect of school life, including prayer and liturgy, is grounded in faith. By placing God at the centre, we follow the example of St. Paul of the Cross, nurturing respect and love for all and fostering a deep engagement with communal and personal prayer.

In Religious Education (RE) and through school prayer and liturgy, this mission guides us to deepen our understanding of the Gospel, live out our Christian values, and grow together as a community where each child is valued, supported and encouraged to flourish in faith and life. Prayer, liturgical celebrations and reflective worship provide opportunities for pupils to encounter God, express gratitude, explore Scripture and participate in the rhythms of the Church year.

We aim to:

- Live compassionately, following Christ's example of love and mercy, expressed through prayers of intercession and acts of service.
- Be present to others, especially those who suffer, through communal prayer, reflection and liturgical participation.
- Act justly, promoting human dignity and peace, guided by the themes of liturgical seasons and Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principles explored in prayer and worship.
- Hold onto hope through all challenges, strengthened by regular engagement with Scripture, prayer and liturgy.

Through these values, lived out in daily prayer, classroom reflection, and whole-school liturgical celebrations, we grow together in faith, wisdom and service.

Context of the Policy

Prayer and liturgy are at the heart of Catholic life and learning. Through daily collective worship, children are encouraged to:

- Reflect on God's Word and respond in love.
- Grow in awareness of God's presence.
- Participate actively in the prayer life of the school.
- Experience the Church's liturgical seasons and Sacraments.

As the Right Reverend Marcus Stock writes in *Christ at the Centre*, prayer and liturgy should "enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God, and develop a mature spiritual life." At St. Joseph's, this principle underpins our approach to collective and individual worship. Prayer and liturgy are designed to provide opportunities for pupils and staff to pause, reflect and encounter God in meaningful ways. Through Scripture, hymns, meditation and simple moments of silence, children are encouraged to recognise God's presence in their daily lives and in the wider world.

Prayer and liturgy support the development of a mature spiritual life by helping pupils understand the rhythms of the Church year, participate in the sacraments and explore their own faith journey. They foster a sense of belonging and community, enabling pupils to express gratitude, seek guidance, offer intercessions for others and respond to God's call in their actions. By embedding these experiences across school life, prayer and liturgy at St. Joseph's nurture spiritual growth, reflection and an understanding of what it means to live out the Gospel.

Statement of Requirement

All Catholic schools are legally required to provide an act of daily collective worship (Education Act 1988; School Standards and Framework Act 1998). This worship must:

- Reflect the rites and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Include a shared repertoire of prayers, music, and traditions.
- Respect the right of withdrawal for pupils (up to age 16) and sixth-form students.

Prayer and liturgy do not count as RE curriculum time but are integral to our school's spiritual identity.

Responsibilities

At St. Joseph's, all members of the school community share responsibility for fostering a prayerful and liturgical life. This includes ensuring worship is reflective, inclusive, and rooted in the Catholic and Passionist tradition, supporting pupils to participate fully and maintaining a school environment where prayer and liturgy are central to daily life.

(a) Governance

The Governing Body ensures:

- Prayer and liturgy are central to school life and aligned with diocesan guidance.
- A named Prayer and Liturgy coordinator (e.g. parish priest or RE lead) is in place.
- This policy is regularly reviewed and communicated.
- An adequate budget supports prayer and liturgical needs.

(b) Headteacher

The Headteacher, as spiritual leader, ensures:

- The school promotes vibrant, inclusive prayer and liturgical opportunities.
- The Prayer and Liturgy Lead is supported and appropriately trained.
- Resources and time are allocated for effective implementation.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

The Coordinator ensures:

- There is an annual plan of prayer and liturgy (APOP) for the school year.
 - Liturgies reflect the Church's calendar and key feasts.
 - Children participate in the planning and leading of worship according to age and ability.
 - Staff are supported through induction, training and ongoing formation.
 - Liturgical resources are accessible and appropriate.
 - Monitoring and evaluation feed into continuous improvement.
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Weekly and Seasonal Structure

Please note: Weekly Prayer and Liturgy timetables for EYFS, KS1, LKS2 and UKS2 are still TBC for 2025-26 academic year.

Special liturgies include:

- School and class Masses (termly)
 - Holy Days of Obligation
 - Seasonal liturgies (Advent, Lent, Pentecost)
 - Sacramental celebrations and Reconciliation
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Resourcing

The importance of prayer and liturgy is reflected in:

- Budget allocation for resources, music, candles and sacred items.
 - Designated prayer spaces in every classroom.
 - Liturgical displays and prayer corners reflecting the Church year.
 - Training and time allocation for planning and leading worship.
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Training and Formation

- New staff receive induction on leading and supporting children in prayer and liturgy, including guidance on the school's Passionist charism.
- All staff take part in at least one annual CPD session, with additional staff meetings scheduled throughout the year to explore different aspects of prayer and liturgy.
- Training covers theological understanding, liturgical structure and creative approaches to planning and delivering worship.
- Children, particularly members of the pupil chaplaincy team, are supported and guided in planning, leading and reflecting on worship and prayer

experiences appropriate to their age and ability.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The quality and impact of prayer and liturgy are reviewed regularly by the RE Team to ensure meaningful and engaging experiences for all.
 - Feedback is gathered from pupils, staff, parents, clergy and governors to capture a wide range of perspectives.
 - Findings from monitoring and feedback are used to inform the ongoing strategic development of the school's Catholic life, supporting continuous improvement in worship and spiritual formation.
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Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the RE Team and Governing Body Team as part of the Catholic Life cycle.

Policy adopted: November 2024

Signed:

Review date: November 2025