



# St Bartholomew's Catholic School

## Prayer and Liturgy Policy



*"For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them."*

Matthew 18:20

|                            |                |                             |
|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Governing Body | <b>Date:</b> September 2026 |
| <b>Last reviewed:</b>      | October 2025   |                             |
| <b>Next review due by:</b> | September 2028 |                             |

## **St Bartholomew's Mission**

Our mission at St. Bartholomew's Catholic Primary School is to create a joyful Catholic environment which caters for the individual academic, social and spiritual needs of each child within a caring school family in which all individuals are valued and respected as much for their differences as for their similarities. We promote values and attitudes of the highest standard which allow each child to reach their full potential.

We strive to develop children's interests and talents and to equip each child with the tools they need for the future. The dignity and value of our children is at the centre of everything we do

Our curriculum drivers, Independence, Dignity, Experience, Aspiration, Joy, reinforce our mission across all subjects. At St Bartholomew's, we Serve the Lord with Joy as One School, One Family.

## **The Context of this Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

*"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, 23).

At St Bartholomew's, we believe that prayer and liturgy are at the heart of our community life. They are essential to our Catholic life and mission. This policy acknowledges our unique story as a school community, our relationship with our local Parish and the spirit of our patron, St Bartholomew.

Rooted in the Catholic Social Teaching principle of Human Dignity, this approach recognises the richness of our diverse social and cultural context. It aims to make the Church's prayer and liturgy a vibrant and inclusive experience for every member of our school community, honouring the inherent dignity of each person as created in the image and likeness of God. It is guided by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory for Catholic Schools in England and Wales (2023).

## **Understanding our Worship**

Prayer and Liturgy in a Catholic school, celebrates the life-giving presence of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in our lives. It is how we, as a school faith community, come together to give glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. Through acts of shared Worship, prayer and liturgy, our school's Catholic identity is encouraged, shaped and sustained.

The intention of our Acts of Worship is to offer our children positive liturgical experiences and give them meaningful opportunities to engage in the sacramental life of the church. They are all undertaken outside of Religious Education designated curriculum time.

In line with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, we recognise a distinction between the different forms of worship that enrich our school life.

- **Prayer:** The lifting of hearts and minds to God. It has a simple structure, blending familiar and spontaneous prayer, such as in daily classroom prayer or grace before meals.

- **Celebrations of the Word:** Worship created for the school community, such as liturgical assemblies, which are not taken from the Church's official liturgical books. These celebrations are centred on scripture and allow for more creative freedom, while drawing on liturgical elements.
- **Liturgy:** The Church's official worship, such as Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The structure, words and gestures are set out in liturgical books and must be followed, allowing for less creative deviation.

### **Statement of Requirement and Pupil Entitlement**

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, (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).

- This policy fulfils the legal requirement for a daily act of prayer and liturgy for all pupils, which is in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic church.
- St Bartholomew's recognises and respects that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from prayer and liturgy and any such request will be handled in a dialogue with the Headteacher.
- Importantly, all pupils at St Bartholomew's have an entitlement to experience the richness of the church's prayer and liturgical life. During their time at our school, children will be given opportunities to experience a wide variety of celebrations including:
  - The Mass
  - The Sacrament of Reconciliation
  - The Sacrament of Holy Communion
  - Celebrations of the Word
  - Elements of the Liturgy of the Hours (such as Morning Prayer)
  - Popular devotions (e.g., the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Crowning of Mary)
  - Rosary
  - Prayers with Parents
- The school will encourage a unified repertoire of traditional prayers and liturgical music, enabling pupils to become well-acquainted with them. Through this, students will commit key prayers to memory and participate in sung liturgy with confidence and reverence.

### **Our School Community at Prayer and Liturgy**

At St Bartholomew's, we strive to be an inclusive community. While all our prayer and liturgy is authentically Catholic, we welcome and respect all members of our community, inviting them to participate according to their own faith and conscience. We are guided by the following principles from the Directory:

- **Members of the Catholic Community:** Our prayer and liturgy will seek to reflect the cultural diversity within our Catholic community, drawing on different traditions to enrich our worship.
- **Other Christians:** Baptised Christians from other denominations are our sisters and brothers in Christ. They are welcome to participate in prayers, singing and listening to the Word of God. We respectfully acknowledge that they do not receive Holy Communion in the Catholic Church.

• **Members of Other Religious Traditions:** We welcome the presence of those from other faiths as a sign of mutual respect and dialogue. Their presence is one of respectful observation. We will not ask them to say prayers or perform gestures contrary to their faith (e.g., the Sign of the Cross). We are committed to open dialogue with families to ensure their integrity is respected.

• **People of Good Will:** We welcome pupils and staff with no professed faith to be present and reflective during our celebrations. Their presence is valued as part of our shared search for meaning and truth.

## **Overview of Provision**

Prayer and liturgy are woven into the fabric of our school day and year, guided by an Annual Plan of Provision (Religious Calendar). Our provision for worship incorporates various forms, from simple classroom prayer to more structured Celebrations of the Word and the formal Liturgy of the Church, such as the Mass.

All our prayer and liturgy gatherings follow the four-part structure of:

**Gather, Word, Respond, Send.**

Provision includes:

- Whole-school liturgical assemblies, three times per week, following the themes of the liturgical year or principles of Catholic Social Teaching. These gatherings allow our pupils to reflect on Gospel values and encourage them to take an active part in prayer and worship. They encourage children to understand and apply the teachings of the faith to their own lives.
- Daily prayer times in class. In addition to class-based acts of worship, common prayers are said together at specific times of the day. Through the connection that daily prayers offer, our children are able to share achievements and challenges of their lives and can take strength and purpose from them. These times are also opportunities to give thanks to God and pray for those in need.
- On days when the school does not gather for Prayer and Liturgy, in class, child-led prayer and liturgy is prepared and led by the children supported.
- During class Masses (KS2) or Children's liturgies (EYFS/KS1). These take place once a term and our pupils lead the liturgies which take place in Church. They introduce the theme of the Mass or liturgy, read the readings, write and read prayers of intercession, sing hymns and offer gifts at the offertory. Parents, governors and Parishioners are invited to attend these acts of worship.
- Our Parish Priest celebrates Mass with us on Holy Days of Obligation and other Christian festivals as well as the beginning and end of terms. These take place in our Parish Church, Holy Apostles. Parents, governors and parishioners are warmly welcomed to pray with us.
- During the seasons of Advent and Lent, those children who have received the sacrament of Holy Communion are invited to church to participate in an act of reconciliation with our Parish priest. They are given opportunities to reflect on right and wrong and the need to say sorry and experience the grace of being forgiven.
- All staff are invited to celebrate the First Holy Communion Mass each year with our candidates. The headteacher prepares the children for this Mass

- Preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Communion is undertaken annually after school, led by our Parish priest and a Parish Catechist.
- We offer children a Rosary club every week during which any children are welcome to come along and say the Rosary with a member of staff.
- We hold 'Prayers with Parents' every Friday morning when children and parents gather in the hall before school to pray together. All are welcome
- Our school works hard to strengthen the links between home, school, Parish and community through:
  - Whole school Masses
  - Class Masses and Children's liturgies
  - Whole school assemblies
  - Religious services such as our Nativity play, Easter production and carol services
  - Harvest Liturgy and Crowning of Mary
  - Carol singing in the community
  - Charity fundraising
  - Confessions
  - Rosary prayer group
  - Community afternoon teas
  - Prayers with Parents every Friday morning

Links to RE and other curriculum subjects (e.g. CST, Laudato Si') are intentionally built into prayer themes and intercessions.

## **Responsibility**

### **(a) Governance**

The Local Governing Committee, 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 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.

### **(b) 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 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.

### **(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator**

In conjunction with the Headteacher, the prayer and liturgy coordinator will 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 (Religious Calendar) 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.
- pupils 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 pupils.
- 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 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.
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

### **(d) All Staff, Pupils and Clergy**

Responsibility is collaborative. All staff model good practice. Pupils are encouraged to lead. We work in close partnership with our local clergy to ensure our celebrations are authentic and pastorally sensitive.

## **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 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 and altar focus areas in every classroom, will be furnished, maintained and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season.
- Corridor displays will, during key liturgical periods, reflect these (Advent/Lent)

## **Training and Formation**

St Bartholomew's is committed to the spiritual formation of all members of its community. 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. 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.

All staff and pupils will receive ongoing formation to help them participate in a "full, conscious and active" way. This includes understanding the meaning of the liturgy and learning the actions, postures and responses that express our faith.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly and at least annually. It will involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy and governors. The pupil voice is an essential part of this review and will be actively sought and listened to.

Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

### **Review**

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

---

Appendix 1a

#### **Prayer and Liturgy Rota**

Appendix 1b

#### **Prayer Progression**

Appendix 1c

#### **Prayer and Liturgy Planner**

## Appendix 1a

### St Bartholomew's Prayer and Liturgy Rota

|           |                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monday    | Whole school prayer and liturgy, led by Headteacher, based on Sunday's Gospel                                                                                                 |
| Tuesday   | Child-Led prayer and liturgy (individual classes)                                                                                                                             |
| Wednesday | Praise and Liturgy, prayers led by children, praise led by Mrs Martin                                                                                                         |
| Thursday  | Child-Led prayer and liturgy (individual classes) and individual Class Masses                                                                                                 |
| Friday    | Prayers with Parents<br>Friday Celebration/Prayers Celebration and links to Monday prayer and liturgy led by Headteacher, prayers led by classes on a rota<br>KS2 Rosary Club |

The prayer and liturgy reflect the liturgical year, Catholic Social Teaching as well as Catholic values and virtues.

## Appendix 1b

### Prayer Progression

| Age phase                                                                      | 5-7 (KS1)                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 7-9 (LKS2)                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 9-11 (UKS2)                                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prayers<br><br>All children will know the school morning and home-time prayers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Sign of the Cross</li> <li>• The Lord's Prayer</li> <li>• Hail Mary</li> <li>• Glory be</li> <li>• Grace before meals</li> <li>• Grace after meals</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Apostles' Creed</li> <li>• An Act of Contrition</li> <li>• Angel of God</li> <li>• Come, Holy Spirit</li> <li>• The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Morning Offering</li> <li>• The Rosary</li> <li>• The Magnificat</li> <li>• Act of Faith</li> <li>• Act of Hope</li> <li>• Act of Love</li> </ul> |

Appendix 1c

**Prayer and Liturgy Planner**

Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

|                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Preparation Required</b> | Resources<br>(Who is leading each aspect of the liturgy? What will they say? What resources are needed?)                                                                                                                                             |  |
| <b>Gather</b>               | The sacred space should be the focal point of the prayer. The candle should be lit and the sign of the cross made to begin the time of Prayer and Liturgy. A focal object or drawing should be shared to help the introduction of your chosen theme. |  |
| <b>Listen</b>               | A reading from Scripture. Which reading will you share, consider how it links to your theme.                                                                                                                                                         |  |
| <b>Respond</b>              | A prayer/reflection linked to the theme.<br>Write your own prayer/s to reflect the teachings you've shared.                                                                                                                                          |  |

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Send</b> | <p>Prayer should lead to action.</p> <p>What questions can you ask of the children based on what you've shared today?</p> <p>What challenge do you want others to complete linked to living out the school's mission? How does the shared message link to CST, how can we live this out in our daily lives?</p> <p>End with a reflective piece of music or a hymn.</p> |  |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|