St Catholic Primary School

Prayer and Liturgy Policy 2026 - 2028

'Love overcomes, love delights. Those who love the Sacred Heart rejoice. Jesus, my God, I love you above all things.' St Bernadette

The Mission of St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School is,

To ensure a loving and faithful learning community in which our children can become the person God created them to be. A community where we celebrate the dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual. Where we grow and learn together with joy, in the love of Jesus. In this love, we strive to be courageous stewards of creation.

Therefore, the implementation of our Prayer and Liturgy policy plays an essential role in enabling us to strive towards achieving this mission for all the children in our care. '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.)

Legal Requirements

- 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).
- 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)). At St Bernadette's, we celebrate a daily act of worship. Parents have a right to withdraw their child from acts of worship. However, given the importance of prayer & liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to 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. (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.)

- 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. It will follow the directives in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.
- 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.

The Aims of Prayer & Liturgy at St Bernadette's

At St Bernadette's we believe that our spiritual life will be alive and meaningful when it has a direct effect upon our daily life. Prayer and Liturgy in our school provides opportunities for all pupils, staff and wider school community:

- to enjoy a rich religious experience
- to grow in liturgical understanding and development
- to reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- to provide times of stillness and silence in body and mind
- to contemplate something of the mystery of God
- to reflect on spiritual and moral issues (opportunity to reflect upon feelings, negative as well as positive).
- to explore their own beliefs
- to respond to and celebrate life
- to experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- to develop a common ethos and shared values
- to reinforce positive attitudes
- to participate fully and enjoy moments beyond the ordinary and everyday
- to take time out to 'wonder at, and give thanks for God's creations', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give value to'.

Principles

Prayer & Liturgy in St Bernadette's school will:

- raise our minds and hearts to God
- celebrate the presence of God in our life and school community
- be of a high quality, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- support learners' spiritual development
- give learners positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds.

Responsibilities

Governance

The governors, as guardians of our 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 are responsible for prayer and liturgy at St Bernadette's the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinators are Mrs Shoulder and Mrs Round
- The prayer and liturgy policy is updated biannually 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 Leaders ensure that:

- 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
- Pupils as 'Minister of The Word' receive appropriate formation and training
- 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.

Prayer & Liturgy: An overview of Provision

At St Bernadette's, we believe that 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.

This section of the policy outlines when prayer and liturgy take place, and the patterns of prayer and liturgy offered in our school. It will also include when Mass is celebrated across the year, when there are opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and when there are special liturgies. The fundamental structure that recurs across prayer and liturgy is one of call and response: God speaks to his people in his word (the scriptures), and they respond. Their response may take many different forms: it could be praise, thanksgiving, or acknowledgement of the need to change. However, the basic pattern holds; it is God who takes the initiative and who speaks, and we who listen and respond.

Liturgy in school takes the form of a four-part structure, which can be expressed as:

- Gather
- Word or listen
- Response
- Send

The beginning and end show that this prayer does not take place in a vacuum. We need to gather to establish who we are as a praying community and to recognise that it is God who has called us together. We need to be sent so that, transformed by what we have heard and done, we can play our part in the Church's service to the world.

Each part can be simple or elaborate. To gather, we light a candle, listen to an appropriately chosen piece of music or a hymn. We may be silent or make the sign of the cross. For celebrations of the word, the context of each celebration may affect the relative weight of the different parts.
Prayer is a daily part of school life, with all classes beginning and ending their day with structured school prayers; there is also prayer before meals. See Appendix A for an overview of our school prayers and common prayers we use at St Bernadette's.

Prayer and liturgy (collective worship) takes place daily; this may take the form of whole school, key stage or class worships.

A Typical Week	
Monday	Celebration of The Word Theme: Sunday Gospel Ministered by the Headteacher
Tuesday	Celebration of The Word Class based worship Ministered by pupils
Wednesday	Key Stage Celebration of The Word EYFS & KS1 – 10:10 KS2 – 9am Ministered by teaching staff
Thursday	Celebration of The Word Class based worship Ministered by teaching Staff
Friday	Celebration of The Word Theme: Daily Scripture or Seasonal scripture at Easter/Advent Ministered by the Headteacher

At **Key Stage 1** Prayer & Liturgy includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word.
- School and Class Mass

At **Key Stage 2** Prayer & Liturgy includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the Mass or the Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite.
- School and Class Mass

Mass is celebrated as a whole school at least once each term as well as on Holy Days of Obligation. In addition individual classes celebrate Mass once a term. Classes are partnered together, for example, Year 6 and Reception, will celebrate mass together. This facilitates the older children being Mass buddies to model respectful and prayerful behaviour and to teach the younger children the rituals of The Mass

Other Liturgies

At St Bernadette's we come together often as a community to celebrate special days in the Liturgical year. These are whole school celebrations of The Word and governors and families are always invited to share in these. We celebrate a Harvest Liturgy, a Remembrance Service, An Advent Service, Holy week Liturgies and a Marian Service.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered during Lent and Advent. A special liturgy is celebrated followed by Reconciliation with Father Phillip. Staff and pupils are invited to the sacrament.

Voluntary Worship and Retreats

- When children attend residential visits, they are encouraged to enter into short acts of collective worship. Prayer, 'talking to God', and praying according to his will (John 5:14) is a special part of the school family time shared.
- Our Year 5 children visit Castlerigg for an overnight retreat to enrich their faith experience and to become closer to God and each other.
- Throughout the year, children and staff can attend prayer-times, which take place before school, afterschool or at the end of lunch-time in the Oratory. These include Rosary Club and Bible club for EYFS & KS1 and Meditative Prayer for KS2
- The Oratory is available for staff, children and parents to use for quiet prayer and contemplation at appropriate times.
- Prayerful time is not limited to these occasions recorded above but opportunities across the day, proactively or retroactively in response to other circumstances that may arise.

Inclusion

At St Bernadette's we recognise the value and importance of each person as a child of God and therefore, we strive to ensure that our acts of worship are accessible and relevant to all participants. To do this, we may give children equipment to hold to help them to be able to be still, adult support, or other special arrangements aimed at helping them to participate as fully as possible.

Pupils of Other Faiths

The school welcomes pupils, staff and families from other Christian denominations, other faith traditions and those of no faith. In accordance with To Love You More Dearly, all members of the school community are invited to be present at prayer and liturgy in a manner that respects both the Catholic character of the school and the individual conscience and beliefs of each person. Pupils will never be required to participate in prayers, responses, songs or gestures that conflict with their own religious beliefs or personal convictions. The school values the contribution of all faiths and worldviews and promotes mutual respect, dialogue and understanding within the community.

Resources

- Prayer and liturgy are vital to Catholic identity of our school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation, staff time – freely given, chaplaincy provision and the wide variety of available prayer resources, Catholic artefacts and dedicated prayer spaces throughout the school. The Catholic character of

the school is reflected throughout our school. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy will be furnished and maintained as such and are updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season.

- Class Prayer Areas and their resources are the responsibility of the class teachers. These resources include resources which facilitate reflection of the Liturgical Year, Bible stands, Coloured tablecloths and candles A wider selection of resources are also housed in the Oratory and may be accessed at any time.
- The Oratory is available for all year groups for small group, and voluntary worship (e.g. dinnertimes for staff and children).
- Staff training and formation costs are 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 & 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.
- Staff are encouraged to undertake the CCRS and Formation North West Catholic Dioceses Training Partnership programmes.
- There will also be the opportunity for whole-staff professional development at our annual Vision and Values Evening Twilight with Governors, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and are equipped to lead confidently.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy takes place regularly.
- Governors visit to prayer and liturgy are timetabled in the overall monitoring schedule linked to the school improvement plan.
- The Catholic Life of our school including the school's provision of prayer & liturgy is a standing item on the Faith & Community Committee and is monitored and evaluated to ensure future developments and to triangulate what they are told.
- Prayer and liturgy Leaders attend class and key stage liturgies termly.
- Parents and families are invited to comment on prayer and liturgy provision through the annual parent survey and the parental comment pages on the website throughout the year.
- Pupil surveys are undertaken termly.
- Areas for further development are identified, actions to be taken and evaluation of impact are brought together in a Prayer & Liturgy Action Plan. Leaders report to Governors termly.

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer & Liturgy leader, The Faith & Communities Committee and is evaluated and reviewed every two years.

Signed: ..... (Headteacher)

Signed: ..... (Prayer & Liturgy leader)

Signed: ..... (RE Governor)

Date: .....

Appendix 1

Common Prayers

Age Phase	**EYFS** **4-5**	**Key stage 1** **5-7**	**Lower Key Stage 2** **7-9**	**Upper Key Stage 2**
Prayers	The Sign of The Cross Grace before Meals Our School Prayer	The Lord's Prayer Hail Mary Glory be Grace before meals Grace after meals	The Apostles' Creed An Act of Contrition Angel of God Come, Holy Spirit The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester	Morning Offering The Rosary The Magnificat Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love