

St Agnes' Catholic Primary School



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

This prayer and liturgy policy has been approved and adopted by the governing body.
Signed by the Chair of Governors
Signed by the Headteacher

Date of policy review: September 2026
Next review: September 2027

Our school mission statement pervades every aspect of school life and can be seen as a reality in our interactions with each other

‘The family of St Agnes Loves, learns and grows together as followers of Jesus’.

Together, we strive to ensure that everyone in our school community is given the nurture, encouragement, knowledge and skills to enable success whilst at St Agnes’ and equip them for the next stage of their educational career and as responsible citizens of the future.

This is achieved through our exciting and ambitious curriculum; providing access to a diverse array of enrichment activities; and by fostering a supportive learning environment through our caring and skilled staff team, inspiring each child in their educational journey.

We are proud of our holistic and inclusive approach to learning, along with our commitment to promoting positive emotional well-being and mental health for all .

We understand that each child is an individual and as such we get to know each member of our school exceptionally well while keeping Christ at the centre of all we do.

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, 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 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)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)).

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
- 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) 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(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 headteacher 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.

4. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

As part of our Catholic faith life, prayer are woven into daily class routines and key school events which can be led by any member of the school community. Prayers offer children the opportunity for spiritual contemplation and should be reverent, respectful and prayerful. As the children move up the school from EYFS to Year 6, the prayers they learn develop and help to deepen their understanding of the power and spiritual enrichment attributed to daily worship. The progression of prayers takes into account where texts are introduced in the RE Curriculum Directory.

EYFS & Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2	Additional Prayers
Nursery • Sign of the Cross • Morning prayer • End of day prayer Reception • Sign of the Cross • Morning prayer • Grace before meals • End of day prayer Year 1 • (As Above) • Hail Mary • Our Father Year 2 • (As Above) • Glory Be • Mass Responses • The Rosary	Year 3 • (As EYFS & KS1) • Act of Contrition • The Apostles Creed Year 4 • (As Above) • Come Holy Spirit • Angel of God • Eternal rest Year 5 • (As Above) • The Magnificat Year 6 • (As Above) • Act of Hope • Act of Faith • Act of Love	Catholic Social Teaching • Dignity • Preferential option for the poor • Community and Participation • Solidarity and peace • Care for creation • Dignity of workers

At St Agnes', each class has a pupil prayer leader who supports and leads the prayer life of the class. We pray together three times each day through Morning Prayer, Grace before Meals and Afternoon Prayer. Children are also given regular opportunities to pause, reflect and pray quietly for their own intentions.

At appropriate times, children are encouraged to lead prayer using their own words, including prayers they may have written when it is their turn to take home the class prayer bag. These prayers are also shared on Google Classroom, enabling families to use them as part of their prayer life at home. Every RE lesson begins with a prayer or reflection, encouraging children to develop a sense of reverence and nurture their relationship with God.

The school's mission statement, values cross, images of significant figures—including our Parish Priest, the Archbishop of Westminster and the Pope—and key prayers are displayed in every classroom. These include our Morning Prayer, Grace before Meals and Afternoon Prayer, ensuring that prayer and our Catholic identity remain a visible and integral part of daily school life.

Each classroom has a focal prayer table and RE display that reflects the colours of the liturgical season. These may also reflect significant liturgical events and themes, such as Remembrance (red) and devotion to Mary (blue). Prayer tables include a Candle, Bible, Statues, Rosary Beads and other artefacts linked to the liturgical year. A Crucifix or Cross is visible in every classroom, ensuring that Christ remains at the heart of the learning environment.

Children have regular opportunities to visit 'Kevin's Corner', our prayer garden, and are encouraged to stop, pause and reflect at our grotto dedicated to Our Lady, she is crowned each May as part of our May devotion.

The prayer garden is available during break and lunchtime, providing children with opportunities for quiet, personal prayer and reflection. Our Social Action Leaders (SALs) also organise pop-up prayer stations at least once each half term, creating additional opportunities for children to engage in prayer in creative and meaningful ways. During October and May dedicated 'Pause and Pray the Rosary' places are available to the children.

Staff model and reinforce expectations of reverence, respect and appropriate behaviour within all prayer spaces, helping children to understand that these are sacred places for encountering God.

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
- 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.

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Offer a meaningful encounter with 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 short and appropriately paced taking into account the age of the children - be appropriate to their level of understanding - include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

Monday	Key Stage Gospel Assembly- Celebration of the word.
Tuesday	Class teacher led prayer and liturgy. Could be: Visio Divina, Lectio Divina, Examen, five finger prayer. Elaine Arundel resources and significant dates or topical events.
Wednesday	Pupil led class celebration of the Word. (Wednesday Word)

Thursday	Class sharing of Marks Mission Class Assemblies (on Rota)
Friday	Class prayer Google Classroom intentions Hymn Practice Celebration assembly
Daily	Morning Prayer, Grace before Meals and Afternoon Prayer. Mission Statement, Daily Meditation.

Assemblies

Assemblies provide an important opportunity for the whole school community to come together in prayer, celebration and reflection, deepening our relationship with God and with one another. Each Monday, children from Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 come together for a Gospel Assembly, led by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or invited visitors, such as representatives from Mary's Meals. based on the Gospel reading for the week.

Assemblies follow the liturgical year and provide children with opportunities to listen to God's Word, reflect on its meaning and consider how they can put its message into practice in their own lives.

On Fridays, children from Reception in the Spring Term through to Year 6 attend a weekly Celebration Assembly, led by the Head teacher, where we come together to celebrate the achievements, efforts and contributions of our pupils and recognise the ways in which they live out our school values.

Throughout the year, classes also lead assemblies for the school community, with parents and families invited to attend. These pupil-led assemblies often include a prayer, reflection or hymn linked to the theme and to the children's learning. Teacher-led assemblies may focus on Saints' days, special intentions, Catholic Social Teaching principles or significant events within the Church and wider community.

Assemblies may also provide opportunities to respond to topical events, current issues or whole-school initiatives through the lens of our Catholic faith and Catholic Social Teaching.

Through this varied programme of assemblies, children experience a rich range of opportunities to pray, listen, sing, reflect and celebrate together. Each assembly has a clear spiritual message, encouraging children to take time to reflect on God's Word and consider how they can live out their faith in their daily lives.

The Liturgical Year

At St Agnes', the Church's Liturgical Year is woven throughout the life of our school, helping children to understand and celebrate the key seasons, feasts and celebrations of our Catholic faith. Our prayer tables, displays and prayer spaces change to reflect the appropriate liturgical colours, while RE lessons, Gospel assemblies, prayer and liturgy and Masses provide opportunities for children to explore the meaning of each season. Throughout the year, we mark significant celebrations including: the start of the school year with Mass, the Month of the Rosary, All Saints' Day, Advent and Christmas, the Feast of St Agnes, Ash Wednesday and Lent, Holy Week and Easter, First Holy Communion, the Crowning of Mary in May, Pentecost, the Feast of St Peter and St Paul and our Year 6 Leavers' Mass. Pupils attend Mass at the church on the feast day of their house saint. (or closet day to it if it falls on the weekend) Children actively participate in many of these celebrations through prayer, music, Scripture, drama, liturgy and Mass, with opportunities to lead and reflect. Special prayer experiences, including Lenten retreats, Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross, reflective prayer stations and Rosary bags, prayer bags enable children and families to deepen their prayer life and journey together through the Church's year.

Throughout the year, we celebrate the Sacrament of the Eucharist at St Agnes' Church. Classes in KS2 have an intimate Mass at St Agnes Church just for their classes and parents.

Children help to prepare and lead the Mass through Altar Serving, reading and bringing up the gifts during Mass. Parents and guardians are invited to join us for all Masses.

This ensures that the Liturgical Year is not simply something children learn about, but something they experience, celebrate and live as part of the St Agnes' Catholic community.

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 have a dedicated RE INSET day which provides an important opportunity for staff formation, spiritual development and professional development in RE. Each session is carefully planned in collaboration with our Parish Priest, Fr Chinedu, around an agreed theme that reflects the needs and priorities of our school community. Fr Chinedu then leads the session, providing staff with opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith, reflect on their own spiritual journey and develop their confidence and expertise in teaching RE. These sessions are an important part of our commitment to ensuring that staff are well supported as witnesses to the faith and confident teachers of RE.

7. 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. 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.