

St John's Catholic Primary School, Bridgnorth



"I am the vine you are the branches" – John, 15.

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Reviewed: September 2025

Reviewed by: G. Welsh

Next review date: September 2028

1. Context

At St John's Catholic Primary School, prayer and liturgy are at the heart of our Catholic life. Rooted in Christ, our prayer and liturgical practices give glory, honour, praise, and thanks to God, shaping us as a community of faith and love.

We fulfil the rights, rites, and disciplines of the Catholic Church, providing daily prayer and liturgy experiences for all pupils in line with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory (2023). We recognise that prayer and liturgy are distinct from curriculum time while being integral to the formation and flourishing of every child.

2. Legal Requirements

In line with the Education Act 1988 and the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, Catholic schools are legally required to provide a daily act of collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church. Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from prayer and liturgy up to the age of sixteen, while pupils in the sixth form may choose to withdraw themselves. It is important to note that prayer and liturgy are not part of the Religious Education curriculum allocation, but rather a distinct and essential aspect of Catholic school life.

3. Vision, Aims and Objectives

Our vision is that prayer and liturgy are inclusive, formative, and central to our school community. Through them, we seek to contemplate the mystery of God, reflect on spiritual and moral issues, and encourage the exploration of personal beliefs. Prayer and liturgy provide opportunities to celebrate the rhythms of life and faith, to foster a strong sense of belonging and community, and to nurture understanding and participation in liturgical practices. Above all, they serve to reinforce our Catholic tradition through the lived experience of prayer and celebration.

4. Responsibilities

Governing Body

The governing body has the responsibility to ensure that daily prayer and liturgy are provided for all pupils. Governors will appoint a named Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator, allocate an appropriate annual budget that reflects the centrality of prayer and liturgy, and monitor and evaluate provision at least annually, drawing upon the views of pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. They will approve and review this policy every three years and ensure that it is shared with all stakeholders.

Headteacher

The Headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school, is responsible for ensuring that this policy is fully implemented. This includes working closely with the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator, supporting staff through induction and ongoing formation, and ensuring that suitable resources are available for prayer and liturgy.

Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

The Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator has the responsibility to develop and implement an Annual Plan of Provision, ensuring that daily prayer is planned, inclusive, and age-appropriate for all pupils. They support pupils in their liturgical formation, enabling them to take an increasingly active role in planning, preparing, and leading prayer and liturgy according to their age and capacity. They also support and resource staff, monitor and evaluate provision, report regularly to the Senior Leadership Team and governors, and maintain active links with clergy, the parish, and diocesan advisors.

5. Overview of Provision

At St John's, prayer and liturgy form part of the daily rhythm of school life.

Daily Prayer and Liturgy:

- **Monday:** Gospel assembly led by SLT.
- **Tuesday:** Whole-school hymn practice/Open the Book
- **Wednesday:** Class-based Prayer and Liturgy using Wednesday Word.
- **Thursday:** Whole-school assembly (Mass or liturgy where scheduled).
- **Friday:** Celebration assembly.

The Annual Provision Plan ensures that pupils experience the liturgical year, holy days of obligation, and the range of liturgical treasures of the Church.

Annual Masses and Liturgies:

- New School Year Mass
- Harvest Mass
- All Saints Mass
- Advent Mass
- Christmas Carol Service
- Epiphany Mass
- Ash Wednesday Mass
- Stations of the Cross
- Easter Journey
- May Procession
- Pentecost Mass
- Corpus Christi Mass
- Leavers' Mass

In addition, opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation are provided during Advent and Lent, ensuring that children are able to encounter the sacramental life of the Church.

6. Resources and Environment

The environment at St John's reflects the centrality of prayer and liturgy. Each classroom and communal space have a designated prayer area, which is regularly updated with cloths, candles, symbols, and images that reflect the liturgical season.

Central resources, including the Roman Missal, Lectionary, altar, ambo, vestments, sacred vessels, hymnals, and liturgy boxes in each class, are used to support meaningful liturgical celebrations. Music and hymn choices follow the guidance of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, giving priority to the use of liturgical texts such as the Gospel Acclamation and Eucharistic Acclamations. Wherever possible, repertoire is aligned with parish practice to ensure continuity between school and parish life.

7. Training and Formation

All new members of staff receive induction on prayer and liturgy so that they understand the expectations and responsibilities associated with this area of Catholic life. Ongoing professional development is provided to ensure staff are well prepared to plan and lead prayer and liturgy. Staff also have access to diocesan training and best-practice updates, ensuring alignment with diocesan expectations. Pupils are supported in their liturgical formation according to their age and capacity so that their participation grows in depth and meaning as they move through the school.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy at St John's are monitored regularly by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator, who works closely with staff and clergy to ensure quality and impact. An annual evaluation takes place and involves pupils, parents, staff, governors, and clergy, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives inform the development of provision. Outcomes from this evaluation directly shape the Annual Plan of Provision for the following year. Governors also receive a formal annual report outlining the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy and identifying next steps.

9. Wider Engagement

Prayer and liturgy at St John's extend beyond pupils. Staff and governors are given opportunities to pray and celebrate liturgy together, recognising the importance of adult faith formation within the school community. Parents and carers are regularly invited to participate in the prayer and liturgical life of the school through events such as Stay and Pray, the Easter Journey, and seasonal liturgies. The school maintains strong links with the parish, local clergy, and diocesan advisors, ensuring that its liturgical life is rooted in and supported by the wider Church.

10. Linked Policies

- Religious Education Policy
- Catholic Life and Mission Policy
- Progression in Prayer Document

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years as part of the school's cycle of policy review. The governing body will ensure it is kept up to date with diocesan and national requirements, and that it continues to reflect the central role of prayer and liturgy in the life of the school.

Agreed by governors: 22nd September 2025

Signed:



Mr E. Beards



Miss C. Derwas

[Chair of Governors / Headteacher]