Stella Maris Catholic Primary

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

"Our School Mission is what God sent us into the world to do – to help build His Kingdom through learning, playing, and making friends together. The tools we will use to do this are: Love, Care, Share, Trust and Respect."

This Policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body on September 2026 and will be reviewed in September 2028

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Colossians 3:12

Introduction to Prayer and Liturgy here at Stella Maris Catholic Primary School

Here at Stella Maris, school prayer, worship and liturgical celebrations are at the heart of our school community and reflect our Catholic identity. These moments provide meaningful opportunities for pupils and staff to come together in worship and deepen their relationship with God. While we honour and respect the rich diversity of beliefs in the wider world and are committed to teaching about other faiths, our focus remains on nurturing a Christ-centred environment. We strive to ensure that worship and liturgical experiences are relevant, inclusive, and spiritually enriching for all who take part, recognising the varied religious and educational needs within our school.

Our School Mission

Our School Mission is to do what God sent us into the world to do – to help build His Kingdom through learning, playing, and making friends together. The tools we will use to do this are: Love, Care, Share, Trust and Respect."
As stated in our school we strive to create a nurturing and compassionate school community. These values shape our actions, inspire our learning, and help us grow into thoughtful, caring individuals who make a positive difference in the lives of others.

'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.)

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; 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' 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.

Responsibility

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 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.

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.

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.
- Children 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 children.
- 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.
- There is liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

Our aims and objectives for Prayer and Liturgy

Through our prayer and liturgy, we aim to:

- Ensure that every pupil and member of staff have the opportunity each day to participate in meaningful worship that reflects our shared Catholic faith and Gospel values of Love, Care, Share, Trust and Respect.
- Support pupils in developing and deepening their own personal relationship with God.
- Foster a strong sense of belonging within our school community through shared spiritual experiences.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their own beliefs, celebrate life, and respond with gratitude and joy.
- Strengthen the connection between spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and our religious education curriculum.
- Inspire awe and wonder through prayer and liturgy, enriching pupils' spiritual experiences.
- Create a reflective and joyful atmosphere for worship, where music, singing and celebration are fully embraced and enjoyed.
- Offer meaningful opportunities throughout the year to explore and celebrate key religious festivals and holy days.
- Promote community cohesion and support the spiritual, social, intellectual, and moral development of all pupils.
- Encourage understanding, tolerance and respect for other faiths and cultures, helping children to grow into compassionate and open-minded individuals.

Our strategies for Prayer and Liturgy

Monday - Daily Prayer and Liturgy
Tuesday – Daily Prayer and Liturgy, and Celebration of the Word
Wednesday – Daily Prayer and Liturgy
Thursday – Daily Prayer and Liturgy, and Prayer and Praise
Friday – Daily Prayer and Liturgy, and Collective Worship/Celebration of our pupils

- Children have an opportunity to say grace before meals and prayers of thanks at the start and end of each day.
- Children will learn some well-known prayers and hymns, which then are used in worship.
- Children are provided with opportunities both to participate in worship and to lead worship dependent upon age and prayer development.
- Throughout the year, the parents from every class will be invited to participate in collective worship.
- During staff meetings, staff gather for worship and an opportunity to share intentions and prayers.
- Visitors and guests are brought in to address the children and, where appropriate, lead acts of worship.
- On special occasions, worship will be linked to religious and other festivals such as advent and lent.

Stella Maris staff and governors will liaise with the Diocese of Southwark and KCSP to keep updated with training needs and/or developing Ecumenical matters, which may affect our work in this area.

Outcomes of Prayer and Liturgy

At Stella Maris, it is so important that our children are given rich and varied opportunities to experience, enjoy, and actively participate in a wide range of acts of worship. Our school creates an environment that nurtures spiritual growth through prayer, reflection, and a deep sense of reverence. Pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards worship and to appreciate the value of worshiping communities. Through our prayer and liturgical life, learners grow in spirituality and are invited to encounter moments of awe and wonder. Each day, the spiritual vision of our mission - using our gifts from God to help others and to bring joy and peace to our world - is brought to life through meaningful worship experiences that shape the hearts and minds of our children.

Resourcing

- 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.

Training

- 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.
- Training and formation of 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.
- New staff will be provided with a handbook, introducing them to the Catholic Life of the school.
- 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 extremely well supported to lead as required

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.

Review

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