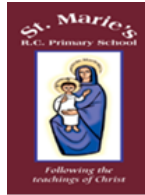




Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Reviewed and Revised May 2026
G McRae/C McGrath: RE Coordinators



Our Vision

St Marie's is proud to be a Catholic school, using the teachings of Christ as our foundations.

Within the care of Our Blessed Lady, we aim to make our school a place where children can safely learn through outstanding and innovative teaching, build on their potential, fulfil their dreams, and grow in faith and love

Our Mission

As Christ's hand and feet on earth, we will...

- Follow the teachings of Christ so that all may grow in faith.
- Recognise and value each child as a loved and unique child of God.
- Treat each person with respect, tolerance and honesty in an atmosphere of love and security.
- Celebrate, nurture and strengthen the relationship between our school family: Our school, our families, our parish and our community
- Inspire those within our care to become successful, caring members of our diverse society and transform the lives of others.

The Context of this Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Collective worship in a Catholic school names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. It is concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. It is an experience to which all in our school community can contribute to and gain from.

'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 9.4 Model prayer and liturgy policy Instrument of Government, clause 2).

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)). However, given the importance of Prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured

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. We recognise that Prayer and Liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

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.

Responsibility

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.

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.

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

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of St. Marie's

We endorse the belief that Prayer and Liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- those who form part of the worshipping community in church
- those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church
- those from other Christian traditions- or none
- those from other faith backgrounds

Worship in our school is an integral part of our school life and central to the Catholic tradition and ethos of the school. It allows us to keep Christ at the centre of all we do.

Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy in St. Marie's RC Primary School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- to contemplate the mystery of God
- to reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- to explore personal beliefs
- to respond to and to celebrate life
- to experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit, uniting our Eucharistic community
- to develop a common ethos and shared values: We are one family
- to enrich religious experience
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development
- to pray using prayers and practices which are part of the Catholic tradition
- to reinforce positive attitudes
- to participate fully
- to take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

Principles

All act of Prayer and Liturgy in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God;

- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church¹. In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - be short and appropriately paced
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision at St Marie's RC Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy opportunities are carefully interwoven into the lived experience of our children, staff and families within the school.

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the liturgical year, the seasons of the Church, Curriculum content, Salford Diocesan Guidelines, significant dates. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and wider community, country and the world
- to develop pupil skills so that they are able to confidently prepare, organise and lead prayer and worship

Layout of week

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Good News Assembly (based on Ten Ten/Sunday's Gospel)	Class based prayers	Celebration of the Word (Class/Whole school)	Class based prayers	Whole school Singing worship Celebration Assembly

The following measures have been undertaken by the school to enable a full contribution by all to Prayer and Liturgy.

Daily Prayers in Class

- Prayers are said at least four times a day in class (morning/Grace before lunch/Grace after lunch/home time)
- Each class has a school prayer book which includes age specific prayers/Common prayers to learn. These are currently being updated in light of new Prayer and Liturgy directory. These are used in school life in the classroom, assemblies, and services.
- Individual/Spontaneous/free prayers i.e. expressing what one feels without set format of words, becoming completely open ended. Children are encouraged to pray for a variety of reasons and use prayers of different types and purposes. Composing prayers for Mass, class assemblies, meditations or sharing innermost thoughts in circle time or class religion work can foster this too.
- There is a set expectation that prayers written should follow a clear progression in terms of the language used and level of complexity.

Celebration of the Word/Class or school -based Celebration of the Word

- Child and teacher led Celebrations of the Word take place weekly either within the classroom or whole school. These are based upon the liturgical year, current topics and events. Scripture and song are chosen by the children who take an active role in planning and celebrating Scripture.
- Whole school Celebration of the Word is separate from Good News assemblies and are led by school prayer leaders.
- The school prayer grotto/garden is dedicated to Our Lady and is used on rotation for all classes and also can be used spontaneously. The outside classroom is often used in Celebration of the Word.
- Timetabled class assemblies will also include 'Celebrations of the Word' within them.
- Liturgical Year Events/Seasons of the church year (All Saints, Advent, Epiphany, Distribution of Ashes, Lent, Pentecost etc) will be celebrated and marked in different ways
- **Stay and Prays** are planned across the year where parents, and parishioners are welcome to join us in acts of morning worship

In our Planning of Celebration of the Word

The children use a focused template (Maria Hall: A Liturgy Handbook for School) in the planning of the Celebration of the Word which focuses on the following elements:

1. SCRIPTURE
2. SACRED SPACE (Including Gathering)
3. SYMBOL AND SYMBOLIC ACTION
4. SILENCE

5. SENSES

6. SPEAK TO GOD IN PRAYER (Including Going Forth)

In our delivery of the Celebration of the Word

The format for Celebration of the Word for our school will be:

- ❖ **We Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)
- ❖ **We Listen** – every worship will centre around a piece of Sacred Scripture read from the Bible
- ❖ **We Respond** – The response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, music, drama, art, poetry etc.) We place our needs before God (prayers of intercession.)
- ❖ **We Go Forth** – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

Progression in Worship

The progression of Celebration of the Word is carefully considered and throughout the school and builds on from children's prior experiences.

EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	UKS2
Listen to scripture Take part in circle prayer with a prompt Participate in short periods of silence	Lay out altar with help Listen to scripture Take part in circle prayer with a prompt Participate in short periods of silence.	Lay out altar Read scripture Make up own circle prayer Increasing comfort with periods of silence	Lay out altar with some guidance. Select theme for scripture Respond to a psalm. Make own circle prayer and use symbols. Spend time in silence.	Set up altar independently Prepare reading and psalm (help may be given) Improvise circle prayer. Select prayers for use Using ICT, select images to be used for reflection.	Set up altar independently, being increasingly creative. Select reading and prayers from a variety of sources(Bible, books, workbooks, web etc.) Compose prayers in different styles to match given needs. Prayers become increasingly detailed in what they are asking for, the reasons why and what they want the outcome to be. Create ICT aids (e.g. PowerPoints/photo story) Search for visual aids(ego from a bank of YouTube videos / Google image/CADOD resources) Match prayers and readings with a given theme. Invent own symbolic actions. Spend increasing amounts of time in silence.

Liturgy (Mass and the Sacraments)

- Whole school masses are scheduled across the year in conjunction with our Parish Priest, Fr Foley. These take place both within St Marie's Church and in school.

- Whole school masses mark key moments in the year of the school (new school year/Leavers' mass) as well as Holy Days of Obligation and the liturgical year (eg Advent)
- Class based masses in school take place across the year. These are often based on the children's liturgy and/or the Mass of the day. The readings are read by the children as are the prayers of intercession. The children take the offertory gifts where possible.
- all children participate in the Mass responses and singing of the hymns. Those children able to receive the Eucharist are encouraged to do so in a reverent manner.

Reconciliation

- The Sacrament of Reconciliation/First Forgiveness is celebrated by children in Year Three with an established programme of preparation for children and parents which takes place within school and the parish. The children on the programme have their photographs in church and take an active role in Sunday Masses during this time.
- Opportunities for the sacrament of reconciliation and penance are given for KS2 children at key moments throughout the year. An emphasis on 'saying sorry' is an important way of leading younger children to the understanding of penance and reconciliation with God.

First Holy Communions/Sacrament of Holy Eucharist

- There is an established programme of preparation for children on the Sacramental Programme for First Holy Communions. This preparation for parents and children takes place in school and within the parish. Children on the programme take an active role in reading during Sunday mass and their photographs are displayed in church, asking for prayers from the parishioners.

Resourcing

- Resourcing Prayer and liturgy are central to our school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources, including staff time 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.
- Each class has its own collection of Worship resources which are routinely being updated and supplemented. Additional resources are available in the Deputy head and Headteacher's offices.

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.
- Periodically the school will seek advice from liturgy experts (via Diocese) to ensure the most current practice is being followed

Recording

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded:

- On group planning sheets evident in samples of work/Children's books
- on a liturgical planner to keep note of themes and resources
- through displays, pupils prayers, photographs, power point presentations, etc

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.

Review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors and shared with staff annually

Reviewed and Revised May 2026

RE Co-ordinators: Mr G McRae and Mrs C McGrath

RE Governor: Mrs V Berry/Mr M McManus