



St Mary's Priory Catholic Infant and Junior Schools

Love one another
Always do our best
Take care of ourselves and the world around us

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Approved: September 2026



Our School Vision

As a Catholic school with Christ at the centre of all that we do, we are committed to nurturing a loving, faith-filled community where everyone is encouraged to flourish and fulfil their God-given potential. Guided by the teachings and example of Jesus, we strive:

- **To love one another as Jesus loved us;**
- **To care for and protect the world that God has entrusted to us;**
- **To always do our best in all that we say and do.**

The Aims of Collective Worship

In our Catholic school, Collective Worship is central to school life and forms an integral part of our faith journey. We believe that worship is our response to God's love: giving Him glory, honour, praise and thanksgiving. Through prayer, reflection and celebration, we seek to deepen our relationship with God, inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Through our school mission, we aim:

- **To love one another as Jesus loved us**, showing kindness, compassion, forgiveness and respect to all members of our community.
- **To care for the world that God gave to us**, recognising our responsibility as stewards of creation and acting with care for others and the environment.
- **To do our best always**, developing our talents and gifts so that we may serve God and contribute positively to our school, parish and wider community.

Collective Worship in Our School

Collective Worship aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff to:

- Contemplate the mystery and presence of God.
- Reflect on spiritual, moral and ethical issues.
- Explore and develop their own beliefs and understanding of faith.
- Respond to and celebrate the joys and challenges of life.
- Experience a sense of belonging and strengthen community spirit.
- Promote and sustain the school's Catholic ethos and shared values.
- Deepen and enrich their religious experience.
- Develop understanding and appreciation of Catholic liturgy and worship.
- Learn and practise prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition.
- Encourage positive attitudes, values and behaviour.
- Experience moments of awe, wonder, reflection and thanksgiving.
- Give thanks to God, listen to His word, seek forgiveness, and place their own needs and the needs of others before Him in prayer.

Through Full Participation in the Faith Life of the School, We Aim to Enable Pupils and Staff to:

- Grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding.
- Develop knowledge and appreciation of the Catholic faith and its traditions.
- Experience awe, wonder and inspiration through a closer relationship with Christ.
- Reflect upon and deepen their individual faith journeys.
- Develop confidence and skills in personal and communal prayer.
- Strengthen their commitment to living out Gospel values in everyday life.
- Recognise their responsibility to care for others and for God's creation.
- Become thoughtful, compassionate and active members of society, inspired by the example of Jesus Christ.

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

At St Mary's Priory, collective worship is a central part of school life and provides opportunities for pupils and staff to come together in prayer, reflection, and worship as a faith community. While collective worship and assemblies are distinct in purpose, all assemblies at St Mary's Priory include an act of worship, which may either form part of the assembly or constitute the entire gathering.

As part of our daily timetable, the school community gathers each day for collective worship. These opportunities enable pupils to deepen their relationship with God, develop spiritually, and strengthen their sense of belonging within the school community. On Thursdays, collective worship takes place within individual classes and is child-led, providing pupils with the opportunity to plan, lead, and participate actively in prayer and worship.

Collective worship at St Mary's Priory supports the development of the intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual capacities of every child. Our provision is carefully planned to ensure the inclusion, participation, and achievement of all pupils, regardless of age, background, faith tradition, or academic ability.

While assemblies may also include elements such as notices, celebrations of achievement, curriculum themes, and other aspects of school life, these administrative or organisational components are distinct from the act of collective worship itself. Through both collective worship and assemblies, we seek to foster a strong sense of community, shared values, and our Catholic mission.

Our weekly timetable consists of:

Monday- SLT Assembly
Tuesday- Gospel Assembly
Wednesday- Praise Assembly
Thursday- Child led Celebration Of The Word
Friday- Celebration Assembly

Prayers:

-Morning prayer
-Before/After lunch prayer
-End of the day prayer

For a more detailed overview, see the APOP:
[2026-27 Annual Plan of Provision.xlsx](#)

Celebration of the Sacraments

As a Catholic school, St Mary's Priory is committed to providing pupils and their families with regular opportunities to participate in the sacramental life of the Church in partnership with our local parishes. The celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of our worshipping community, and Mass is celebrated weekly throughout the school year. These celebrations may involve the whole school, Key Stage 2 pupils, or individual year groups, depending on the liturgical calendar and the needs of the school community. Parents, carers, parishioners, and members of the wider community are warmly invited to join us whenever Mass is celebrated. All school Masses are planned collaboratively by school staff and parish clergy in accordance with the principles outlined in the *Directory for Masses with Children*.

During the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent, pupils who are appropriately prepared in their faith journey are offered the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. These occasions are supported and facilitated by our parish priests, enabling children to experience God's mercy and forgiveness in a meaningful way.

Alongside the celebration of the sacraments, our collective worship programme reflects the liturgical life of the Church. Throughout the year, worship opportunities are planned to recognise and celebrate significant feast days, solemnities, memorials, and other important events within the Church's calendar that occur during term time. In doing so, we help pupils grow in their understanding of the Church's traditions and deepen their participation in the rhythm of the liturgical year.

These include:

- All Saints' Mass
- The Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception
- The Feast Day of St Nicholas
- Advent liturgies
- Mass for the Epiphany
- Ash Wednesday Mass/ liturgy
- Lenten Liturgies
- Holy Week Liturgies
- The Crowning of Mary
- Liturgies for the Feast Days of House Saints

Collective worship and staff

At St Mary's Priory Catholic Schools, we recognise that our responsibilities as a living faith community are to our staff as well as to our pupils. Every Monday morning, we gather together as a school community and start our briefing with a small act of worship or devotion, be that a short prayer, a moment of reflection or a time to consider particular intentions of the school at that time.

Collective worship for parents and the wider community

Parents, carers and other family members are welcomed to many acts of collective worship throughout the year. They are invited to attend the Wednesday Mass with their child's class at St John Vianney's Church and are also welcome to attend Masses celebrated at St Thomas More's Church. Due to limited space, parents and carers are invited to selected whole-school Masses held within the school. During the month of October, families are also invited to join the school community in praying the Rosary each Friday.

Each year, every class leads a Class Assembly, at least part of which is an act of worship, and a class liturgy. Parents and family members are invited to attend both occasions. School governors and priests from our local parishes are also warmly invited to participate in these celebrations.

Prayer Leaders

Prayer Leaders play an important role in nurturing the prayer life of our school community. They lead their classes, and on occasions the wider school community, in prayer and reflection. They also assist with the preparation and celebration of Masses and liturgies throughout the year. Our older Prayer Leaders support children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by helping them to learn and say prayers and, from time to time, sharing Bible stories with our youngest pupils. Through their commitment, leadership and example, they are positive role models who help others to grow in faith and develop a deeper relationship with God.

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.

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.