

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Our Mission Statement:

To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us

DOCUMENT STATUS

Last reviewed	Approved by Governors:	Date of next review:
January 2025 <i>Re-written in line with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory</i>	February 2026	February 2027



Introduction : Understanding Prayer and Liturgy (from the Prayer and Liturgy Directory)

In any school there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.



In Catholic terminology 'worship' is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God's world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 there is a statutory duty to inspect and report on denominational education (that is religious education) and collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character. For this reason, the term 'Collective Worship' has been kept as the headline judgement by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate but throughout the framework it is referred to as prayer and liturgy. This model policy addresses the shift in vocabulary and is an interim response to the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Mission Statement

To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy 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 words and actions, to God's invitation to enter into relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

'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.'¹

Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered for all pupils. 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. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between 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. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the Executive Headteacher and Head of School.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. 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 Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

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) Executive Headteacher / Head of School

The Executive Headteacher and Head of School, as the spiritual leaders of the school as a Catholic community, 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*
- 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.

(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 Executive Headteacher / Head of School 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 Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in St. Vincent's Catholic 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

- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using prayers 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 acts of prayer in St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

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 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.

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.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, RE Curriculum, feast days and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

An overview of prayer and liturgy across the week/term/year can be seen in Appendix 2.

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leaders of the school, the Head of School and Executive Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy for whole school assemblies and services. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

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.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'³

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference RE topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

The Head of School, Mrs Amy Norris, leads Prayer and Liturgy at St. Vincent's Catholic Primary School, in collaboration with the Executive Headteacher, Mr Dominic Vernon.

A job description is included in Appendix 1.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

APPENDIX 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring 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'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and Executive Headteacher / Head of School to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and Executive Headteacher / Head of School regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation

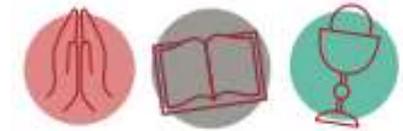
- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

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

APPENDIX 2 Annual Prayer and Liturgy Plan

To love, serve and learn as Jesus shows us



Class Prayer and Liturgy Overview

	Class Prayer and Liturgy Overview				
	Daily prayers	Common prayers	Other forms of prayer	Celebration of the Word	Mass responses
EYFS	<p>Grace before meals</p> <p>End of day</p>	<p>Amen</p> <p>Sign of the cross</p> <p>Glory Be</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>1 x Guided individual prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Spontaneous prayer ✚ Litany ✚ Prayers of intercession ✚ Reflection on religious music / art <p>Friday: whole school sing and praise</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>Monday: whole school</p> <p>2 x teacher-led (with children learning to participate as outlined in the policy)</p>	<p>The Lord be with you. <i>R: And with your spirit.</i></p> <p>Greet the Gospel with “<i>Alleluia</i>”</p>
Key Stage 1	<p>Morning</p> <p>Grace before meals</p> <p>End of day</p>	<p>All the above, plus...</p> <p>Our Father</p> <p>Hail Mary</p> <p>Gloria</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>1 x Guided individual prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Spontaneous prayer ✚ Litany ✚ Prayers of intercession ✚ Reflection on religious music / art ✚ Reflection on Common Prayers ✚ The Examen <p>Friday: whole school sing and praise</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>Monday: whole school</p> <p>2 x teacher-led (with children participating as outlined in the policy)</p>	<p>All the above, plus...</p> <p><u>Introductory Rites</u> Lord, have mercy. <i>R: Lord, have mercy.</i> Christ, have mercy. <i>R: Christ, have mercy.</i> Lord, have mercy. <i>R: Lord, have mercy.</i></p> <p><u>Sign of Peace</u> <i>Peace be with you</i></p>
Lower Key Stage 2	<p>Morning</p> <p>Grace before meals</p> <p>End of day</p>	<p>All the above, plus...</p> <p>Apostles Creed</p> <p>Nicene Creed</p> <p>Act of Contrition</p> <p>Angel of God</p> <p>Prayer to the Holy Spirit</p> <p>The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>1 x Guided individual prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Spontaneous prayer ✚ Litany ✚ Prayers of intercession ✚ Reflection on religious music / art ✚ Reflection on Common Prayers or Prayers of a Saint ✚ The Examen ✚ Lectio Divina <p>Friday: whole school sing and praise</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>Monday: whole school</p> <p>2 x teacher-led (with children participating as outlined in the policy, building up to child-led with adult support)</p>	<p>All the above, plus...</p> <p><u>Liturgy of the Word</u> The Word of the Lord <i>R: Thanks be to God</i></p> <p>A reading from the holy Gospel according to ... <i>R: Glory to you, O Lord.</i> (Sign of the Cross on forehead, lips, and chest)</p> <p>The Gospel of the Lord. <i>R: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.</i></p>

Upper Key Stage 2					<p>All the above, plus...</p> <p><u>Liturgy of the Eucharist</u> <i>Blessed be God for ever.</i></p> <p><i>May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church</i></p> <p><u>The Eucharistic Prayer</u> The Lord be with you. <i>R: And with your spirit.</i> Lift up your hearts. <i>R: We lift them up to the Lord.</i> Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. <i>R: It is right and just.</i></p> <p><i>Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</i></p> <p><u>Communion Rite</u> <i>When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.</i></p> <p><i>Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.</i> <i>Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.</i> <i>Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.</i></p> <p><i>Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.</i></p>
	<p>Morning</p> <p>Grace before meals</p> <p>End of day</p>	<p>All the above, plus...</p> <p>Morning Offering</p> <p>Eternal Rest</p> <p>Act of Faith</p> <p>Act of Hope</p> <p>Act of Love</p> <p>The Magnificat</p> <p>The Rosary</p> <p>Angelus</p> <p>The Confiteor (I Confess)</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>1 x Guided individual prayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✠ Spontaneous prayer ✠ Litany ✠ Prayers of intercession ✠ Common Prayers (Rosary, Angelus, Stations of the Cross, Magnificat) ✠ Reflection on religious music / art ✠ Reflection on Common Prayers or Prayers of a Saint ✠ The Examen ✠ Lectio Divina ✠ Christian meditation <p>Friday: whole school sing and praise</p>	<p>Each week:</p> <p>Monday: whole school</p> <p>1 x teacher-led</p> <p>1 x child led</p>	



Whole School Prayer and Liturgy Overview

N.B. Where Holy Days fall on a Sunday, a Celebration of the Word using the scriptures will be held for the whole school.

	Other prayer opportunities	Services / Celebrations	Holy Day celebration of the Word	Sacraments	School Masses
September					Mission Day Mass (Feast of St Vincent)
October	Rosary	Harvest			
November	Reflections on Saints (St Vincent, St Joseph, St Francis, saints of the UK)	Remembrance Day		Year 5 and 6 Reconciliation during Advent	All Saints Day Advent Mass
December		Nativity Carol Service		First Reconciliation	
January	Stations of the Cross		Epiphany Baptism of Jesus		
February			Candlemas		Ash Wednesday
March		Mother's Day Easter Passion Service	St Joseph Annunciation	Year 4, 5 and 6 Reconciliation during Lent	
April					
May	Rosary	Month of Mary	Ascension	First Holy Communion	
June		Father's Day	Pentecost Holy Trinity Body & Blood of the Lord		St Peter and Paul
July		Year 6 Leavers'			Mass of Thanksgiving

Appendix 3: Progression of child involvement

Children participate in all areas of collective worship, participating fully in acts of worship. They are also involved in preparation and delivery of collective worship, regularly leading class collective worship, increasing involvement based on their age or stage of development:

Children's Involvement - Step 1

The teacher always models and leads.

Prepare

- Choose suitable artefacts – given from two choices
- Help to set up focus table and notice the liturgical colour

Gather

- Sing a gather Song
- Make the Sign of Cross
- Greet everyone

Listen

- Reverence for the **Word of God in Scripture** should be shown and expected from the earliest years.

Respond

- Be silent and be with God
- Pass an object around and take turns to share
- Say prayers together
- Say who/what they want to pray for
- Model and say traditional prayers e.g. Hail Mary, Our Father.

Evaluate

- What did we hear about today? What will it help us to do?

Reflect quietly

Being still

Children's Involvement - Step 2

The teacher always models and leads.

Prepare

- Choose suitable artefacts – given from three/four choices;
- Share the theme or message and ask children which hymn they could sing from two or three they know.
- Help to set up focus table and notice the liturgical colour

Gather

- Sing a gather Song
- Make the Sign of Cross
- Greet everyone

Listen

- Reverence for the **Word of God in Scripture** should be shown and expected from the earliest years.
- Read from Scripture.

Respond

- Be silent and be with God
- Pass an object around and take turns to share
- Say prayers together
- Say who/what they want to pray for
- Model and say traditional prayers
- Heartfelt responses

Evaluate

- What did we hear about today? What will it help us to do?
- Why did you choose the hymn/song/focus?

Reflect quietly

Being still

Participate in periods of reflection in response to a given stimulus

Think to myself about what I have seen or heard

Children's Involvement - Step 3

The teacher always models and leads and supports children in preparing and beginning to lead in parts.

Prepare

- Choose suitable artefacts – given from a wider choice
- Share the theme or message and ask children which hymn/song might be suitable
- Give a theme/message – set up a focus table, write prayers for Respond.
- Help choose the liturgical colour
- Help to support ICT equipment*

Gather

- Sing a gather Song
- Make the Sign of Cross
- Greet everyone

Listen

- Read from Scripture.
- Reverence for the **Word of God in Scripture** should be shown and expected from the earliest years.

Respond

- Pass an object around and take turns to share
- Say prayers together
- Say who/what they want to pray for
- Lead a hymn/song
- Heartfelt responses

Evaluate

- What did we hear about today? What will it help us to do?
- Why did you choose the hymn/song/focus?
- How did our focus help us today?

Reflect quietly

Being still

Participate in periods of reflection in response to a given stimulus

Think to myself about what I have seen or heard

Show understanding of the importance of stillness and quiet during times of reflection and prayer

Be still, be quiet, think to myself and say a prayer

Children's Involvement - Step 4

The teacher always models and leads and supports children in preparing and beginning to lead in parts.

Prepare

- Choose suitable artefacts – given from a wider choice
- Share the theme or message and ask children which hymn/song might be suitable
- Give a theme/message – set up a focus table, support children in finding suitable Scripture, write prayers for Respond.
- Help choose the liturgical colour
- Help to support ICT equipment*
- Support planning for larger liturgical gatherings

Gather

- Sing a gather Song
- Make the Sign of Cross
- Greet everyone

Listen

- Read from Scripture.
- Reverence for the **Word of God in Scripture** should be shown and expected from the earliest years.

Respond

- Pass an object around and take turns to share
- Say prayers together
- Say who/what they want to pray for
- Lead a hymn/song
- Heartfelt responses

Evaluate

- What did we hear about today? What will it help us to do?
- Why did you choose the hymn/song/focus?
- How did our focus help us today?

LEADERS OF ...
FAITH IN ACTION
CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

- ✓ Reflect quietly- *Being still*
- ✓ Participate in periods of reflection in response to a given stimulus - *Think to myself about what I have seen or heard*
- ✓ Show understanding of the importance of stillness and quiet during times of reflection and prayer - *Be still, be quiet, think to myself and say a prayer*
- ✓ Demonstrate an appreciation of the elements needed for reflection and contemplation or prayer (places, times, foci, stimuli) - *What do we need to do to reflect, think and pray? What helps us reflect, think and pray?*