

# St Patrick's RC High School

## Prayer and Liturgy Policy



Not statutory.

Reviewed: Autumn 2024 - 2025

Next review: Autumn 2025 - 2026

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Signed Headteacher: Mrs Byrne .....

Signed by Chair of Governors: .....

## **Our Mission Statement**

Our outstanding school community is guided by the Gospel values of: love, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, integrity, humility and truth. Faith and worship are lived, taught and celebrated. We recognise the importance of service to others and the opportunity to be witnesses to Christ in our community. All are unique and strive for personal growth. We celebrate the pursuit of academic excellence, applaud ambition and value the achievements of all. Our pupils are expected to achieve their best and use their learning to make a difference in the world they live in.

### **1. The context 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.)

### **2. Statement of requirement**

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils (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; 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).

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.

Prayer and liturgy are not designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education.

### **3. 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*.

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- There is a named person 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) Headteacher**

The Headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures 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 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 headteacher and local 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.

### **4. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision**

#### Daily Prayer and Liturgy:

- During the four weekly form times where students are not in assembly, their Form Teachers facilitate a daily act of collective worship. Students lead and actively participate in Morning Prayer using resources created by our Spiritual Enrichment Lead.
- Every classroom has a Cross or Crucifix to create an atmosphere appropriate for worship.
- The quality of Morning Prayer is assured by Heads of Year to ensure our students benefit from consistently high-quality opportunities for collective worship within their form groups. Students are  

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also given opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their experience of Morning Prayer through pupil voice.

- Training and support is readily available for Form Teachers who are new to the school and/or are not of the Catholic faith to instil confidence in their facilitation and leadership of Morning Prayer.

#### Weekly Prayer and Liturgy:

- Each year group participate in a weekly assembly, supported by their Form Teachers. The Assistant Headteacher for Behaviour and Safeguarding publishes an assembly rota with themes to be used. Themes first and foremost take consideration of the liturgical calendar, and thereafter link with Catholic beliefs and teachings. Each assembly includes a Celebration of the Word as our act of collective worship, facilitated by either a Senior Leader or the Head of Year, with students taking an active role in the delivery of this.
- The quality of collective worship through assemblies is reviewed by the Deputy Headteachers to ensure all year groups fully participate in and benefit from these experiences. Training is given to Heads of Year and Senior Leaders who are new to role/school and/or not of the Catholic faith to ensure they are confident in their roles as leaders of our faith.
- In addition, every Wednesday, a form group lead a voluntary prayer service in our Chapel at lunchtime, led by Fr Martin Collins with students actively participating through reading, reflection, responses and prayer.
- Once all forms within a given year group have led a Wednesday prayer service, two pupils per form participate in a pupil voice session to evaluate their experience.

#### Celebration of Mass:

- We welcome our new Year 7 cohort with their families and our staff to the Year 7 Welcome Mass every September, and we say farewell to our Year 11 cohorts in the same way every May before their public examinations begin. Mass is therefore prominent at the beginning and the end of every child's journey at St Patrick's, marking these important milestones in their lives.
- As a whole school community, we celebrate Mass on St Patrick's Day at Holy Cross RC Church.
- As the source and summit of Catholic sacramental life, students also receive the Eucharist throughout the year during First Friday Masses. Every year group celebrates Mass together twice per year.
- All pupils contribute to pupil surveys led by their Form Teacher once per year on their experience of Mass so that they play an active role in evaluating their experience.

#### Special Liturgies:

- Students have the ability to take part in a variety of liturgical and devotional experiences, including:
  - The Stations of the Cross.
  - Remembrance liturgies.
  - The Rosary.
  - Ash Wednesday liturgies.
  - Advent and Lent liturgies.
  - The sacrament of Reconciliation.
- The staff Ethos Committee will take the lead in preparing the liturgies and student involvement in the preparation and delivery is considered very important. All whole-school celebrations are student-led with the Faith in Action Team taking an active role in planning and creating resources for the liturgies.
- Links are forged with local parish churches and major school celebrations are shared with the local community (e.g. our annual Advent Carol Service, St Patrick's Day Mass, Year 7 Welcome Mass).
- Students are offered Retreat Days (e.g. Year 7 – Savio House) or at residential retreat centres (e.g. Year 8 - Castlerigg).

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- Visual Displays around the school promote the school's Mission Statement and the religious character of the school.
- Students are given opportunities to engage in their own private prayer in the Chapel.

#### Staff:

- Staff morning briefings and meetings begin with prayer, with all staff prepared to take the lead.
- Each school year begins with a 'walking talking Mass' for staff to welcome the start of the new academic year. Opening liturgies continue on subsequent teacher training days.
- All new staff have CPD focused on supporting the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- All staff have access to Morning Prayer resources on the shared area.
- The school aims to mark special occasions for staff, such as retirements, with a Mass to celebrate and give thanks for the contribution which has been made to the life of the school.
- There is a staff Ethos Committee which all staff, regardless of role, are warmly invited to join.

### **5. 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, chaplaincy provision, 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.

### **6. 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. We actively engage with the CPDF offer from the Diocese of Salford, and other Middle/Senior Leadership CPD opportunities offered by the NWCDTP.

### **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

### **8. Review**

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors on an annual basis.