



## **St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy**



### **Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

"We commit ourselves to love, respect and serve one another as disciples of Jesus Christ"

<b>Approval Date:</b>	<b>September 2025</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>September 2028</b>

## **Introduction**

At St Bede's Voluntary Academy, we place Christ at the centre of what we do. This means we are committed to educating the whole child to reach their potential: "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full" John 10:10. Prayer, liturgy, worship and reflection are woven into the fabric of our school community because they are integral to the Catholic faith.<sup>i</sup>

Within the Diocese of Nottingham, it is our mission to help each person to "encounter God's personal love for them" and this will be partly achieved through prayer and liturgy. Students will be provided opportunities to plan, prepare and deliver so that they can "discover and grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his disciples". They will also be encouraged to "open [up] to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in their lives so that they reach out to others with God's love" by being involved in practical prayer through mission and evangelism.

This policy sits alongside and is written in collaboration with our Annual Plan of Provision (APoP) and the wider policies and priorities of the Diocese of Nottingham; Prayer and Liturgy Directory for Catholic Schools, and Planning and celebrating Prayer and Liturgy with Young People in the Diocese of Nottingham. It is not created in isolation, but as part of a continuous cycle of monitoring, evaluation, and reflection, ensuring that our provision remains responsive to the unique needs of our school community. This provision set out in this policy, and within the APoP, will be monitored and reviewed regularly by school leaders and governors, with support from the Diocesan Education Service and Our Lady of Lourdes CMAT, to ensure it remains responsive to the needs of our community and faithful to our mission to educate the whole person in the image of Christ.

### **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.)

### **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; 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.

## **Responsibility**

### **(a) 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, Chaplain and Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Life)
- 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(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.

### **(c) Assistant Headteacher :**

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

### **(d) Prayer and Liturgy Co-Ordinator and Chaplain**

The prayer and liturgy co-ordinator in conjunction with the chaplain ensure that:

- 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
- there is collaboration with local clergy and parishes

## **Overview of prayer and liturgy provision**

At the heart of our Catholic school, is the commitment to nourish the spiritual life of our community through regular, meaningful, and inclusive opportunities for prayer and liturgy. These are not additional to school life, but are central to it, forming and shaping our identity as a community rooted in the person of Jesus Christ.

Liturgy is understood in the Catholic tradition as "the participation of the People of God in the work of God"<sup>iii</sup>. To engage in worship is to respond to God's loving invitation to receive His sanctifying grace, which strengthens, renews and sustains us.

Our school provides a rich tapestry of prayer and liturgical experiences that are age-appropriate, accessible, and rooted in the rhythm of the liturgical year. These include daily prayer, celebrations of the word, seasonal liturgies of Mass and the sacrament of reconciliation. Every opportunity for prayer and worship is designed to support the spiritual growth of our students and staff, nurturing them to encounter Christ, reflect on His presence in their lives, and respond in faith.

The Annual Plan of Provision (APoP) outlines in full the scope and structure of our prayer and liturgical life across the academic year. This includes key celebrations, leadership responsibilities, pupil participation, and alignment with diocesan guidance and the Prayer and Liturgy Directory for the Diocese of Nottingham. It ensures that our provision is consistent, reflective of our mission, and integrated into the wider life of the school.

Prayer and liturgy in our school are more than routines — they are sacred moments where we encounter God together as a school family, grow in our relationship with Him, and are sent out to live the Gospel in our daily lives.

### **Prayer**

Every morning, during AM tutor, a communal prayer will be said in year groups (KS3) or in tutor groups (KS4). Prayer also takes place in classrooms, and before or during staff meetings. This prayer has a clear and simple structure but there is scope for extempore prayer. The focus and format of these prayers will vary according to the liturgical calendar.

### **Celebrations of the word**

A more formal structure is adopted for when students or other members of the school community join together for a longer period of time. These are celebrations that are not taken directly from the liturgical books of the church but will include a proclamation of scripture. Every week, a year group will have an assembly to celebrate. Throughout the year, gatherings for the school community and events mapped out in the APoP will fall under this category.

### **Liturgy**

Mass is celebrated in the chapel every Thursday. Parishioners are invited to join in these at least once a term. Mass is celebrated as a whole school one a term; Advent, Lent and Pentecost. Any Holy days of obligation are celebrated in school or students are taken to St Bernadette's church. The sacrament of reconciliation is offered during these three seasons.

### **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 site. 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 evaluating

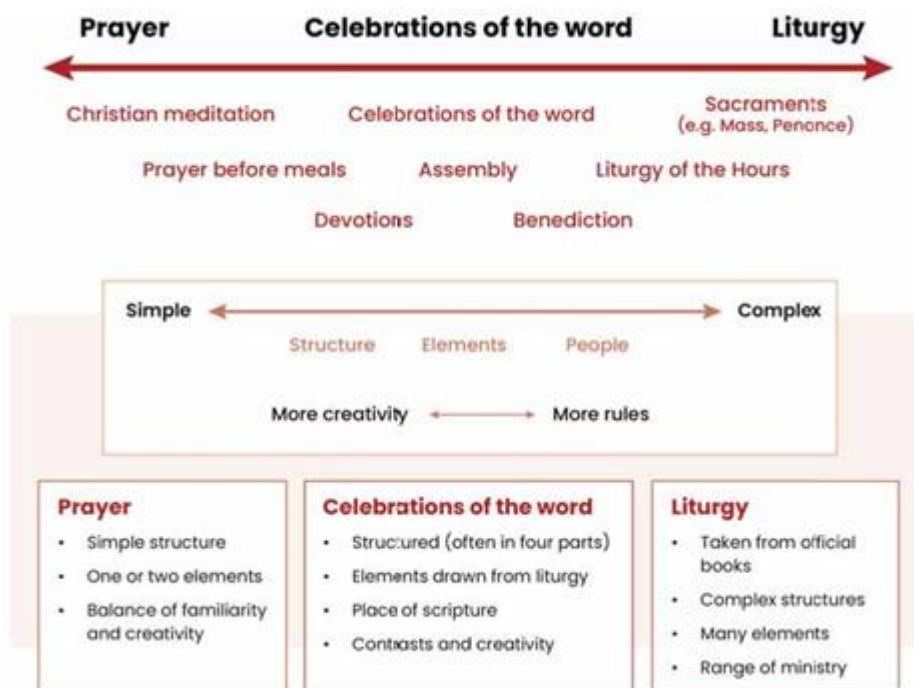
The Assistant Headteacher for Catholic Ethos, along with the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator, and Chaplain, are responsible for monitoring prayer and liturgy. The AHT for Catholic Ethos together with the Headteacher, are responsible for evaluating the impact of prayer and liturgy.

Learning walks and observations will be published within the quality assurance calendar. Pupils are routinely monitoring and evaluating celebrations of the word and liturgies, and these are collated by the AHT and Liturgy coordinator. All stakeholders are regularly asked to submit feedback via surveys.

### Review

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

## Appendix A: Definition of terms



## Appendix B:

### **Methods**

Singing "singing is praying twice" (Youcat, attributed to St Augustine)

Adoration: Praising God

Confession: Asking God for forgiveness

Thanksgiving: Thanking God

Reciting scripture

Meditation

Rosary

Devotion

### **Ideas and structure for Celebrations of the word**

Open with the Sign of the Cross

Religious artefacts could be used-candles lit, rosary beads laid out.

A visual welcome that reflects the word of the week

This will be linked to a reading-pupils will be invited to read the Word and this can be seen on a displayed rota to indicate participation of all

Quiet time to reflect on what has been read and this could be linked to a video, music or discussion

Sharing of ideas should be recorded in the Act of Worship book- something that students will take ownership of

A moment to pray-this could be led by students. It can be formulaic (the Our Father, Trust prayer) or extempore, linked to something they are praying for

Students ask for St Bede and Our Lady of Lourdes to pray for us

Worship is closed with the Sign of the Cross

---

<sup>i</sup> “To ensure that the Lord Jesus Christ is at the centre of a Catholic school, prayer and liturgy must be at the heart of its community”: Prayer and Liturgy Directory for Catholic schools, colleges and academies in England and Wales

<sup>ii</sup> (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1069)