

LITURGY AND WORSHIP POLICY

Mission Statement

Empowered by the example of Christ, St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School strives to promote the education and development of our children in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect.

In light of our school mission statement we understand the prayer and worship life of our school community to be central to all we do.

Through liturgy and worship we aim to:

- ✚ foster an understanding of what it means to belong to a community;
- ✚ provide opportunities for enhancing spiritual growth and personal development through prayer and reflection;
- ✚ encourage the development of a personal relationship with God;
- ✚ provide experiences of sharing values and celebrating significant events in the lives of individuals and the community;
- ✚ develop knowledge of and experience seasons within the Church's year;
- ✚ develop knowledge and understanding of scripture;
- ✚ develop and celebrate skills of creativity.

WHAT IS LITURGY?

Liturgy is a communal act in which we praise and worship God; it is the source and summit of the Church's life and our lives.

All good liturgies involve the telling of the story of Christ and his Church.

Liturgy is action and symbol; it speaks to the person, it involves all the senses: sight, touch, sound, taste and smell. Participating in liturgy forms our habits because we are ritual people and learn through repetition and copying. In liturgy, we discover the riches of prayer, through word and gesture, silence and stillness.

The purpose of adapting liturgy for pupils is to lead them into full, conscious and active participation in the wider liturgy of the Church.

Liturgy with children, as with adults, demands dignity, clarity and simplicity. Good liturgy touches our lives in such a way that we are renewed in our mission.

LITURGY/WORSHIP IN SCHOOL

Good worship happens when the whole school community, staff and pupils, are fully involved in the preparation and celebration. Time for worship is in addition to the 10% curriculum time for classroom Religious Education, as required by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

Within St. Joseph's, liturgy and worship provides opportunities for the community to come together to celebrate and share. Parents of the class leading whole school assembly are invited to join the worship.

Timetable of Worship

Day	Key Stage One	Led by:	Key Stage Two	Led by:
Monday	Hymn Practice. Class intro to Ethos Statements.	Class teachers	Hymn Practice. Class intro to Ethos Statements.	Deputy Head teacher
Tuesday	Key Stage Assembly based on the forthcoming Sundays readings.	Head teacher Deputy head teacher	Key Stage Assembly based on the forthcoming Sundays readings.	Head teacher Deputy head teacher
Wednesday	Key Stage 'Showing' Assembly based on the daily readings where appropriate. Celebration of good work.	Class teachers	Key Stage Awards Assembly based on the daily readings where appropriate. Celebration of good work.	Class teachers
Thursday	Year group or class worship based on the weekly Gospel and message.	Class teachers and pupils (Slides Presentation provided)	Year group or class worship based on the weekly Gospel and message.	Class teachers and pupils (Slides Presentation is provided)
Friday	Whole school assembly led by a class with a theme based on the Liturgical Season, a Come and See topic or an aspect of school life for example: 'New Beginnings', 'Pentecost' etc. Classes on a rota – each class has one assembly per year. Parents of the class are invited.			

Liturgy and worship in school follows the Church's calendar in using daily scripture readings from relevant liturgical seasons, in addition, we celebrate the 'Come and See' topics and key events in the school year. One assembly a week, for each key stage, is led by the Headteacher or member of the SLT, and follows the relevant readings of the forthcoming Sunday.

Class Collective Worship

Weekly class/year group worship is led by the class teachers and the children (Appendix A - Collective Worship Planner). This focuses on a relevant piece of Scripture, response and prayers. Class Teachers and the pupils can include drama, music, spiritual journaling etc to create a reflective atmosphere.

Advent and Lent

The seasons of Advent and Lent are times of preparation for Christmas and Easter, but need to be given their own importance. A focus is given to both of these seasons by raising money for certain causes and providing prayer/activity groups for the children to attend, run by volunteer staff. Prayer and assemblies at these times must also reflect the season, even if preparations for Christmas are also going on. During the last week of the spring term, preparation for Easter takes place, with the school focussing on the events of Holy Week. There are class reflections and prayers planned throughout the week to celebrate Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday and Good Friday. The week culminates with the 'Way of the Cross' where parents and parishioner are invited to watch a 'Passion Play'. Each class provides a meditation on the parts of Holy Week. Following Easter, there is a New Life Liturgy which is planned to emphasise the resurrection - this is celebrated by the Reception classes as a whole school assembly. It is important that the children appreciate that Christmas Day and Easter Sunday are the beginnings of the seasons of Christmas and Easter.

Holydays of Obligation

Holy days of Obligation are marked with a Mass, led by year groups in the parish church of St. Mary's or our School Hall.

Patronal Feast Day

St. Joseph's day, our Patronal Feast day, is marked with a Mass in which each class is represented.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is planned for years 5 and 6 during Lent. They are led by the school chaplain and provide the opportunity for individual confession. An opportunity for reflection and prayer is offered to children who are not Catholics.

Reflection Day

Year 6 are provided with the experience of a day retreat within their final term. Part of this day is involved with preparation for the Leavers' Mass in the form of drama, prayer writing, altar cloth making or music.

Other Opportunities for Prayer

Children are offered opportunities to pray at different times of the year such as in November for Remembrance. A Rosary Club runs weekly for children to attend of their own accord and pray the Rosary.

SPIRITUALITY**Spiritual Council**

Working alongside the School Council, St Joseph's has a 'Spiritual Council'. Each Junior year group has two representatives who are responsible for demonstrating their spirituality through what they think, what they say and what they do. These children are role models for the school in following our Ethos and Mission: being empowered by the example of Christ and living in an atmosphere of love and mutual respect. Once these children are nominated at the beginning of each year, they will participate in weekly meetings, managed by the RE coordinator. They are responsible for the upkeep of prayer tables, RE displays, leading class worship and prayer, organising masses and liturgies and being a 'spiritual voice' for their year group.

PREPARATION FOR MASS

Preparing for Mass begins in the classroom when Class Teachers will take the opportunity to reflect on the theme and remind the children of the times in the Mass when they should be reflecting upon those themes in silence (after the Homily and Communion), meditating or praising God in their hearts. Opportunities in class to practice meditation and silent praise will help the children to develop this ability.

How pupils arrive and gather for any liturgy is vital as it can create the climate in which the liturgy is received. It is also true that how pupils depart will have an impact on how they remember the liturgy. Therefore, children should walk to the church or School Hall in a quiet and reflective manner, in descending age order, so that the younger children have less time waiting for Mass to begin. Music should provide a signal that the gathering part of the Mass has begun.

Children should be reminded about behaviour before Mass. Class teachers should remind children that communion should be received in a reverent way (clean hands) and how to cross arms if they are receiving a blessing. How to genuflect should be discussed and practised if necessary. When sharing the sign of peace, children should be reminded that it is to the person either side of them that they shake hands and not the whole row, and that this should be done in a sensible and quiet manner. Children in Key Stage 1 may be asked to hold hands for the sign of peace.

PRAYER

Children have a natural aptitude for prayer. They are open to God. They respond in joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world around them. True prayer draws us to discover God within our deepest being, and calls us to walk with God in faith. Each person has to find the space within where the encounter with God takes place; the 'Come and See' scheme provides opportunities for this.

When praying with children we must remember that each of them is unique and therefore their prayer is unique. They come from different homes, with different experiences, and an individual set of problems, anxieties and questions. Teachers will need to provide creative and varied opportunities for prayer so that children from many diverse backgrounds have the best opportunities to discover their own spiritual response. The use of music and signing supports this.

Daily prayer in the classroom

A daily experience of prayer - in classroom, assembly or elsewhere - is much more than just a legal requirement. It should be at the heart of every school. It is a centre to which many of the achievements and challenges of daily life can be brought and from which strength and purpose can be taken. At this centre is the person of Jesus, the Son of God.

Daily prayer helps make Jesus real for all in the school - a friend whom they can trust and relate to, one who is a guide, and one to whom they can turn in time of need. Prayer within the classroom should take place before lunch and at the start and end of the day.

The community must be able to pray as well as recite prayers together. Pupils should learn, and experience, all forms of prayer so that they can adore, give praise and thanks, express sorrow to God on their own behalf and on behalf of others, as well as offer prayers of petition and intercession.

Each class should provide a prayer focus within their room, in the form of a prayer table and display, collection of artefacts, bible and candle etc. where the children can focus during times of class prayer or private reflection during the day.

While it is important that children should learn *to pray*, there is always a place for *learning prayers* that can be recited together. The RE curriculum plays an important role by providing opportunities to teach pupils about prayer, and also for them to learn prayers. (Appendix C)

Staff Prayer

"One of the distinctive features of the Catholic school is that it proclaims itself as a faith community ... as part of their life as a faith community, Catholic schools are committed to communal prayer. There is an expectation that all teachers will play an active part in this."

All staff meetings begin with a prayer or reflection providing an opportunity to be still and quiet at the end of the day. The beginning of the Academic Year starts with a school Mass for staff and pupils. There is also a Deanery Mass that all staff are invited to attend in the first few weeks of the year.

There is a prayer table and prayer board displayed in the staffroom, where relevant prayer intentions are shared, alongside the Pope's monthly focus.

Parent Prayer

Parents are invited and informed about opportunities to take part in the prayer life of the school and parish through the Headteacher's Weekly Newsletter and the Parent Prayer Group.

HOME-SCHOOL-PARISH LINKS

Liturgy and worship can be a key way to develop and realise the links we have between home-school and parish. At St. Joseph's we are fortunate enough to have St. Mary's church adjoining our site. We are therefore actively involved in joint celebrations for Holy days of Obligation, where parents and parishioners are invited.

The school also provides a lead at celebrations within the parish on Education Sunday and supports sacramental preparation and celebration through classwork and attendance of First Holy Communion celebrations. A post communion celebration Mass is provided within school.

The school's harvest celebration provides an opportunity for all parties to come together. Children and parents are involved in gathering and arranging food in the School Hall, staff and children lead and participate in the liturgy and parents and parishioners pack the food into boxes which is delivered by the children to the local elderly and other members of the community.

The school chaplain (Father Sebastian) plays an active part in school Masses and leads teaching and learning sessions in the church, working alongside the classteachers. The school employs a counsellor for all members of the community (principally vulnerable children) to support their welfare. The priests of the parish support the chaplaincy for the school and have a special role in the sacramental life of the school. The school is also blessed with the support of a Deacon.

DIFFERENTIATION

A key principle of the Directory for Masses with Children is to enhance the quality of worship by adapting, whilst maintaining authenticity to the Catholic tradition, thus encouraging participation. Therefore worship and liturgy should be "suited to children's age and capabilities"

Children do not have to always understand all of the experiences provided in worship and liturgy, as they are aimed at a wide range of ages. They must, however, experience some elements that are relevant to them whenever they attend.

Curriculum RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for worship by giving them the means to understand the religious language and significance of the actions. Particular attention should be given to the Word of God, and all readings used in worship and liturgy, so that it is proclaimed at a level appropriate to the pupils' age and capacity.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**Multicultural Issues**

In respect of worship and liturgy, it is very important to be faithful to the Catholic tradition. The school community reflects our multi-cultural society, thus it is appropriate to incorporate a multi-cultural dimension to the worship and liturgy. A certain degree of sensitivity is required to avoid tokenism and enable authentic celebration. The Catholic Church is a world-wide community (the largest multicultural institution in the world) with a wealth of different cultural traditions, as is Christianity a world-wide faith. It is helpful to draw upon these common traditions to promote a multicultural perspective.

Multifaith Issues

Worship and liturgy that has a multi-faith dimension is more problematic. It is unwise for a Catholic school to fully celebrate a non-Christian feast or event. Liturgies and prayer should look to be inclusive where possible. We are sensitive to needs of children of other faiths and provide time for their own worship in school, for example, during Ramadan. The presence of another faith will enrich and deepen the understanding of our own when there is genuine dialogue. We believe a faith community is well placed for that dialogue to be most respected and

fostered. Our admissions policy reflects and welcomes that dialogue. Prayer is universal to all faiths and opportunities for personal and reflective prayer is the most inclusive.

PLANNING/MONITORING/EVALUATION

Good liturgical celebrations are dependent upon good preparation. The involvement of those who celebrate in this preparation is crucial.

Key elements which guide liturgy preparations

- * the Scripture readings
- * the season of the liturgical year/feast
- * the nature of the celebration
- * particular events or concerns for the school or wider community
- * the nature of the school

Masses

Masses are planned by the RE coordinator and chaplaincy team in liaison with year groups in turn. It is crucial that the priest or leader is briefed and provided with information about the structure of the celebration (Appendix D - Mass preparation form and Mass booklet).

Class Assemblies

Class assemblies to the whole school are collective acts of worship and should therefore be planned for accordingly. They should start with the sign of the cross, a prayer which involves all those present and signals the beginning of the celebration. Prayers should be seen as an integral part of the celebration and should represent the various forms of prayer which the children experience. Readings and stories should be at an appropriate level to engage the interest of the whole community and should be read clearly. The use of art, dance, music and drama adds interest to the celebration, creates atmosphere and maintains the participation of the rest of the community. All assemblies should be planned, starting with the scripture reading, liturgical season, feast day or sacramental occasion as its focus.

It is important to evaluate all aspects of the liturgy including the preparation process in order to improve (Appendix E - evaluation questions). Worship is a special living experience and evaluation needs to support its development. Regular informal reflection is the most appropriate short term evaluation with periodic records or consultation supporting Collective Worship in the SDP.

Just as every part of the curriculum needs to be monitored, so does liturgy. The purpose of monitoring is to identify good practice, as well as to support and develop areas of weakness. Monitoring will take place by the RE coordinator.

Date updated: Autumn 2018

Date for review: Autumn 2019

APPENDIX A

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP PLANNER

Class/Leaders:

Date:

Theme:

Gather - welcome**Word** - scripture**Response to the Word** - Prayer/Symbolic Action/Key Questions**Go forth** - mission

What the children thought...

APPENDIX B

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP GUIDANCECollective Worship

Class/Leaders:

Date:



Theme:

Gather – welcome

Set the scene – consider layout of the space and the seating arrangements.

Lighting? Fragrance?

Can everyone see the focal point?

What symbols/objects will you use?

Bible – for the Word

Candle for Jesus as light of the world – may have a smaller table with candles for each class

Cross or Crucifix – depending on the time of the year

Liturgical colours – help to focus on the mood for the season

**Word- scripture**

Every liturgy must include a biblical text – it is through the Word that God speaks to us and calls us to respond

Ensure the word can be read – choose readers carefully allow them time to rehearse

Allow for times of silence

Example:

Luke 24:13-35 – The Road to Emmaus

A reading from the Gospel according to Luke

Glory to you, O Lord

...Gospel read aloud...

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ**Response to the Word – Prayer/Symbolic Action/Key Questions**

Key questions – ask the children questions about the Word of God to help them understand it

Sing – children enjoy singing – chose music relevant to the time of the year

Actions, dance and drama – allows us to reflect on scripture and turn towards God in a prayerful response

Bidding prayers – Lord in your mercy, We pray to the Lord

Ritual action – usually using the senses

**Go Forth - Mission**

How can this relate to our lives? What can we do? Why is this important?

What will you do to help those present take the message away with them prayer card, picture, symbol, action/deed etc.

Music or hymn to leave



What the children thought....

APPENDIX C

TRADITIONAL PRAYERS MET WITHIN COME AND SEE

FOUNDATION STAGE**Sign of the cross****Morning and Evening prayers****Prayers before and after meals**

Simple litanies of thanks and praise

Prayerful reflection on the day

Prayers for the blessing of the Advent wreath

Prayers for the lighting of Advent candles

Responses at Mass:

*Peace be with you**And also with you.**Thanks be to God.*Greeting the Gospel - *Alleluia***KEY STAGE 1**

As above, plus:

Our Father**Hail Mary**

Glory be to the Father

Morning offering

Grace at meals

Simple Magnificat

Come Holy Spirit

Act of Sorrow

Prayers used at Baptism

Prayer for Lent - This is the wood of the cross

Simple examination of conscience

Prayers at Mass:

*Lord have mercy**Prayers of Intercession**Eucharistic prayer for Masses with Children 11***KEY STAGE 2**

As above, plus:

I confess

Angelus

Benedictus

Magnificat

Eternal rest

Act of love

Act of Contrition (long and **short**)

The Rosary

Stations of the cross

Litany of Saints

Prayers used for sacramental rites

Prayers from the liturgy for special feasts

Funeral Mass prayers

Blessing and giving of ashes

Saints' prayers e.g. St Teresa of Avila

Prayers at Mass:

*Penitential rite**Glory to God**Creed**Offertory prayers**Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with**Children I, II and III**Holy, holy**Lamb of God**Rite of dismissal***(Those in bold should be learned)**

APPENDIX D

MASS PREPARATION FORM

CELEBRATION/LITURGICAL SEASON _____

CLASS MASS	YEAR MASS	SCHOOL MASS	PLACE
DATE	TIME	AGE OF CHILDREN	NUMBER

🎵 **ENTRANCE HYMN** _____

LORD HAVE MERCY (SUNG/SAID)

GLORIA (SUNG/SAID - NOT DURING ADVENT OR LENT)

FIRST READING _____ READ BY _____

RESPONSORIAL PSALM _____ READ BY _____

SECOND READING _____ READ BY _____

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (SUNG/SAID)

GOSPEL _____

UNIVERSAL PRAYER _____ READ BY _____

🎵 **OFFERTORY HYMN** _____

OFFERTORY PROCESSION _____

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

HOLY, HOLY (SUNG/SAID)

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION (SUNG/SAID)

OUR FATHER

SIGN OF PEACE

LAMB OF GOD (SUNG/SAID)

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS _____

🎵 **COMMUNION HYMNS:**

🎵 **RECESSIONAL HYMNS:**

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONS FOR EVALUATING LITURGY AND WORSHIP

PREPARATION

- Who was involved in the preparation?
- Was the preparation inclusive?
- Were sound principles used to prepare this liturgy?
- What use was made of the Church's season and Lectionary?
- Has the preparation given opportunities for potential leaders to develop?
- Has the preparation process nurtured the faith development of all?

THE CELEBRATION

- Did what you prepare succeed?
- What was the quality of the participation?
- Were those who ministered (reader, leader etc.) effective?
- How successful was the music?
- Was there a good use of space?
- Was the liturgical focus clear?

AREAS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- Who needs to be more involved in the preparation process?
- What positive aspects can be reinforced?
- What are the whole school training needs?
- Who needs individual training?
- What changes are needed to the environment?
- What new resources are needed?
- How will the changes be agreed and then managed?