

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



Written: February 2026

Approved:

“At Holy Family School, we encourage our children to live together, work together and pray together in a way which will enable them to find fulfilment in this life and be a living example within the community.”

1. 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*, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

2. 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; 70 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)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)). 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.

3. Responsibility

Governance

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

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Prayer and liturgy are central to the daily life and Catholic mission of our school, shaping the spiritual rhythm of our community and supporting pupils in their growth in faith.

In accordance with current Catholic Education Service (CES) expectations for Catholic schools, our provision offers a structured pattern of daily classroom prayer including morning prayer, grace before and after meals, and end-of-day reflection. This is alongside weekly opportunities for pupils to gather for collective worship, hymn practice and class-led liturgies that reflect the liturgical season.

Throughout the year, the school celebrates Mass at key points in the liturgical calendar, including major feasts and solemnities and provides opportunities for pupils to encounter the Sacrament of Reconciliation, particularly during Advent and Lent, as part of their sacramental and spiritual formation.

Special liturgies, including those marking saints' days, seasonal devotions, and moments of community significance, further enrich the prayer life of the school. This section offers an overview of our worship life; fuller operational detail including dates, responsibilities, and celebration-specific planning, is set out in the Annual Plan of Provision and Liturgical Calendar.

ANNUAL PLAN OF PROVISION & LITURGICAL CALENDAR

(Including RSHE Provision, Prayer & Liturgy, Monitoring & Responsibilities)

Academic Years: 2026 - 2028

1. DAILY AND WEEKLY PATTERN OF PRAYER & LITURGY

Daily

Practice	Description	Responsibility
Morning Prayer	Class-based prayer using school prayer book / diocesan prayers.	Class Teacher
Grace Before Meals	Prayer said before lunch.	Class Teacher
Grace After Meals	Optional, depending on KS.	Class Teacher
End of Day Prayer	Reflective prayer or examen-style reflection.	Class Teacher
Collective Silence/Stillness	1–2 minutes at the start of RE lessons or assemblies.	Class Teacher / SLT

Weekly

Practice	Description	Responsibility
Whole-School Liturgy / Celebration Assembly	Gospel focus, celebration of mission & virtues.	Headteacher / RE Lead
Class Liturgies	Child-led prayer time linked to RE topic.	Class Teacher / Pupils
Hymn Practice	Liturgical music preparation.	Music Lead / RE Lead
Key Stage Liturgy	Gospel focus, celebration of mission & virtues.	Teacher / Pupils

2. YEARLY LITURGICAL CALENDAR (Core Dates for 2026–2028)

LITURGICAL SEASONS

- **Advent:** Begins 4 Sundays before Christmas (late Nov/early Dec each year)
- **Christmas Season:** Dec 25 – Baptism of the Lord (mid-Jan)
- **Lent:** Begins on **Ash Wednesday**
- **Holy Week:** Week before Easter
- **Eastertide:** Easter Sunday → Pentecost
- **Ordinary Time:** After Baptism of the Lord → Lent, then Pentecost → Advent

KEY DATES 2026

Date	Event	School Action	Responsible
18 Feb 2026	Ash Wednesday	Whole-school liturgy, distribution of ashes	Parish Priest / RE Lead
29 Mar 2026	Palm Sunday	Gospel dramatisation in assembly (Fri before)	RE Lead
2 Apr 2026	Holy Thursday	Prayer stations of the Last Supper	KS2 Staff
5 Apr 2026	Easter Sunday	Easter liturgy first week back	SLT
14 May 2026	Ascension	Whole-school Mass	RE Lead
24 May 2026	Pentecost	Red-themed celebration assembly	RE Lead
31 May 2026	Corpus Christi	Adoration / procession in school	Parish Priest
1 Nov 2026	All Saints	Saints-themed liturgy	Class Teachers
2 Nov 2026	All Souls	Prayer service for deceased	HT / RE Lead
29 Nov 2026	Advent Begins	Weekly Advent liturgies	RE Lead
15 Dec 2026	School Carol Service	Parish link	Music Lead

KEY DATES 2027

Date	Event	School Action	Responsibility
10 Feb 2027	Ash Wednesday	Whole-school liturgy	RE Lead
21 Mar 2027	Palm Sunday	Assembly re-enactment	KS1
25 Mar 2027	Holy Thursday	Last Supper retreat morning	SLT
28 Mar 2027	Easter Sunday	Eastertide liturgy	RE Lead
6 May 2027	Ascension	Mass	Parish Priest
16 May 2027	Pentecost	Whole-school celebration	Chaplaincy
3 Jun 2027	Corpus Christi	Adoration	Parish Priest
1 Nov 2027	All Saints	Celebration of saints	Class Teachers
2 Nov 2027	All Souls	Remembrance liturgy	HT
28 Nov 2027	Advent Begins	Weekly candle-lit liturgies	RE Lead
14 Dec 2027	Carol Service	Hall or church	Music Lead

KEY DATES 2028

Date	Event	School Action	Responsibility
1 Mar 2028	Ash Wednesday	Whole-school liturgy	RE Lead
9 Apr 2028	Palm Sunday	Assembly	KS2
13 Apr 2028	Holy Thursday	Prayer stations	RE Lead
16 Apr 2028	Easter Sunday	Resurrection liturgy	SLT
25 May 2028	Ascension	Mass	RE Lead
4 Jun 2028	Pentecost	Celebration assembly	Chaplaincy
22 Jun 2028	Corpus Christi	Adoration in classrooms	Parish Priest
1 Nov 2028	All Saints	Saints day liturgy	Class Teachers

Date	Event	School Action	Responsibility
2 Nov 2028	All Souls	Prayer for the faithful departed	HT
3 Dec 2028	Advent Begins	Weekly liturgies	RE Lead
12 Dec 2028	Carol Service	Church	Music Lead

3. RSE/RSHE ANNUAL PROVISION CALENDAR (2026–2028)

Aligns with Catholic formation, CES expectations, and DfE RSHE requirements

EVERY YEAR (Repeating Cycle)

September

- Launch of Mission of the School
 - Class prayer service to “Dedicate our learning to God”
 - RSHE baseline activities
- Responsibility:** HT, RE Lead, Class Teachers

October

- Creationtide activities (environmental stewardship)
 - Y6 puberty introduction session
- Responsibility:** Science Lead, RSHE Lead

November

- All Saints / All Souls liturgies
 - Beginning of Anti-Bullying Week → links to *Respectful Relationships (DfE)*
- Responsibility:** RE Lead, Pastoral Lead

December (Advent)

- Weekly Advent liturgies
 - Charity actions (Caritas, CAFOD)
- Responsibility:** Chaplaincy Lead

January

- New Year peace liturgy
 - Mental Health Week preparation
- Responsibility:** Pastoral Lead

February (Lent begins)

- Ash Wednesday liturgy (fixed annually above)
 - RSHE teaching on emotions, self-care, forgiveness
- Responsibility:** RE Lead, RSHE Lead

March

- Holy Week reflections
 - KS2 puberty & hygiene sessions (Science + RSHE)
- Responsibility:** Science Lead, RSHE Lead

April

- Eastertide liturgy
 - Online safety week (DfE safeguarding requirement)
- Responsibility:** Computing Lead

May

- Ascension Mass
 - Y5/6 human development science units
 - RSE parent information workshop
- Responsibility:** HT, Science Lead, RSHE Lead

June

- Pentecost liturgy
 - Relationships and family life sessions (Journey in Love)
 - Chaplaincy retreat day
- Responsibility:** RE Lead, Parish Priest

July

- Thanksgiving liturgy
 - End-of-year pupil spiritual reflections
- Responsibility:** SLT, Class Teachers

4. GOVERNANCE, MONITORING & RESPONSIBILITIES

Area	Action	Frequency	Responsibility
RE Curriculum Monitoring	Book scrutinies, learning walks	Termly	RE Lead / Governors
RSHE Monitoring	Pupil voice, planning checks	Bi-annually	RSHE Lead
Worship Audit	Review prayer & liturgy provision	Termly	Chaplaincy Lead
Catholic Life Review	Review mission, behaviour, charity work	Termly	HT / Governors
Parish Links	Priest visits, sacramental prep	Ongoing	Parish Priest
Annual Governors Report	Catholic Life & Mission	Annual	Foundation Governors

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. 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

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.

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 Headteacher and Religious Education Lead.

Appendix

INSPECTION-READY EVIDENCE TEMPLATES designed specifically for **Catholic Schools Inspectorate (CSI)** expectations, **Ofsted (2025 framework)** and **DfE RSHE statutory requirements**.

1. Catholic Life & Mission

Section	Details / Evidence	Completed By	Date
Mission & Values in Action			
Examples of Gospel Values Lived Out			
Catholic Social Teaching (CST) in Practice			
Witness of Adults (e.g., modelling faith, pastoral care)			
Community & Parish Links			
Sacramental Preparation Involvement			
Charity & Social Action Projects			
Pupil Voice Evidence			
Documentation Attached (photos, notes, newsletters)			
Next Steps / Actions			

2. Prayer & Liturgy

Area Observed	Evidence / Notes	Observer	Date
Sacred Space Prepared (liturgical colours, symbols)			
Quality of Gathering			
Scripture Used & Quality of Proclamation			
Pupil Participation (reading, leading, music)			
Structure Followed (Gather-Listen-Respond-Go Forth)			
Reverence & Engagement			
Links to Liturgical Calendar			
Impact on Pupils			
Improvements Identified			

3. RSHE Lesson Evaluation

Category	Evidence / Notes	Observer / Teacher	Date
RSHE Objective Taught (Statutory & Catholic)			
Curriculum Alignment (Journey in Love / To See You More Clearly)			
Sensitive Handling of Content			
Accuracy of Information (science links)			
Safeguarding Considerations Present			
Inclusion / SEND Adaptations			
Respect for Family Diversity			
Pupil Engagement & Understanding			
Assessment Opportunities			
Follow-Up Actions			

4. Foundation Governor Monitoring

Section	Evidence Collected	Governor Name	Date
Focus Area (RE / RSHE / Catholic Life / Prayer & Liturgy)			
Evidence Seen (books, displays, lessons, worship)			
Conversations with Staff			
Conversations with Pupils			
Impact on Catholic Life / Moral Development			
Strengths Observed			
Areas for Development			
Recommended Actions			
Follow-Up Visit Date			

5. Whole-School Evidence

A. Catholic Life

Evidence Type	Location / File	Updated By	Last Updated
Mission in Action Examples			
Charity Records			
Community & Parish Links			
Chaplaincy Logs			

B. Prayer & Liturgy

Evidence Type	Location / File	Updated By	Last Updated
Liturgy Plans			
Pupil-Led Liturgy Portfolios			
Monitoring Reports			

C. RSHE

Evidence Type	Location / File	Updated By	Last Updated
Curriculum Map			
Parent Consultation Records			
Withdrawal Logs			
RSHE Monitoring Notes			

D. Religious Education Curriculum

Evidence Type	Location / File	Updated By	Last Updated
Medium/Long Term Plans			
Work Samples			
Data & Assessment Reports			

6. Class Worship Planning

Liturgical Season	Theme	Scripture	Pupil Leaders	Planned Responses (Prayer/Art/Music)	Go Forth Message	Date

8. RE Lesson Observation Template

Area	Notes / Evidence	Observer	Date
Learning Objective & Catholic Focus			
Scripture Used Effectively			
Theological Accuracy			
Pupil Engagement & Spiritual Development			
Quality of Questioning			
Links to Catholic Life / Virtues			
Assessment Opportunities			
Strengths			
Next Steps			