



Cardinal Newman Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



MISSION STATEMENT

To be a community of learners, believers and friends rooted in the values and teachings of the Gospel. We seek to enable every individual to develop his or her potential in the knowledge that they are uniquely created and loved by God.

Title	Prayer and Liturgy Policy
Approved and adopted by	Teaching staff, Head Teacher and Governors
Policy reviewed	March 2023
Committee Responsible	RE Leader/HT/DHT
New Review Date	March 2025

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 The term Collective Worship is the legal term to describe gathering together for Prayer and Liturgy. Both terms are used interchangeably in this document.

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.

Parents have a legal 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 the Religious Education curriculum.

In schools with a designated religious character, like Cardinal Newman, Collective Worship is far more than a statutory requirement. It is crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Collective worship is an important part of a Catholic school's distinctive ethos.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Cardinal Newman Catholic School

Prayer and Liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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.

The Aims of Collective Worship

Collective Worship in Cardinal Newman Catholic 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.'

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Principles

All acts of worship in Cardinal Newman Catholic 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 skills so that they can 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

Collective Worship is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Religious Education, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day.

Parish and parents are invited to participate in some liturgical celebrations.

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

We have formal prayers taught to all the children including the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be. The children are encouraged to participate in spontaneous pray within their own class on a daily basis as well as in collective worship.

Liturgical Assemblies

Introduction

Assemblies are important regular occasions when the Catholic school reinforces its sense of being a community centred on Christ. This policy was written in light of the Diocesan Directory on Worship in Catholic Schools.

Structure of an Assembly

Essentially the structure for an assembly can be based around the Liturgy of the Word:

1. Gathering - welcome
2. The Word - readings from Scripture
3. Reflection - responding to the Word of God, intercessions
4. Moving on - sending forth

1. Gathering – welcome

It is important that we give assemblies a sense of occasion. The quality of the atmosphere can be shaped by how pupils and staff arrive and punctuality. Gathering in silence is very effective in preparing pupils to listen to the Word of God, just as live or recorded music can help to still the group. Teachers are to sit with their class and should see themselves as responsible for the behaviour of their class. Pupils should enter in silence, displaying prayer hands.

2. The Word - readings from Scripture

The starting point for a whole school liturgy should be the Scripture readings from the previous or forthcoming Sunday. The weekly Christian festival, Sunday, is the feast of feasts. Sunday is the weekly Easter, recalling the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Week by week, season by season, the Church unfolds the mystery of Christ through the scriptures contained in her Lectionary (The Sunday Missal contains all the lectionary readings). Many members of our school community may not normally experience the Christian feast of Sunday, however for those members of our school community who have celebrated the Christian feast of Sunday, our school should be a place where they are able to reflect on the mysteries they have celebrated. The principle is to reflect on the Sunday past at the Monday Liturgy assembly and prepare for the Sunday coming on the Friday. Themes are therefore based upon the Lectionary.

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

There will be, from time to time, special occasions that need to be acknowledged during collective worship. On such occasions it may well be appropriate, in consultation with the RE Lead, to select alternative readings to the Lectionary.

Using the Previous Sunday's Reading in Assembly

The readings for any given Sunday will consist of an Old Testament Reading, a Psalm, a New Testament Reading and a Gospel Reading. From this collection of readings, an assembly theme could be drawn from a couple or only one text. If appropriate a single line of Scripture could be the basis for the assembly theme. The key point to remember is that whatever is selected must be proclaimed. It must be read with dignity, clearly and confidently.

3. Reflection - responding to the Word of God, intercessions

At this point, the response to Scripture can be original and stimulating, for example drama, art (visual focus), mime, song, and music. Prayer and Liturgy offers regular opportunities for community song.

Collective Worship is the key time when the community prays together. The whole assembly should be seen as prayer. A prayer added onto the end of an otherwise secular assembly is to be avoided. There should be some opportunity for intercessory prayers (these are prayers that invite prayers for a particular person, event or issue). Pupils can prepare these invitations to prayer. It is important that pupils should be formed in how to pray and how to invite others to pray. (This formation in prayer occurs in different ways, through the daily act of worship in the classroom, in the RE curriculum and on retreat days.) They should be encouraged to prepare the intercessions as invitations to prayer, rather than letters to God. Prayers that begin, "Dear God ..." or "Dear Jesus ..." should be discouraged. We should encourage invitations that begin, "Let us pray for ..." or simply, "For ..."

The use of silence is cannot be overstated; it provides the opportunity for pupils to pray in their hearts.

4. Moving on - sending forth

Whatever theme is developed, there should be some aspect that enables students and staff to link it to their lives and invites them to respond. This can be quite simple such as asking a question or more elaborate in terms of giving detailed examples. For instances, an assembly based around the reading from Matthew 25:31-46 (The Last Judgement) might elaborate on how pupils could help those in need around them.

Prayer and Liturgy Preparation

Prayer and Liturgy, as any other part of the curriculum, should be seen as intentional learning experiences, which require careful preparation, professional execution, and detailed evaluation. The use of the Assembly Planning Sheet will aid the process of effective delivery.

The timetable of Collective Worship is as below.

See calendar for the Liturgical year at the end of the policy. Appendix 2

Monitoring and Evaluation

See monitoring file.

Prayer and Liturgy is monitored using Collective Worship monitoring form, (Appendix 1).

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and appropriate CPD put in place.

Resources

The R.E. leader has a bank of resources to support staff in planning and leading Prayer and Liturgy. Each classroom has a number of resources including a 'Prayer and Liturgy' box and Bibles.

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

Other opportunities

See calendar for the Liturgical year at the end of the policy. Appendix 2

Eucharist

See calendar for the Liturgical year at the end of the policy. Appendix 2

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the R.E. Leader 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.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

<p>Date:</p>	<p>Class/ Leaders :</p> <p>Names of the children who have planned and led the session:</p>
<p>Gather:</p> <p>Set the scene – consider layout of the space and the seating arrangements. Lighting? Fragrance? Can everyone see the focal point? Lectern? What symbols will you use? Bible – for the Word Candle for Jesus as light of the world – may have a smaller table with candles for each class Cross or Crucifix – depending on the time of the year Liturgical colours – help to focus on the mood for the season</p>	
<p>Word:</p> <p>Every liturgy must include a biblical text – it is through the Word that God speaks to us and calls us to respond Ensure the word can be read – choose readers carefully allow them time to rehearse Allow for times of silence</p> <div> </div>	
<p>Response to the Word: – Prayer/Symbolic Action</p> <p>Sing – children enjoy singing – chose music relevant to the time of the year Actions, dance and drama – allows us to reflect on scripture and turn towards God in a prayerful response Bidding prayers – Lord in your mercy, We pray to the Lord Ritual action – usually using the senses</p>	
<p>Mission and dismissal</p> <p>How? What? Why? What will you do to help those present take the message away with them - prayer card, picture, symbol, action/deed etc. Music or hymn to leave</p>	
<p>What the children thought...</p>	<div> </div>

Collective Worship Observation Record

Date and Time:

Present: Whole school / Key Stage / Class

Leader:

Theme of Act of Worship:

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
<p>Setting the Atmosphere and Preparing for Worship: Is there a plan available with content to meet the needs of all present? Is there an appropriate focus? Are the resources used suitable? Are ICT / Music etc. prepared and ready? Do all the readers / leaders have all they need? Have all support staff been briefed? Have invitations been sent to members of the community (if appropriate)? Is the environment suitable and ready?</p>		
<p>Gathering: How do participants gather – is there a sense of order and respect? Is there a procession / movement to another area? How is a prayerful atmosphere created? Is there an invitation to participate? Does everyone feel welcome? Is the purpose of the act of worship clear and the focus explained?</p>		

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
<p>Listening to the Word: Is the Scripture they are listening to suitable? Is the Word treated with reverence? Has / have the reader(s) been well-prepared so as to engage the listener? How is the 'reading' shared – role play, music, power-point etc.? Is it suitable for the participants? Do participants listen attentively? Do they show good listening skills?</p>		
<p>Responding: Is there maximum participation? Is time given for individual silent reflection? Do children pray / respond wholeheartedly? Are adults good role models? Do all adults participate? Are participants invited to respond in an appropriate manner? (in a variety of ways?)</p>		
<p>Going Forth: Does Worship conclude appropriately? Do participants leave Collective Worship in a suitable, orderly manner? How are they enabled to take the message away with them?</p>		

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
<p>Overall: Was it a positive, enriching religious experience for all present? Has this worship enhanced the spiritual and / or moral development of those present? Was the time and content appropriate for the age, ability and background of the children? Did all parts of worship help to develop the Liturgical formation of participants? Was it well-organised, led and presented? Was there a sense of community, common ethos and shared values?</p>		

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to Class Teacher:

Date:

Monitoring of prayer corner/focus

Year Group:

Date:

Focus	Areas to celebrate	Actions Required
The prayer corner/area is prominent in the classroom		
It reflects the current religious education topic		
It looks clean, fresh and well presented		
The focus is changed regularly to reflect the liturgical time of the year		
Do pupils help to assemble and care for the area?		
<p>The Bible is prominently displayed</p> <p>YES / NO (turned to the Scripture reading of the day/theme)</p>		
<p>A selection of religious objects, items for reflection and cloths</p> <p>are available and brought out at different times</p>		

The prayer area is used interactively e.g. by using prayer intention cards		
Interesting stimuli are used e.g. incense, music, wind chimes, running water		
The prayer area is used regularly by teachers and pupils		

A copy of this monitoring sheet has been given to Class Teacher:

Date:



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Appendix 2
Liturgical Year at Cardinal Newman School

Continuous	Twice weekly whole school Prayer and Liturgy, 1 x Key stage assembly and 2 x Class Prayer and Liturgy. 1 x Class Mass, 1 x Parish Mass and a Mission week assembly.		
Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term	
September (Ordinary Time) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school Family Mass- Beginning of the school year linked with the parishes. Including Goring Forth. • 	January <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epiphany or Candlemas Mass 	April (Easter) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter Mass 	
October (Ordinary Time) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvest Festival- KS1 and KS2 Rosary -daily • Feast of St John Henry Newman 	February / March <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ash Wednesday 	May <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feast of the Ascension Mass • Rosary every morning • Crowning of Our Lady 	
November (Ordinary Time / Start of Advent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remembrance 	Lent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation services & sacrament. Years 4-6. • 24 hours for the Lord • Stations of the Cross - all classes • Holy week liturgies if appropriate. 	June <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feast of St Peter and St Paul Mass 	
December (Advent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconciliation services & sacrament. Yrs 4-6 • Advent Mass for the Whole School • Nativities Years R-3. • Years 4, 5 and 6 Carol Service at Church 	Easter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easter Services KS1 & KS2 • Celebrating Easter day 	July <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xavier Y6 Mass. • Whole school Celebration Mass. 	