



We are His body, living and learning as one.

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# PRAYER & LITURGY POLICY



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## Contents

	Paragraph	Page
1.	Introduction	4
2.	Statement of Requirement	5
3.	Roles and Responsibilities	6
4.	Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision	8
5.	Eucharist	8
6.	Celebration of the Word Format	9
7.	Resourcing	9
8.	Safeguarding	9
9.	Training and Formation	9
10.	Monitoring and Evaluation	9
11.	Review	9
12.	Appendices	10

## 1. Introduction

In His name we gather. All prayer and liturgy is directed to the glory of His name and for our holiness. To be holy is to try to come closer to God, and through our work in Catholic education, through the support of this policy, we aim to provide a framework for the Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust (the Trust), for pupils and students, supported by staff, to grow in that holiness. As Jesus reminds us in Psalm 23, *"The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I shall want."* Through our continued lifting of our hearts and minds to God across all of our Trust schools, we are reminded through scripture to offer continual thanksgiving, praise and reflection to our Father.

The greatest prayer we have is the sign of the cross which should ground what we do or say, mark ourselves as His disciples and call on His name to be our courage and strength. Prayer and liturgy is central to our Catholic ethos across all of our schools, and when staff join schools within our Trust, they take on the role of leading and modelling good practice in prayer for our pupils and students.

As a Trust, we aim to provide a rich variety of prayer and liturgy opportunities and resources which seek to deepen our pupils' and students' sense of belonging to both their own school community and the wider Church. Ultimately, our aim as Catholic educators is that pupils and students are informed by their faith to discern contemporary culture in an engaged way. Our schools are not solely educational institutions, but they are also communities animated by the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, for it is by recognising Jesus as the fulfilment of prophecy, and growing closer to Him, that we become closest to God.

### The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust is centered on the love of Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church under the Diocese of Shrewsbury. Within every one of our schools, spiritual development is at the core of all we do, with pupils and students being provided with a rich and varied prayer life, to support their relationships with God, each other and themselves. Daily acts of prayer allow pupils and students to offer praise, glory and thanksgiving to God, and frame their own spiritual development in the context of today's world. We aim to teach and foster the Gospel values of love of God and neighbour, through our curriculums, chaplaincy events, staff development and leadership. The work of the schools within the Trust is conducted in accordance with the rites, practices and observances of the Catholic Church.

### What is Prayer?

*"Preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary, use words"*

*- St Francis of Assisi*

The word 'prayer' signifies to us ways of communicating with God. We have many ways to do this, for example, the silence of our hearts, symbols and acts, words, and liturgies etc. Each school within our Trust has a wide range of experiences for our pupils and students to communicate with God our creator.

## **Aims of this Policy**

It is the responsibility of our Catholic schools to provide for all their pupils and students a vital experience of liturgy, worship and prayer which:

- Names and celebrates God as being present and active in our human experience
- Is in line with our Catholic tradition
- Enriches the religious experience
- Reinforces positive attitudes
- Helps our pupils and students to:
  - Grow in liturgical understanding
  - Develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ
- Develops within our pupils and students the qualities of:
  - Reverence
  - Contemplation
  - Reflection
  - Empathy
  - Meditation

## **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 and students, 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)).

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil pupils' and students' entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which pupils and students in the Trust schools will be familiar.

Each school within our Trust will have a set prayer and liturgy provision which provides for pupils and students, in combination with their academic studies, to experience the fullness of liturgy that the Church has to offer.

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. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **(a) Governors**

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 & 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:

- Opportunities for staff retreat, formation, reflection and training are supported
- 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 in their respective schools, utilising guidance from the Trust Chaplain, and Trust priest where necessary
- 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
- Pupils and students are given opportunities to become leaders (eg. Mini Vinnies, Youth SVP, Student Chaplains, Prayer Angels, Worship Leaders)

#### **(c) Trust Chaplain and Prayer and Liturgy Coordinators**

Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust has a Trust Chaplain who is available to support with chaplaincy support for Trust schools. Those responsible for prayer and liturgy in each school, utilising support and guidance from the Trust Chaplain, 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 as well as with the rites and traditions of the Catholic Church

- Each school will have an annual plan of provision for prayer and liturgy across the school year which identifies liturgical seasons, key celebrations and patron saint feast days, as well as opportunities for the celebration of the sacraments, in accordance with pupils' and students' stage of sacramental formation as well as their understanding of faith
- There is daily planned prayer for all pupils and students, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- Pupils and students 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, for example pupils in older year groups can, through formation, be trained to deliver prayer and liturgy to younger year groups. Each school's individual approach can be found in Appendix B.
- Resources to support the planning of prayer and liturgy are appropriate and readily available to staff and pupils. This includes Trust-wide materials, materials available on request from the Chaplain, as well as the Chaplain being able to direct schools to resources as necessary.
- Induction on prayer and liturgy takes place for new members of staff as required. This is done on the Trust induction day for new staff, as well as within schools, so staff have more specific guidance regarding the character of each respective school, as well as their patron saint feast day celebrations, form saints and chaplaincy provision.
- Staff have access to effective training and formation opportunities, both within the Trust, as deemed necessary by the diocese, as well as on request from the Trust Chaplain.
- Monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy take place regularly with feedback into planning for future liturgies
- Prayer and liturgy is recorded: on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources; on a planning proforma for class prayer and liturgy; through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs and videos etc. Each school's individual approach can be found in Appendix C.
- Monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the Headteacher and Local 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 Diocese of Shrewsbury is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice

#### **(d) Curriculum Leader of Religious Education**

Curriculum, prayer and RE leads will:

- Comply with diocesan protocols for a committed working relationship between the diocese and the Trust
- Ensure continual communication with and, where appropriate, seek support and guidance from the diocesan education service

#### **(e) Teachers**

Teachers ensure that:

- Acts of worship are in accordance with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church
- There are opportunities for quality prayer and liturgy to be delivered
- An appropriate time is allocated for prayer and liturgy

#### **(f) Pupils and students**

Pupils and students are expected to:

- Participate in acts of prayer and liturgy in a respectful and reverent way

#### **(g) Parents**

Parents are expected to:

- Promote a positive attitude towards prayer and liturgy

### **4. Overview of Prayer and Liturgy Provision**

Available to all Trust schools is a liturgical year guidance document, that allows staff to have an overview of key seasons, feast days and celebrations that fall within each half-term. This allows staff to view the Church's calendar in line with their school structure, and celebrate whichever feasts are taking place while pupils and students are in school. This document is accessible via the Trust Share Point, as well as support given from the Trust Chaplain where necessary.

Please see Appendix B for a school-specific overview that outlines the daily and weekly pattern of prayer and liturgy offered in the school.

### **5. Eucharist**

The Trust priest or local clergy to the school will lead courses on the Ministry of the Word and Ministry of Holy Communion across the Trust.



Pupils and staff should have regular opportunities to attend Mass within school, where possible also having Masses for holydays of obligation and patron saint feast days.

## **6. Celebration of the Word Format**

Celebration of the Word should follow the “Gather, Word/Listen, Response, Send” format. Staff should be offered training on how to prepare Celebration of the Word, so that they can facilitate student-led prayers.

## **7. Resourcing**

Prayer and liturgy is 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.

## **8. Safeguarding**

As part of taking part in acts of daily prayer and worship with pupils and students, we also take our duty of safeguarding very seriously, and we understand that personal prayer and reflection may subsequently lead to a disclosure which would activate each school’s well-established safeguarding procedures.

## **9. Training and formation**

All new staff will be supported during Trust 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.

## **10. 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, governors and directors. Areas for development will be identified, and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

## **11. Review**

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

11.

## **Appendix A**

School Mission Statement:

“Founded on the love of Christ, and recognising the unique worth of each individual, Saint Paul’s exists to foster, with care and compassion, personal, spiritual and academic growth, extending into the community and beyond.”

## **Appendix B**

School specific overview that outlines the daily and weekly pattern of prayer and liturgy offered in the school.

### ***Daily School Life:***

- School prayer in morning and afternoon form
- School prayer at the end of period 5
- Staff prayer in weekly briefing and during formal meetings
- Collective worship in form
- Liturgical assemblies – Rota is presented at the start of the year highlighting week belongs to the Progress Leader’s, Senior Leadership Team, Chaplain and Progress Tutors as well as the liturgical theme and time of the year
- Values embedded into curriculum including RE, PSHE, RSE and other subjects
- Chaplaincy access and access to the school chapel for reflection

### ***Groups and project work:***

- Peer mentoring
- Diversity Council
- Student Council
- Prefects and pupil leadership
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- St Vincent de Paul group
- MANCEP partnership for staff
- Staff CPD

### ***Charity work:***

- Collection for Wythenshawe Foodbank
- Gifts and Toys collection for Christmas
- Projects for chosen charity of the year. These continue throughout the academic year, examples include Christmas Jumper Day, Cake Sales, sponsored events etc. students work within forms or part of the various groups highlighted to identify fundraising opportunities linked with the Chaplain.

## ***Calendared Events:***

### ***Autumn 1:***

Priest start of year blessing  
Priest prayer and blessing during staff briefing  
Year 7 one day retreat  
Year 7 Welcome Liturgy  
Voluntary praying of the rosary  
Annual Year 10 Pilgrimage

### ***Autumn 2:***

Priest prayer and blessing during staff briefing  
Year 7 annual retreat  
All Saints Day – Voluntary mass  
Annual Carol Service – Sacred Heart  
Trust Cluster mass with the primary schools  
Christmas school mass - in school  
Annual Pie & Peas event for the parish and wider community

### ***Spring 1:***

Priest prayer and blessing during staff briefing  
Year 9 annual retreat

### ***Spring 2:***

Priest prayer and blessing during staff briefing  
Ash Wednesday service (date changes annually)  
Opportunities for Reconciliation within school – Chapel  
Easter school mass - in school  
Staff Easter mass – Sacred Heart

### ***Summer 1:***

Priest prayer and blessing during staff briefing  
Prayer relay – linked to primary schools  
Year 11 Leavers Liturgy

### ***Summer 2:***

Priest prayer and blessing during staff briefing  
Corpus Christi Trust mass  
St Peter & Paul's feast day celebrations  
St Peter & Paul's school mass – St Anthony's

## **Appendix C**

### ***Quality Assurance process for prayer and liturgy at St Paul's:***

Prayer and liturgy are an integral part of our Catholic practice here at St Paul's. As such, we pride ourselves on ensuring that we share our best practice and continually aim to improve in our own roles to ensure that this is carried out to the highest possible standard.

In order for the best practice to be identified we have the following Quality Assurance process in place:

Progress Leaders are tasked with doing periodic checks on the methods and practices happening within our form time sessions to ensure consistency throughout. Staff are aware of our annual QA cycle for year groups and to ensure transparency, the Progress Leaders use these same weeks to do their checks within the forms. These checks are not written and only tracked in terms of a collective year group similar to department tracking of learning walks, as the aim is to identify best practice and also to highlight areas for improvement, which can be discussed with the year team and worked on in collaboration with the Progress Leader. The QA calendar for the year can be found within the staff handbook and is also highlighted on the overall school calendar. The Teaching & Learning Lead also sends reminders about the upcoming schedule.

Throughout the year, we also ask Progress Tutors who have particular areas of best practice within prayer and liturgy, to volunteer to share this with colleagues in order to promote this across the school.

Any Progress Tutor who requires further support, are also encouraged to reach out to the school Chaplain, who is always happy to help with any training needs required. Catholic Life CPD is also scheduled within 'School Improvement Time' a number of times a year.

In order to ensure consistency of checks from Progress Leaders, our Senior Team also accompany them on a number of walk throughs which helps to ensure that we have good quality assurance on all practice.

Progress Leaders are responsible for including the tracking of their overall year group, including set up of prayer stations, equipment such as prayer books and student involvement in prayer and liturgy identified through regular student voice surveys, which is reported back to the Senior Team annually.