

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Written/Revision Date: 7 November 2024

Next Review: 6 November 2026

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Approved:
Chair of Governors

Date: 7 November 2024

Mission Statement

We are a Roman Catholic community, placing God at the centre of our lives. Christian values permeate every aspect of the school day. As a small friendly school, we aim to produce the warmth and intimacy of the family. We recognise each individual as special and loved by God, caring for one another and fostering love, trust and respect. When mistakes are made we recognise them as opportunities for learning and consequent reconciliation.

We aim to help all children fulfil their potential. We have high expectations of the children; we want them to do their best socially, personally, academically and spiritually.

We recognise each child's full entitlement to education. We value children's uniqueness and endeavour to nurture their potential. We strive to promote in them a sense of personal worth and self-confidence, as well as an awareness of their responsibilities to self and others.

Our Faith is at the heart of all that we do at St Mary Magdalen's. It is an integral part of each school day and provides unique opportunities for reflection and celebration.

The first paragraph of our Mission Statement clarifies how we, at St Mary Magdalen's, ensure that Religious Education (RE) becomes not just a lesson, but also a way of life.

Children's Mission Statement

We are a special caring family loved by God.

Learning together in faith and love.

We do our best for others and ourselves.

Our mistakes are our opportunities.

In order to make sure that our Mission Statement is an accessible and relevant part of our school life for parents/carers, pupils and staff alike we have developed a child friendly Mission Statement. This Statement is on display in all of our classrooms and is used as a means of explaining our beliefs, words and actions by staff and pupils. We also use it as an integral part of our School Behaviour Policy.

The Context and Nature 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.)

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school 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.

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). 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).

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.) 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 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)).

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.

At St Mary Magdalen's, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Prayer and Liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the head teacher.

Prayer and Liturgy are not designated curriculum time under regulations and should not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum. It must be distinctive and be able to be identified as such if it is to meet legal requirements. The governing body also has the discretion to allow Prayer and Liturgy to take place outside of the school for example in the church for special occasions.

Rationale

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

It is an opportunity for our community to come together to pray, praise, ask, thank, say sorry to and glorify God Our Father.

It can be a shared experience, but also a chance in quiet reflection to develop an awareness of God's presence in our own lives and to respond to this call.

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

Aims and objectives

At St Mary Magdalen's we aim to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff

- To cultivate our awareness of a variety of forms of worship all of which are effective and appreciated.
- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit

- To nurture, an environment in which we feel able to pray and worship comfortably.
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To develop the skills of:
 - Reverence
 - Contemplation
 - Reflection
 - Interpretation
 - Empathy
 - Meditation
- To foster a real sense of joy in worshipping God.
- To participate fully
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ

Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision At St Mary Magdalen’s:

- On Monday and Friday whole school assemblies happen in the hall.
- We have Key stage class assemblies for every class.
- KS2 attend classes masses on a rotation.
- The whole school attends Mass on major feast day and celebrations.
- Children visit the church throughout the year for different topics.
- Every Tuesday we have Key stage hymn practice.
- Every week we hold pupil led class prayer and liturgies.

Whole school and class-based Prayer and liturgy

A long-term plan for Collective worship is in place and followed by each member of staff.

Whole School, led by member of the senior leadership team
Songs of Praise – led by class teachers
Class collective worship adult and child led
Class prayer services
Circle time
Celebration assembly - led by member of the senior leadership team
Mass

At St. Mary Magdalen’s Catholic Primary Schools, acts of worship should engage all pupils’ interest and inspire in them deep thought and a heartfelt response.

Principles

All Acts of Worship in our school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality experience, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

Celebrations will:

- Be appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

At St Mary Magdalen's we have a wide-ranging schedule of Prayer and liturgies

See Appendix 1 for full range of school celebrations throughout the year.

Prayer

Prayer is an essential part of the religious education programme at St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School. It is central to our Catholic traditions. Each class has set times of the day when prayers are used, e.g. the start of the day, at mealtimes, and at the end of the day, as well as spontaneous prayer. Children are expected to learn and recite some formal prayer, but they are also exposed to a wide range of other prayers, as well as having opportunities to compose their own.

All children are taught:

- The sign of the Cross
- A morning offering
- Before and after mealtime grace
- An evening prayer
- Our Father
- Hail Mary
- Glory be
- A Simple creed

Children are also expected to join in with simple Mass responses.

At Key Stage Two, children are also taught the Act of Sorrow, The Rosary, The Stations of the Cross, the Act of Faith and the Apostles Creed.

Each classroom has a specific area devoted to Religious Education: this area forms a focal point for prayer and display, pertinent to their class.

Intentions of Prayer and Liturgy in a Catholic School

Prayer and Liturgy in a Catholic School should provide an opportunity for every member of the school community to

- Pray by giving praise thanks and intercession to God using traditional prayers of the Catholic Church and many other sources of prayer that will enable this to take place.
- Come to know and acknowledge the presence of God who is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Continue to nurture a relationship with God through words, symbols, song, gestures and silence
- Take part in an educational experience that is rooted in prayer and the worship of God.
- Contemplate the mystery and transcendence of God who is ever close to us and ever beyond us.
- Develop a sense of wonder and awe at the presence of God amongst us and the gift of life itself.
- Explore the beliefs of the Catholic faith community and their own beliefs.
- Experience what it means to belong or take part in the worshipping community of the Church.
- Acknowledge joys and sorrows, the ordinary and darker side of life as part of a relationship with God.
- Learn how the Liturgy of the Church is structured and the meaning of the different parts of the liturgical rites.
- Be able to make links between communal prayer and liturgy and the daily life.

Liturgy - Planning the Celebration of Mass

The opportunity to come together to pray and celebrate the Eucharist is a very importance part of our school curriculum. The Mass is a central focus of liturgical worship in our school. Sometimes these are whole school masses, or they are class masses. Masses / Prayer services are celebrated on Holy days of obligation and at special times such as the beginning of the school term, harvest, Ash Wednesday, the feast of St Mary Magdalen's and Commitment masses for the sacraments.

All pupils are encouraged to participate in the following ways:

- Altar servers
- Reading at Mass
- Offertory procession
- Prayers of the faithful
- Singing

“In making preparations for the celebration of the Eucharist in school consideration should always be given to when the celebration is actually taking place within the liturgical year. The choice of readings and the prayers used for the Mass should take into consideration the season of the year, whether the day for the celebration of Mass is a solemnity, a feast day, a memorial of a saint or an ordinary weekday” (Diocesan guidance).

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Collective Worship

Prayer and liturgy is planned:

- Following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, 'Come and See', significant dates, feast days and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most prayers and liturgies.
- 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.
- 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.

There is planning pro-forma which can be used to plan at the discretion of the class teacher. The format should always include:

The format for prayer and liturgy for our school will be:

- **Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)
- **Listen (The Word)** – every liturgy will centre around at least one text from the Bible, with the reading of the day being the first source. The Word of God will be proclaimed from a bible or lectionary
- **Response to the Word** – 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 (intercessory prayers)
- **Going forth (Mission)** – Giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives

Monitoring and Evaluation

Recording

Evidence may be recorded:

- through the scripts of class assemblies
- through the slides prepared
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.
- through plans for child led prayer and liturgy being kept in RE books.

At least once a year the school's provision of prayer and liturgy 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 prayers and liturgies.

Prayer and Liturgy is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form ([Appendix 3](#)).

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified, and outcomes used to inform new changes

Resources

Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy will be changed and updated accordingly to reflect the Church's liturgical season.

Each class has a box which can be used for class prayer and liturgies. There are central resources in the RE Cupboard under the staircase. Teachers have bibles and personal resources in their own rooms.

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.

Staff training is available to all staff so they are able to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

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.

The Subject Lead for prayer and liturgy

The RE subject lead is Mrs Maya El Khoury who is also responsible for prayer and liturgy. Mrs Sally Derby (Assistant Headteacher) is the SLT lead of the Catholic Life in the school.

Description of Role and Responsibilities ([Appendix 4](#))

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy lead as well as the catholic life in the school lead and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years (earlier if required). The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role. Governors should review reports on the prayer life of the school on a termly basis.

Appendix 1

Attached are the dates for 2024-2025





Monday 2nd September	Inset Day
Tuesday 3rd September	First Day of New School Year - Father Adrian helping with Reception welcome
Wednesday 11 th September	First Mass of the Year led by Year 5 - POSTPONED DUE TO FR ADRIAN'S HEALTH
Wednesday 18 th September	First School Visit POSTPONED DUE TO FR ADRIAN'S HEALTH
Wednesday 25 th September	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 2nd October	Harvest First Mass of the Year Led by Year 5
Wednesday 9 th October	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 16 th October	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 23 rd October	Father Adrian School Visit
Monday 28 th October - Friday 1 st November	Half Term
Monday 4 th November	Inset Day
Wednesday 6 th November	Whole School Mass Led by Year 4
Friday 8 th November	Year 6 Assembly (Remembrance Day Service)
Wednesday 13 th November	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 20 th November	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 27 th November	Father Adrian School Visit
Monday 2 nd December	Advent Assembly
Wednesday 4 th December	Father Adrian School Visit
Monday 9 th December and Wednesday 11 th December	Nativity Led by Year 2
Wednesday 18 th December	Christmas Carol Service led by Year 4
20 th December till 3 rd January	Christmas Holiday
Monday 6 th January	Inset Day
Wednesday 8 th January	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 15 th January	First Mass of Spring Term Led by Year 6
Wednesday 22 nd January	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 29 th January	Y5 Class Mass
Wednesday 5 th February	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 12 th February	Y6 Class Mass
17 th February - 21 st February	Half Term
Wednesday 26 th February	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 5 th March	Ash Wednesday Mass Led by Year 3
Saturday 8 th March 11am to 12pm (Noon)	First Reconciliation Service in Church
Wednesday 12 th March	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 19 th March	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 26 th March	Year 4 Class Mass
Thursday 3 rd April - check	Way of the Cross Led by Year 6
4 th April - 21 st April	Spring Break
Wednesday 23 rd April	Year 3 Class Mass
Wednesday 30 th April	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 7 th May	Mass for the start of the Summer Term Led by Year 4
Wednesday 14 th May	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 21 st May	Father Adrian School Visit
Friday 23 rd May	Inset Day
Monday 26 th May - Friday 30 th May	Half Term
Wednesday 4 th June	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 11 th June	Year 2 Class Mass

Wednesday 18th June	School
Friday 20th June	Inset Day
Saturday 21st June	Holy Communion Mass
Wednesday 25th June	Class Visit
Wednesday 2nd July	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 9th July	Father Adrian School Visit
Wednesday 16th July and Thursday 17th July	Year 6 Production
Monday 21st July	Father Adrian Year 6 transition
Tuesday 22nd July	Leavers Mass Led by Year 6 /Last Day of School Year

Date:

Class:

Theme/focus:

		Think about...
 <p>We gather</p>	We come together as part of God's family. Make everyone welcome!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liturgical colours (Green, purple, white/gold, red) ▪ Prayer focus table ▪ Bible ▪ Cross ▪ Symbols/ objects/ pictures/ photos ▪ Candle ▪ Music ▪ Sign of the cross
 <p>We listen <i>(The Word)</i></p>	God speaks to us and we listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bible Reading
 <p>We respond</p>	We respond to the Word of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prayer ▪ Singing ▪ Reflection ▪ Sacred Silence ▪ Dance ▪ Gesture/ action ▪ CAFOD story ▪ Drama ▪ Picture / photo ▪ Create
 <p>Going Forth <i>(Mission)</i></p>	We want to share the Good News!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gospel phrase ▪ Song ▪ Learn about CAFOD ▪ Tell others about CAFOD ▪ Action ▪ Campaign ▪ Prayer card ▪ Artefact ▪ Picture ▪ Big question

Appendix 3

Year Group:

Monitoring of Collective Worship

Date:

Focus	Comments
Planning (discussed with teacher before or after celebration) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the children been involved in the planning? • Has the Act of Worship been planned around a theme/feast? 	
Structure (If Liturgy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the four parts (Gather, Word, Response, Mission) be distinctly identified? • How did children gather? • Was the Word appropriate and treated reverently? • How did children respond to the Word? • Was there a clear Mission, an evident message at the end of the liturgy? 	
Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or adult led? • Depending on the age of the children were they as involved as possible in leading? 	
Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were children fully engaged and participating enthusiastically? • Was it a prayerful experience? 	
Creativity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How creative was the Act of Worship? • Did it include different prayer styles/dance/music etc to enhance the experience? 	
Prayer Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were children able to create focal point, atmosphere for prayer, appropriate for their age? 	
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were liturgical resources used appropriately eg correct liturgical colours, artefacts? 	
ICT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was ICT used to support and enhance the Act of Worship or was it a distraction? 	
Agreed areas for development	

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to the class teacher

Coordinator ...

Class Teacher ...

The Role of the Subject Lead of prayer and liturgy

- **Formulating a written policy for Prayer and Liturgy**
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Prayer and Liturgy which may at times form part of the school development plan
- Ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family 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'
- Assisting the governors and head teacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Prayer and liturgy

PLANNING, RECORDING, MONITORING AND EVALUATING

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing, on occasions, a Prayer and Liturgy
- Informing the head teacher 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 head teacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Prayer and Liturgies
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Prayer and Liturgies
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ONGOING FORMATION

- Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Prayer and Liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- 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