

Pray, Learn, Achieve and Celebrate Together



# Prayer and Liturgy Policy

A new commandment I give unto you: that you love one  
another as I have loved you."

John 13:34

Written: March 2021

Review Date: June 2024



## **Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

### **Mission Statement**

St. Gabriel's is a Roman Catholic Primary School. It is inspired by the example of Christ and the teachings of the Gospel and seeks to develop the spiritual growth of all members of the school.

As a Christian Community we aim to meet the needs of each individual and to promote an active partnership between the school, home, parish and the wider community to provide an education which will prepare all children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

### **Aim**

The act of Prayer and Liturgy plays a fundamental role to the whole ethos of our school. We aim to enable children, staff and visitors to St Gabriel's Catholic Primary School, to have the opportunity to take part in Prayer and Liturgy and have time to reflect. To enable and encourage a sense of belonging.

### **Definitions**

Prayer and Liturgy is a term used in legislation in this country but it is not a phrase we would readily use in a Catholic context. "Prayer" and "Liturgy" are terms more commonly used.

### **Liturgy**

Liturgy literally means 'work of the people' and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action. The four part structure of Gathering-Listen-Respond-Go forth is common to many liturgies – it is one way of understanding the structure of mass.

## **Prayer**

One of the early fathers of the church described prayer as “the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or requesting of good things from God”. These words illustrate why in this Catholic school we begin and end each session of the day in prayer. Prayer may be an individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.

**Prayer consists of:**

## **Listening, speaking, reflecting and resting**

### **Legal Requirements**

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 Prayer and Liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. An assembly is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship and as such be part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

For our school community, worship is much more than a legal requirement; it acts as an anchor from which all our core values evolve, reflecting something special or separate from ordinary school activities of the day.

Schools must constantly strive to create that distinctively Catholic ethos which is the result of truly Christian relationships and values and in which, prayer, worship and spirituality have a central place. (Curriculum Directory, 1997)

### **Objectives of Prayer and Liturgy**

The daily act of worship aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God and to give honour, praise and thanks to Him
- 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 develop a common ethos and shared values
- To develop the skills of :
  - Reverence
  - Contemplation
  - Reflection
  - Interpretation
  - Empathy
  - Meditation
- 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.

## **Where**

Acts of Prayer and Liturgy take place in a variety of settings: classrooms, the hall, the church and weather permitting outside. Ensuring that the atmosphere created is one of reverence and respectfulness. To enable those taking part to do so in a way that is meaningful and personal.

## **Principles**

Collective Acts of Worship in our school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity
- Give our children positive experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the church.

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be short and appropriately paced(5-7 mins for Reception and Key Stage One and 7-11mins for Key Stage Two);
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings;
- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help personalise the experience.

## **Focal points**

Each teacher develops with the children an area of focus to look at when praying, which is separate from the Religious Education display. Both teachers and children are increasingly using ICT as a resource for Prayer and Liturgy. Children are taking a more active role as they show ownership through creating an area which represents the theme that week (in small groups) using objects, symbols, pictures etc. which they believe reflects what is being shared, as well as reading prayers or pieces of Scripture provided by the teacher.

## **Resources**

Music, focal points, stories and children's prayers, Religious Education website, candles, crucifix, God's story, Church story, CAFOD resources, Prayer and Liturgy CD- provided by Liverpool Archdiocese. Each class has been provided with a box of resources which can be used at different seasons/themes throughout the year. As well as a range of items stored centrally in the school hall to be used when needed.

## **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy and Liturgy**

Prayer and Liturgy is planned in relation to the current 'Religious Education' topic, as well as weekly themes provided to give guidance where necessary. However staff are given the flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school, the community or the wider world. We hope to develop in our children skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way. The recording of the acts of worship will be completed using the following formats:

- on a Prayer and Liturgy weekly planning sheet
- use of a cork board and pictures which represent each part of the Prayer and Liturgy process (used by both adults and children in EYFS and KS1) photographs or photocopies of this also act as planning.
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, power point, presentations etc.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The schools provision of worship will be evaluated yearly 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. Observations of Collective Acts of Worship and Liturgy, discussions with those who lead worship are carried out by the Headteacher and the RE Co-ordinator at various times throughout the year. Outcomes of monitoring will be shared with

all staff and governors with recommendations for future action. Observation and monitoring records are kept and form part of the self review process.

## When

Below is a timetable of how Prayer and Liturgy is organised at St Gabriel's

	Groups	Times
Monday	Key Stage Two (Prayer and Liturgy & Assembly)  Key Stage One and Foundation Stage (Prayer and Liturgy & Assembly)	AM  PM
Tuesday	Reception Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6	As stated previously there are no set times as worship can take place any time during the school day.
Wednesday	Reception Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6	
Thursday	Reception Year 1 Year 2  Key stage 2 Prayer and Liturgy and Singing	

Friday	Key stage 2 Prayer and Liturgy and awards	PM
	Key stage 1 Prayer and Liturgy and awards	

We hope Prayer and Liturgy is meaningful to all who take part, is celebratory and sensitive. It is an opportunity for us to 'be still' and in thought together and a time for peace and calm, which is invaluable to our children and staff.

### **Yearly overview for weekly Prayer and Liturgy themes**

This is a guide only, both staff and pupils are free to develop their own ideas and themes, especially to respond to changing situations.

### **Autumn term**

THEME
Respect – rules
Respect – values
Love and Care – family (link to Religious Education topic)
Love and Care – school and community
Harvest
Belonging (link to Religious Education topic)
Memories
Autumn
Saints
Remembrance
Peace
Hope
Link to values in Judaism
Gifts / giving
Christmas / loving

### **Spring term**

THEME
Epiphany/New Year
Community link to Religious Education topic
Friendship
Wonder
Candlemas/Light/Chinese New Year
Core value love link to Saint Valentine
Lent
Spring/ new life link to Holi festival
Family link to Mothering Sunday
Core value forgiveness
Holy week – Easter

### **Summer term**

THEME
New life – link to Religious Education topic Pentecost
Inspirational people – link to St George and other saints/ leading figures
Opportunities
Mary
Choices – link to Religious Education topic Reconciliation
Surprises
Safety
Being Fair (KS1) Justice (KS2) – CAFOD fair trade
Family link to Father's day
Neighbours link to universal church topic
One World link to universal church topic
Other faiths – link to Islam
Summer

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