Our Lady of Hartley Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Date of last review:	October 2026	Date of next review:	October 2027
Author:	Anna O'Donohoe	Policy Type	Subject

Mission Statement

Together in faith, love and learning…

At Our Lady of Hartley we:
Care for each child as an individual
Help each other to achieve our full potential
Reach out to families, parish and the community
Inspire a lifelong love of learning
Share and understand in Christ's love
Trust each other in a community that serves God and others

Philippians 4:9 'Whatever you have learnt, or received, or heard from me, or seen from me – put into practice.

Informed by the teachings of the Gospel, Our Lady of Hartley offers a rich, varied and inspiring curriculum that allows all children to reach their full potential. Community links are built into the curriculum to provide opportunities for broader educational skills that enhance children's understanding of real life experiences. Our engaging and purposeful curriculum means all learners are nurtured in God's love.

Our Lady of Hartley. Statement of Curriculum Intent September 2019.

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

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.)

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

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.

Prayer **Liturgical Prayer** **Liturgy**

Christian meditation Service of the Word Sacraments:

Prayer before meals Assembly Liturgy of Hours Mass

Penance

Devotions Benediction

Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	Structured (often 4 part)	Taken from official books
One or two elements	Elements drawn from liturgy	Complex structure
Balance of familiarity & creativity	Places of Scripture	Many elements
	Contrasts and creativity	Range of ministry

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 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 denominal 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.

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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 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.

'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 headteacher.

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 that those which are specifically structured within the RE curriculum.

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.

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

[1] Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

- 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 Model
- 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, parishes and the Diocese.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Our Lady of Hartley 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.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy
Prayer and liturgy in Our Lady of Hartley 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 Our Lady of Hartley 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.

Planning, content and celebration
Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, The Way the Truth and the Life, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.
Parish and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations such as class assembly and class mass.
A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

The regular Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Daily morning reflections and prayer within the class group				
Prayer and Liturgy	Whole School Prayer and Liturgy	Whole School Prayer, Singing and Liturgy	Class based Prayer and Liturgy	Whole School Prayer and Liturgy	Class based Prayer and Liturgy

[2] Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

			Classes attend Mass in the parish church (rota)		Class Assembly to Parents (rota)

Leading Prayer and Liturgy
As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy, supported by the senior leadership team and RE leader. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Recording
Prayer and liturgy is recorded in various places including in class big books, pupil books. There may be photographic and video evidence.

Monitoring and Evaluation
Prayer and liturgy is monitored by the leadership team.
Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

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 The Way, the Truth and the Life topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Other opportunities
Children take part in Parish events such as the Annual Parish Open Air mass and the Christmas Nativity and Carol concert.

Eucharist
Children regularly attend Eucharist services both in school and church. Children celebrate mass for Holy Day of Obligations in school where Parishioners are invited to join.

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy
Nicola Bonvini Coordinator
Jane Pemberton Parish Liaison Coordinator

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

The right of withdrawal from Religious Education and/or Collective Worship

Parents are permitted, by law, to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or collective worship. This request should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

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 headteacher 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 headteacher 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

[Consideration should be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]