



# Policy for Prayer and Liturgy

This Policy has been reviewed and adopted by Holy Family School  
Last reviewed – April 2024  
Next review – April 2026



**Part of the Xavier Catholic Education Trust**

## **Holy Family Mission Statement**

Our catholic school sets out to provide an education that is God centred. It is a community where everyone is valued, loved and respected by each other. Our children are encouraged to give of their best in all they do, to understand their beliefs and to work and play happily together. They are further encouraged to express their God given talents and to show qualities of honesty, tolerance, forgiveness, caring and patience. We value our place in the parish and aim to maintain our strong partnerships with parents, governors and the wider community. We aim to work as a team in a partnership that is truly supportive and understanding of everyone's needs. We seek to follow God's guidance of loving and caring for each other in the way he taught us and to uphold our school name, living each day as one happy and Holy Family.

### **Policy for Prayer and Liturgy**

In keeping with our Mission Statement above, we believe that Christian liturgy in a Catholic school 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.

### **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of liturgy for all pupils. (This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of liturgy for all pupils, or separate acts of liturgy in school groups.) We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that Key Stage, class liturgies and assemblies are distinct activities.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from prayer and liturgy. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to 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 than those which are specifically structured.

Any liturgy is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. In this school, responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher and RE Lead.

### **THE PLACE OF PRAYER AND LITURGY IN THE LIFE OF OUR SCHOOL**

We endorse the belief that 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. Acts of Prayer and Liturgy in this school are more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic ethos of our school.

### **AIMS OF PRAYER AND LITURGY**

We believe that prayer and liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for pupils, staff and the wider school community:

- 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, sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ
- 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.

### PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER AND LITURGY

At Holy Family, we aim to support our school community to strengthen their relationship with God by valuing and respecting the power of prayer. We provide our school community with a variety of different times to pray in different ways including class liturgies, daily prayer time, worship through song, sharing the Rosary, whole school worship and many others. We aim for children to understand that prayer can be formal and informal, it is an opportunity to speak, listen and respond to God. We also have set times of the day when we pray together as a class: Start of the day, before lunch, after lunch and at the end of the day. Children are taught to make the Sign of the Cross and know by heart the following prayers: The Lord's Prayer, The Hail Mary, the Glory Be and the School Prayer. Children are also encouraged to pray the Rosary and learn Mass responses.

All acts of Prayer and Liturgy in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to 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.
- Be central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory

Celebrations will:

- be appropriately paced
- include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

### TIMETABLE FOR COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Daily acts of Collective Worship are the foundation of our daily life at Holy Family. The opportunity to gather as a community is important as we pray, sing, celebrate, teach and proclaim the Good News. The RE lead maintains and updates the Annual Provision of Prayer Documents detailing weekly and daily acts of prayer and liturgy.

|                                                                               | Monday                        | Tuesday                                     | Wednesday                            | Thursday          | Friday                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Daily Prayer and Reflection takes place every day for every class 12.55 -1.00 |                               |                                             |                                      |                   |                                                                                              |
| KS 1                                                                          | Class Liturgy and prayer time | 10.00 – 10.30                               | Praise Assembly and Hymn Practice PM | Class prayer time | Whole school Celebration Assembly (Catholic Social Teaching and Mission) Led by Head/RE Lead |
| KS 2                                                                          | Class Liturgy and prayer time | Whole School Gospel Assembly led by RE lead |                                      | Class prayer time |                                                                                              |

## PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF PRAYER AND LITURGY

Acts of Prayer and Liturgy are planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum.
- Scripture will be the focus in all liturgies
- involving consultation with the PSHE Lead, staff and with reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

The format for liturgies in school will be:

- **Gather** – how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet reflective music, lighted candles, icons etc.)
- **Proclaim** – every liturgy will centre around at least one text from the Bible, with the reading of the day being the first source. The Word of God will be proclaimed from a bible.
- **Respond** – the response to the Word may lead into a time of ritual action or communal prayer. The ritual action may vary (dance, music, drama, art, poetry etc.) We place our needs before God (intercessory prayers)
- **Go Forth** – giving the children something to hold on to from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

## ASSEMBLIES

Gospel, Praise and Celebration assemblies will follow the same structure as detailed above. Ten Ten Prayer and Liturgy resources will support teachers in planning and delivering assemblies. Key Stage Children are asked to participate where relevant. During the academic year, each class in the school has the opportunity to prepare and deliver a class assembly. These assemblies are presented to the whole school community with parents from the class invited to attend.

## MASSES AND CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

The celebration of Mass is an important part of our spiritual life at Holy Family. We aim for Mass to be a community celebration which gathers together children, all staff, parents and parishioners. Each Mass is led by a different class who learn and share the readings and bidding prayers. Mass is celebrated to mark the beginning of each term as well as Holy Days of Obligation and other key events in the year of the Church.

The Timetable for the Celebration of Mass is as follows and additional Masses may be added as the need arises.

| Autumn Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Spring Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Summer Term                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>September</b><br>New School Year Mass<br><b>October</b><br>Harvest Mass<br>Daily Rosary Reflection<br><b>November</b><br>All Saints Day Service<br>Remembrance Service<br><b>December</b><br>Advent Reconciliation Mass<br>Mass<br>EYFS Advent Performance<br>KS 1 Advent Performance<br>KS 2 Advent Carol | <b>January</b><br>Epiphany – Start of Term Mass<br>Class Service of the Eucharist (Y4-6)<br><b>February</b><br>Whole School Mass<br>Class Liturgy with Br Stephen<br><b>March</b><br>Ash Wednesday Mass<br>Lenten Reconciliation Mass<br>Class liturgy with Br Stephen<br>Stations of the Cross | <b>April</b><br>Start of Term Mass<br><b>May</b><br>Ascension Day Mass<br>Daily Rosary Reflection<br>Marian Mass<br>First Holy Communion Masses<br><b>June</b><br>Going Forth Mass (Holy Family Feast Day)<br>St Peter and Paul Mass<br><b>July</b><br>End of Term Mass<br>Leavers Mass |

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|---------|--|--|
| Service |  |  |
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During the school year, children from Rec to Year 6 will participate in the planning and celebrating of the Mass.

All staff invite Fr Stephen into their classrooms for Services of the Eucharist and liturgical celebrations.

The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of prayer and liturgy, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised.

### **LINKS WITH HOME**

As a school we recognise the central role parents have in the religious education of their children. As the Statement of the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales on Religious Education in Catholic Schools '2000' states, "The first educators in the faith are parents. It is they, above all others, who establish in their children the first sensitivity and responsiveness to the presence of God, to the practice of prayer and to the patterns of life in the community of faith, the parish. By their example in the home and in the participation in the Mass and the other sacraments the foundations of a life-long faith and discipleship in their children are laid down." With this in mind, we believe it is essential to establish and maintain links with parents through:

- Home- School Agreement
- Welcoming prospective and new parents
- Regular information about the child, their progress and their welfare
- Families supporting the work of the school, at home
- Providing information about the school and what is happening
- Families and parishioners sharing the religious life of the school

### **LINKS WITH OUR WIDER COMMUNITY**

We welcome the visits from our Parish Priest and other members of the Clergy and value the clergy's contribution to the teaching of R.E. in the classrooms. We also work very closely with deanery and Xavier colleagues sharing expertise, resources and ideas as well as organising celebrations. We attend the annual Xavier Celebration of Mass at the start of each school year. We are proud to celebrate and share our journey of faith with colleagues, pupils and members of our academy community. Finally, we regularly encourage the children to participate in fund raising for the benefit of the local and wider Community.

### **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The school's provision of opportunities for prayer and liturgy will be evaluated by the R.E. Lead, SLT and governors to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading liturgies.

### **RESOURCES**

Daily prayers, with child planned and led worship to take place each day using resources from

- Ten Ten
- Mark 10 Mission
- Elaine Arundel
- Magister
- Cafod
- Missio

Children and staff also have access to a range of books to support planning and delivery of prayer and

liturgy. Children will also be encouraged to make use of a library of focus objects to encourage prayer, reflection and contemplation.

These will include

- Cloths in the colours of the Liturgical year
- Candles
- A variety of natural objects and artefacts e.g. stones, shells, statues
- Music for worship
- Plants and flowers
- Items for Godly play such as wooden figures and textural materials

### **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

It is the responsibility of each class teacher to ensure that every child can participate in prayer and liturgy, including those with additional needs.

### **THE ROLE OF THE PRAYER AND LITURGY LEAD**

The Prayer and Liturgy lead is responsible for -

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it
- Organising themes for Prayer and Liturgy
- Assisting the governors and Headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy

The lead is also responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy. This task involves:

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing acts of prayer and liturgy
- Informing the Headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

The lead will also:

- Communicate to members of the school community the significance and content of acts of prayer and liturgy
- Lead and organise in-service training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attend appropriate in-service courses and report back
- Report to and consult with the governors and Headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Act as consultant to colleagues
- Encourage positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Inform newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Prayer and Liturgy
- Communicate with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaise with the parish priest and work closely with the school Chaplain
- Liaise with other school RE Leads at termly, Xavier Trust meetings.
- Liaise with the Diocesan RE Centre at The Philip Howard Centre
- Evaluate existing resources and purchase new ones when required. This might include: one line resources, visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books

### **POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Lead, together with the R.E. Governor 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.