



The Willows Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Our central aim at The Willows is our school motto:
God Loves Me, God Loves Everyone.

With Christ at our heart, we are a loving, caring family where each individual is nurtured in mind and spirit to fully become the person God created.

In learning together, we support each other to reach our full potential in a safe and stimulating environment where all are valued and respected.

Our school motto: 'God loves me, God loves everyone' guides our journey.

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that Christian prayer and liturgy 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.¹

Legal Requirements

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils.² (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 Prayer and Liturgy 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.

As a rule, Prayer and Liturgy will take place on the school premises. However, the Governing Body has the discretion to allow acts of worship to be held elsewhere e.g. church, church grounds.

¹ It is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of 'Collective Worship' in schools. 'Collective Worship' is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.

² 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 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.





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In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Prayer and Liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Headteacher.

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.

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- 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 enrich religious experience
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development
- to reinforce 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 Prayer and Liturgy in this school will aim to:

- raise our mind and heart to God
- celebrate the presence of God in our life and school community
- be a high quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- support learners' spiritual development





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- give learners positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds. In order to do this, celebrations will:
 - be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
 - be short and appropriately paced
 - be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings;
 - seek to involve learners at all times in preparation and leadership.

Organisation

Monday	Whole school
Tuesday	In class prepared by the pupils.
Wednesday	9.00a.m. Foundation KS1 worship KS2 class worships – all based on the Wednesday Word
Thursday	9.00a.m. Whole school lead by classes on a rota basis. Parents and families invited.
Friday	Whole school parents and families of pupils involved invited

The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy is planned:

- following a structure with reference to the church's seasons, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- in consultation with appropriate parties 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 learners skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship, rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
- Trained Liturgy leaders from Year five and Year six help plan and prepare liturgies which they then deliver to Reception and Year One. They are also responsible for leading special events in school such as Family Fast day.

Recording

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded:

- on our school calendar to keep note of themes, leaders, learner groupings
- through displays, collections of learners' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs etc.
- each class will keep their own prayer and liturgy file.





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Monitoring and Evaluation

At least once a year the school's provision of worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all learners and whether learners are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

Resources

Bibles and age appropriate Gospels are housed in the library on a separate display shelf. Each class has been given their own set of Bibles which is kept in class. Prayer books and other collective worship related materials are also housed on these shelves. Further materials are on the adjacent library shelves. There is also a section for religious books in the library.

Each classroom has a cross with a crucifix and an area as a focus for Prayer and Liturgy.

Materials for worship focal points are also provided by the RE Subject Leader.

The school mission statement is displayed in all classrooms.

The school has a central 'Worship Area' which contains resources and used daily. The Key Stage One Lunchtime liturgy group also uses this area every Monday lunchtime.

Eucharist

Eucharistic celebrations in school highlight a special occasion such as the start of the each school term and end of year. Each class join the Parish for Mass termly. The same general principles apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for learners to participate will be maximised.

We believe that learners are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

In school, therefore, the '**Liturgy of the Word**', rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

The Subject Leader for Prayer and Liturgy

The Subject leader for Prayer and Liturgy is Michelle Roddy.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinator 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.

Policy updated by Michelle Roddy September 2021





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Appendix 1

The Role of the Co-ordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- ❖ Formulating a written policy for Prayer and Liturgy
- ❖ Ensuring that there is a development plan for Prayer and Liturgy which may at times form part of the school development plan
- ❖ Ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and family backgrounds of learners
- ❖ Ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory on Children's Masses'
- ❖ Organising themes for Prayer and Liturgy
- ❖ Assisting the governors and Headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to Prayer and Liturgy

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- ❖ Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- ❖ Observing, on occasions, an Act of Prayer and Liturgy
- ❖ Informing the Headteacher of standards and developments in Prayer and Liturgy

Communication

- ❖ Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Acts of Prayer and 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 and Liturgy
- ❖ Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Prayer and Liturgy
- ❖ Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- ❖ Liaison with the Diocesan RE Centre

Professional development/ongoing formation

- ❖ Leading and organising in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- ❖ Attending appropriate in-service courses and reporting back
- ❖ Keeping up-to-date by personal reading

Resources

- ❖ Evaluating existing resources
- ❖ Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc
- ❖ Budgeting efficiently





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Appendix 2

School Statement on Prayer and Liturgy

It is the responsibility of every Catholic school to provide for all its members a vital experience of liturgy, worship and prayer which:

- ❖ names and celebrates God present and active in authentic human experience
- ❖ is educative
- ❖ is within our Catholic tradition

The purpose of these experiences is:

- ❖ to raise our mind and heart to God
- ❖ to develop the school as a community of faith
- ❖ to assist learners in developing their relationship with God, creation and the community of the Church
- ❖ to witness to the community and the wider world

Collective Worship in our schools will be:

- ❖ properly planned
- ❖ adequately resourced
- ❖ recorded
- ❖ monitored
- ❖ evaluated

In order to ensure that the Collective Worship experienced within the school is a relevant, meaningful and positive contribution to the religious, spiritual and moral development of all members of the community.

