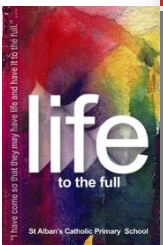


DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

Policy for Prayer & Liturgy
St Alban's RC Primary School



November 2022

St Alban's Collective Worship Policy

Mission Statement: *'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'* (John 10:10)

The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian worship 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

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship 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.) 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 collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two 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.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Collective Worship rests 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 Collective Worship 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 than those which are specifically structured, within Come and See RE curriculum.

Definition of key terms

Taken from the draft Prayer & Liturgy Directory²

Liturgy is a formal act of the Church, e.g. celebration of the sacraments (Eucharist, Reconciliation).

Liturgical Prayer follows structural patterns found in the liturgy, e.g. Liturgy of the Word.

Prayer takes place, for example, at the beginning and end of every day and can use familiar and traditional prayers.

The Place of prayer in the life of St Alban's School

Prayer in St Alban's School is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

Our prayer 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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

² Prayer & Liturgy Directory, 2022

The Aims of Prayer & Liturgy

Prayer & Liturgy in St Alban's 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 and liturgy in St Alban's 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, through faith, the competence, knowledge and skills to prepare, organise and lead worship;
- 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 & Liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, 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.

A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Staff gather voluntarily for prayers every Friday at 8.30am in St Alban's Room.

The timetable of Collective Worship is as below:

Monday	1.00pm Whole school Liturgical prayer (Head Teacher)
Tuesday	10.15am Whole school Liturgical prayer (Deputy Headteacher/Chaplain)
Wednesday/ Thursday	Class Liturgical Prayer Key Stage Liturgical Prayer (rotation of staff)
Friday	Creative prayer or liturgical prayer in pastoral houses

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

Recording

Liturgical Prayer plans, including samples of children's liturgy planners are recorded in Chaplain's Office in files and in Cohort Collective Worship Portfolios.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Liturgical Prayer is monitored using diocesan monitoring form, (Appendix 1).

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform CSED.

Progression

Children will experience planning, preparing and leading Class Liturgical Prayer following our school's progression document (Appendix 3).

Resources

Resources are located in the Chaplain's Office, St Alban's Room, storage cupboards on the top corridor and in classrooms. An extensive list can be located in the Chaplain's File.

Children are taught how to locate and select appropriate resources for their Liturgical Prayer times, remembering that 'less is more'. The Chaplain is responsible for managing the resources.

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 Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Retreats

We hold an annual Staff Retreat; an annual Year 5 residential retreat on Holy Island and an annual Year 6 Leavers' Retreat in the summer Term in St Patrick's Parish Centre, Felling.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will normally be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised. When preparing these celebrations reference will be made to the '*Directory for Masses with Children*' as a basis for our practice. We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

Other opportunities

The Chaplain attends parish Mass at St Alban's Church/St Alban's room when it is offered, taking 2 or 3 children from each class in KS2 on a voluntary basis.

The coordinator for Collective Worship

Maria Robinson (as RE Coordinator, Chaplain and Deputy Headteacher) is coordinator for Prayer & Liturgy, in collaboration with the headteacher. One or both attend all INSET offered by the diocese on Liturgical Prayer, as well as Primary Chaplaincy meetings and RE courses.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Liturgical Prayer 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.

Date of Policy: November 2022 Date to be reviewed: November 2024

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Appendix 1

The Role of the Coordinator for Liturgical Prayer

- Formulating a written policy for Prayer & Liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for Prayer & Liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that Prayer & Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Prayer & 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 & Liturgy
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Collective Worship (Prayer & Liturgy)
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles and CPD

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Liturgical Prayer and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in Liturgical Prayer

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Prayer & 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 & Liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Prayer & Liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with the school chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development / On-going formation

- Leading and organising in-service training and on-going formation for Prayer & 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 & 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.]

Appendix 2

Progression of skills in Prayer & Liturgy

- The teacher should always prepare and lead most Acts of Collective Worship and be an excellent role model for children to emulate.
- Teachers should withdraw their input gradually at the appropriate time - given the age, capacity and stage of development of the children.
- It must never detract from being an enriching experience where glory, honour and praise is given to God.
- The REJOICE part of *Come and See* is a good place to start the process of involving children in preparing and leading worship.

Early Years and Years 1-2

- Teacher models and leads.
- At this age, children are facilitating Prayer & Liturgy rather than leading it. They may lead certain elements/parts.
- Reverence for the **Word of God in Scripture** should be shown and expected from the earliest years.

Years 3-6

- Teachers should be excellent role models in preparing and delivering Liturgical Prayer.
- Teachers and pupils work together at first to prepare Liturgical Prayer. Teachers withdraw support gradually for pupils to take over.
- Teachers direct what happens and withdraw direction gradually for pupils to take over.
- Teachers should provide themes and Scripture and oversee the children's efforts before delivery. Teachers can withdraw this provision if appropriate.

Children as leaders of Liturgical Prayer

Some will be more able or willing than others. There should be no coercion, but all children should have the opportunity to prepare and/or lead Liturgical Prayer if they wish to do so (at the teacher's discretion).

Evaluations

- All Collective Acts of Liturgical Prayer should be evaluated by the teacher.
- The children should learn to evaluate their own Liturgical Prayer.

<p>Reception <i>Children may...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sing a gather song, greet everyone and make the Sign of Cross • choose suitable artefacts given a very limited choice and set up focus table • pass objects around to focus attention and prayers • say prayers, saying who/what they want to pray for
<p>Year 1 <i>All previous statements plus children may:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choose suitable artefacts from a less limited selection • use given the theme to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ choose appropriate songs from a limited selection (e.g. CD or from Youtube) ○ decide on an appropriate way to gather or go forth
<p>Year 2 <i>All previous statements plus children may:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain the purpose, theme and focus • use resources to choose a suitable Gather, Listen, Respond and Go Forth • introduce traditional prayers (School Prayer, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be)
<p>Years 3/4 <i>All previous statements plus children may:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use given theme and provide a suitable focus without limit of choice, understanding their choice and making appropriate use of liturgical colours • lead singing and work I.C.T. equipment etc. • write prayers and petitions etc. for inclusion that fit the theme of the Collective Worship • make full use of resources to choose suitable ways to Gather, Listen, Respond, Go Forth, etc.
<p>Years 5/6 <i>All previous statements plus children may:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the given the theme to now select appropriate Scripture passages (initially from a limited selection) • begin to show creativity and introduce varied styles of prayer (Rosary, Stations, dance, meditation, art) <p><i>By end of Y6, all elements should be in place and pupils should be able to develop all parts of Collective Worship independently with understanding when given a theme or a passage from Scripture</i></p>