Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Dated: October 2026

To be reviewed: September 2027

Signed: Mrs M Keating (Executive Headteacher)

Signed: Mr N Mendonca (Chair of Governors)

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.) As stated by the Diocese of Westminster Education service, 'Every opportunity for Prayer and Liturgy in our schools offers a meaningful encounter with the living God that reveals his transformative love and truth and leads to a deepening of faith and action.'

Prayer is an integral part of school life at Sacred Heart, and is not separated from the rest of school life; therefore children who belong to the school will share in the prayer life of the school. Children have a natural aptitude for prayer and are open to God.

They respond in many ways to the world around them and their school life is full of endless exploration and discovery. Teachers must create an environment where these responses are developed as the beginnings of prayer. Each classroom has a special and visible prayer space which either reflects the current topic or the liturgical season. These spaces are to support children in their communication with God.

Prayer and liturgy are crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Taking part in daily prayer and liturgy helps build community cohesion by creating a consistent structure around the core values.

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; 699.4 Model prayer and liturgy policy 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 2 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 3
- 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, the parish of Ware and within the schools of the St. Francis of Assisi Trust.

- 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 Liturgical celebrations at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School	
Daily	Prayer at the start of the day Prayer before lunch Prayer after lunch (meditation) Prayer at the end of the day
Monday	**Whole School Gospel Assembly** with the Head teacher / Deputy Head. All the children gather in the hall for assembly. The content and messages are linked to Sunday's Gospel
Tuesday	**Child Led Class liturgy**/ prayer (This can be also lead by House Captains/ Chaplaincy or a Buddy Assembly)
Wednesday	**Whole School Singing** of Hymns and liturgy
Thursday	**Whole School Assembly** lead by staff- linked to Liturgical Year or specific relevant themes.
Friday	**Celebration**- This assembly is a celebration assembly for the whole school. The whole school gathers in the hall to celebrate the week, and to share special achievements of individuals and classes. It is lead by the Headteacher and reflects on the week and is linked to scripture.
Mass	Whole School Mass at the start of Autumn and Spring Term Whole School mass at the end of the Academic Year (Leavers' Mass) Holy Days of Obligation and Feast Day Masses (Pentecost Mass) Class Masses in Summer Term Mass to celebrate our pupils who have made their First Holy Communion
Other liturgies and celebrations	Advent/ Lent- Reconciliations Harvest service Advent Service Ash Wednesday Service (Dependent on term dates- Maundy Thursday Liturgy) KS1 Easter Breakfast Liturgy Lower Key Stage 2- Seder Meal/ Last Supper Upper Key Stage 2- Stations of the Cross (in church) Individual Liturgies- EYFS- Year 3
Church visits	Stations of the Cross Linked to Curriculum Attendance at weekday Mass
Parish Priest	Fr. Charles regularly visits the school and will speak and pray with the children in their classrooms as well as visiting at lunchtimes.

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 6 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.