St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, EPSOM

Prayer and liturgy policy

This prayer and liturgy policy has been approved and adopted by the governing body on 21st September 2026 and will be reviewed in October 2027

Signed by the Chair of Governors Chris Donovan

Signed by the Headteacher Tim Hallett

School Mission Statement:

Our Mission

All that we do at St Joseph's is shaped by our commitment to our Faith. The choices we make and the expectations we nurture in our children emanate from a guiding desire to live our lives according to gospel values. In the words of our Mission Statement, written by the children:

- *God is at the heart of everything. Prayer is behind us in all that we do.*
- *We are God's family, here to learn and try our best.*
- *We are called to serve others.*
- *As friends of Jesus, we treat others with respect, as we would wish to be treated ourselves.*
- *We want everyone to be the best person they can be.*
- *We are all amazing in our own way.*
- *We look after the wonderful world that God created for us*.

Introduction

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; 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.

Prayer

At St Joseph's, we aim to nurture and strengthen our school community's relationship with God by valuing and respecting the power of prayer. At St Joseph's we offer our school community a wide and varied opportunity for prayer throughout the day and school year. We provide many opportunities for prayer in different forms, such as class liturgies, worship through song, sharing the Rosary, and whole-school worship. Children also have the opportunity to pray and offer personal intentions in our Holy Hallway, a special space for quiet reflection and connection with God. We help our pupils understand that prayer can be both formal and informal – a way to speak, listen, and respond to God in their own way. As a school, we pray together at key times during the day: at the start of the day, before lunch, and at the end of the day. Children are taught to make the Sign of the Cross and to know by heart key prayers including the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be. They are also encouraged to pray the Rosary, especially during the months of May and October, and to learn and participate confidently in Mass responses. During Advent, we send a travelling crib home with each family in the school as a way of preparing and helping them understand this liturgical season.

Collective Worship

It is the aim of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School that Collective Worship (Prayer and Liturgy) places Christ at the heart of our community and enables all pupils and staff to encounter God

through prayer, scripture, and reflection. Prayer and Liturgy are central to the spiritual life of the school, fostering moral and spiritual development and strengthening the sense of belonging within our Catholic community. Through shared acts of worship, we seek to nurture a deeper relationship with God, promote the Gospel values of love, service, and compassion, and encourage all to reflect on their experience of faith in daily life. Collective Worship also forms pupils and staff to participate more fully in the liturgical life and mission of the Church, helping them to live out their vocation as children of God in service to others.

Below is an overview of our collective worship timetable:

Day of the week	Worship format	Focus	Led by
Monday	Mark 10 Mission liturgies	Choice of Scripture	Class Teacher
Tuesday	Praise the Lord – Musical Worship (singing assembly)	Scripture focus	Headteacher RE Team Music Lead
Wednesday	Celebration of the Word	Sunday's Gospel	RE Team
Thursday	Celebrate Year Group Child led liturgy	Choice of Scripture	Class Teacher Children
Friday	Celebration Assembly	Liturgical Focus Catholic Social Teaching Principles	Headteacher

Mass

Throughout the year, pupils participate in Mass at St Joseph's church. They take an active role through altar serving, proclaiming the word, music ministry through choir and band and welcoming during the mass. The school leads key masses throughout the year. See table below

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
New School Year Mass	Way of the Cross	St Joseph's Day Mass
Harvest Celebration	Lent Reconciliation Service	Rosary in Church
Deanery Mass	Passion Play	Ascension Mass
Reception Welcome Liturgy	Year Group Parish Mass	May Procession
Rosary in Church		Liturgy in the Meadow
Launch of Advent Service		Good Shepherd Mass
Advent Reconciliation Service		Year Group Parish Mass
Carol Service		Leavers' Mass
Celebrating Christmas Service		

Year groups also visit St Joseph's church throughout the year for weekday mass with the parish.

Sacred Spaces and Physical Signs
The school has a dedicated prayer garden which the children are able to access during their lunchtimes as well as a place for classes to gather for their own liturgies.

The school has a dedicated memorial garden within the school meadow memorial garden which is a quiet space where we have memory benches, with plaques for school family members who have died.

Over time, children, staff and governors have created an extensive Way of the Cross in the school grounds. Classes take responsibility for looking after their allocated station.
Named the 'Via Dolorosa', it is a beautiful and spiritual experience which is used throughout the year. All children are invited to 'walk the way' during Lent with their families.

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 and external environment. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy will reflect the Church's liturgical season, Catholic Social Teaching principles and the Religious Education Directory.

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.

Responsibility
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 are named people who are responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school (the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator)
- the prayer and liturgy policy is updated annually and shared with all stakeholders
- there is a budget for prayer and liturgy that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

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 leaders 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.

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 as necessary 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.

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.

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.

Review

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

Appendixes

Appendix 1 - Mass Planner

Mass Planner		
Date: Time: Celebrant: Servers:		
Entrance Hymn		
Introduction		
Penitential Rite		
Gloria		
(short opening prayer then everyone sits down) **First Reading**		
Responsorial Psalm		
Second Reading		
Gospel Acclamation	**Halle, halle, halle**	
Gospel Reading		
(After priest's homily) **Bidding Prayers**		
(At end of bidding prayers, everyone sits then…) **Offertory**		
Holy, Holy	**Holy, holy – Gathering Mass**	
Eucharistic Prayer		
Memorial Acclamation	***We proclaim your death O lord* – Gathering Mass**	
Great Amen		
Our Father		
Lamb of God	**Breaking of Bread – Millenium mass**	
(Musicians and Choir to go immediately after servers) **Communion Hymns**		
Recessional		
Notes: Display at front of church		

Appendix 2 – Child-led Liturgy Planner

Liturgy Planner

Add your ideas to this planner for your class liturgy. You can use words or pictures.
Talk to your teacher if you would like some help with ideas.

Name	
Date	

Gather 	
Listen to the Word 	
Respond to the Word 	
Go Forth 	

Evaluation 	How was the liturgy? What went well? What didn't go so well? What would you do differently next time?
Peer Evaluation What did my classmates think?	What went well? What did you enjoy about the liturgy? What would you like to see next time?