



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, **Bingley**



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Vision

Learning with Jesus to be the best we can be.

Mission

In our school we live our lives through the Christian virtues, with God at the heart of everything we do. We grow in friendship with God through prayer. We aim to build a nurturing, thriving learning community, where everyone is valued as a child of God.

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The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian 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.¹

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups.) We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship 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.

The act of worship is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

Acts of worship will take place on the school premises or sometimes at our parish church.

The Place of Collective Worship in the Life of our School

We endorse the belief that Collective Worship 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

¹ It is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of 'Collective Worship' in schools. 'Collective Worship' is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

² Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to 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.



Aims

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff to:

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

Provision

All Acts of Worship 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.
-  give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family
-  help them to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

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 (children's attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life i.e., 5-6 minutes for Key Stage 1 and 7-10 minutes For Key Stage 2).
-  be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

At St Joseph's, Prayer and Liturgy will be celebrated in the following way:

Monday: whole school worship based on the Gospel reading from the previous day's Mass, led by the Head teacher or member of the SLT.

Tuesday: Key stages will have worship in the hall lead by teachers on a rota.

Wednesday: All children will take part in child led worship in class.

Thursday: Whole school Music Worship or Mark 10 Mission worship

Friday: Whole school worship lead by classes on a rota or worship led by the Faith Leaders alongside merit celebrations.

During particular times of the Church's liturgical season, such as Advent, Lent, October/May, there will be additional opportunities for worship and prayer before school/at lunch time, led by the Faith Leaders.



There will also be opportunities for celebration of the Eucharist, Reconciliation, retreats, meditation and the focus on different types of prayer.

Pupil Led Worship

Children will be encouraged, on a developmental basis, to lead their own celebrations of the Word. They will follow a progressive plan from the youngest choosing elements of the worship, to the oldest who will independently plan and deliver a whole worship to their own class, key stages and the whole school.

Resources

Each class will have its own 'worship box' including a variety of liturgically coloured cloths, candles, Bibles, other religious artifacts. There will be a child led worship planning folder for each class, including resources and ideas to support the children's planning, appropriate to each stage of development.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

Children will be given opportunities for additional prayer and liturgy experience on a voluntary basis. For example, voluntary prayer led by the Faith Leaders during special times of the liturgical year (e.g. Stations of the Cross during Lent, Rosary during May/October).

The parish priest will offer opportunities for confession, especially during Lent.

The school will endeavour to offer both staff and pupils opportunities to develop their formation, such as retreats and joint liturgical experiences within the Trust.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to "The Welcome Table. Planning Masses with Children" which contains the complete text of the Church's 'Directory for Masses with Children' as a basis for our practice.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

In school, therefore, the 'Liturgy of the Word', rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

At **Key Stage 1** worship includes:

- short, simple celebrations of the Word with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word

At **Key Stage 2** worship includes:

- short, simple celebrations of the Word and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:



- ☪ following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the PLD, the Life/Lighting the Path themes and significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in all acts of worship
- ☪ involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies
- ☪ with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- ☪ to develop in pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded:

- ☪ on a celebration of the Word planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- ☪ through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

Inclusion

- ☪ The Religious and educational needs of all children will be addressed whether they are of a Catholic faith or not
- ☪ Worship will help all children grow spiritually and help them develop in self-esteem.
- ☪ Teachers will be responsible for planning and the delivery of Prayer and Liturgy taking into account additional educational needs in accordance with the school SEN policy.

Withdrawal:

Parents have a statutory right to withdraw children from Prayer and Liturgy. It is assumed that parents who send their children to St Joseph's Catholic School will be aware of the particular nature of the school and will have chosen it precisely because of its religious ethos. Parents of other faith and non-faith children should give this serious consideration when applying for a place at St Joseph's Bingley and a visit to the school is strongly recommended. Parents who wish their children to be withdrawn from Prayer and Liturgy are requested to speak to the headteacher to discuss their concerns.



Monitoring and Evaluation:

- ☐ Monitoring of Prayer and Liturgy will take place through observations, learning walks and monitoring of displays/prayer space.
- ☐ At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.
- ☐ The Trust Director of Education and RE lead for the Trust will also visit the school for external moderation and validation.

Other documentation/ Appendices:

Please also refer to:

- ☐ Curriculum Directory for teaching RE in Catholic Schools
- ☐ Diocesan Guidelines for Celebrating School Masses
- ☐ Guidelines for Liturgical Display in Catholic Schools
- ☐ Religious Education Policy
- ☐ Pupil Led Worship document



Appendix 1: Role of the Prayer and Liturgy Leader

Roles and Responsibilities:

It is the role of the Prayer and Liturgy Leader to:

- ☞ formulate a written policy for Prayer and Liturgy.
- ☞ ensure that there is a development plan for Prayer and Liturgy which may at times form part of the school development plan.
- ☞ ensure that Prayer and Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils.
- ☞ ensure that Prayer and Liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children' and in line with diocesan guidelines.
- ☞ organise themes for Worship.
- ☞ organise, prepare and set up for Eucharistic Celebrations.
- ☞ liaise with the Music Leader re music for Masses and special celebrations.
- ☞ assist the governors and Head teacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Prayer and Liturgy.

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluation:

- ☞ maintain and develop effective procedures and documentation.
- ☞ observe, on occasions, an Act of Prayer and Liturgy.
- ☞ inform the Head teacher of standards and developments in Prayer and Liturgy.

Communication:

- ☞ communicate to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Prayer and Liturgy.
- ☞ report to and consult with the governors and Head teacher regarding matters of concern and development.
- ☞ act as consultant to colleagues.
- ☞ encourage positive attitudes towards Prayer and Liturgy.
- ☞ inform newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Prayer and Liturgy.
- ☞ communicate with parents, governors and the parish community.
- ☞ liaise with the Diocesan RE Centre.

Professional development / ongoing formation:

- ☞ lead and organise in-service training and ongoing formation for Prayer and Liturgy.
- ☞ attend appropriate in-service courses and report back.

Resources:

- ☞ budget efficiently. Evaluating existing resources
- ☞ Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- ☞ Budgeting efficiently