



**St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School  
Prayer, Liturgy and Worship Policy**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Designated Senior Person</b>	<b>Deputy Designated Senior Person</b>	<b>Nominated Governor</b>	<b>Chair of Governors</b>
2014-2015	A Weir	A Roberts	E Morrissey	E Morrissey
2015-2016	A Weir	A Roberts	T McGough	E Morrissey
2016-2017	A Weir	A Roberts	T McGough	E Morrissey
2017-2018	A Weir	J McEniff	T McGough	E Morrissey
2022-2023	J McEniff	P Harkness	E Morrissey	E Morrissey
2024-2025	J McEniff	P Harkness	E Morrissey	E Morrissey

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>By whom</b>	<b>Date ratified with FGB</b>
March 2016	Yes	RE Coordinator	March 2016
November 2017	Yes	RE Coordinator	March 2018
September 2019	Yes	RE Coordinator	November 2019
September 2022	Yes	RE Coordinators	November 2022
November 2024	Yes	RE Coordinators	Approved by SAC Committee in January 2025. Awaiting ratification by FGB in March 2025

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*"I have come that they may have life,  
and have it to the full."*

*John 10:10*



*At St. Wilfrid's we love one another,  
show respect and accept responsibility.  
Embracing opportunity and nurturing creativity  
we share in the joy of Jesus.*

## **St Wilfrid's Prayer, Liturgy and Worship Policy**

### **Context**

We use the language 'Prayer and Liturgy' in place of the previous term 'Collective Worship' in our daily life, practices and policies.

This policy is written to reflect and support our school mission statement: "**I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.**" (John 10:10)

St Wilfrid's is a Catholic school which seeks to live out the values of Jesus Christ - founded on His commandment to, 'Love one another.' We are committed to the Catholic Faith, recognising and valuing every individual as unique, created in the image and likeness of God.

We believe that liturgy and prayer in a Catholic school celebrates God's presence in our lives and 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.

As a Catholic school, we are fully committed to providing opportunities for all children to know, love and serve God, in such a way that will enrich their own lives and help them to understand their Catholic faith traditions, in an ever-changing world and within the multicultural society we all live in.

Through prayer and liturgy, we support our children to live out our Mission Statement and school values daily. Our principal aim is that children leave St. Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School with a living and *personal* faith in Jesus Christ, allowing them to know and love God so that they are inspired to put that faith in action as they walk on their journey through life.

### **Prayer, Liturgy and Worship**

We believe that **Prayer** consists of:

- listening - being attentive to the voice of God in every moment of life
- speaking - expressing our heart's deepest longings and desires to the One who knows and understands us better than we know and understand ourselves
- reflecting - thinking about our relationship with God. Pondering on the actions of God in history and in the unfolding mystery of our lives
- resting – simply being consciously in the presence of God, knowing that we are loved

Prayer can have a variety of forms and styles and express different things.

Prayer may be an individual experience, or if it is an activity with others may form part of an act of worship.

**“Liturgy”** literally means, “work of the people”, and points to the fact that something else is going on beyond prayer. It is the formalising of worship at the heart of which is symbol and action.

Liturgy makes explicit the celebration deriving from and highlighting every instance of worship, which occurs in our daily lives. The liturgical celebration therefore should bring together all human symbols of expression - art, dance, poetry, music, gesture and stillness [see ‘Children’s Directory for Masses’].

The ‘Liturgy of the Word with Children. Guidelines’ [1996 The Bishop’s Conference of England and Wales] lists the General Principles of Liturgy:

- Liturgy is the praise and worship of God
- Liturgy is the source and summit of the Church’s life and our lives
- It is the right and duty of all baptised, both children and adults
- The function of the liturgy is to build up members of Christ’s body, to strengthen us in preaching Christ
- Liturgy is action and symbol; it speaks to the whole person, it involves all the senses: sight, touch, sound, taste and smell
- Participating in liturgy forms our habits because we are ritual people and learn through repetition and copying
- In liturgy we discover the riches of prayer, through word and gesture, silence and stillness
- The purpose of adapting liturgy for children is to lead them into full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy of the parish
- Liturgy with children, as with adults, demands dignity, clarity and simplicity

**Collective Worship** is the acknowledgement that God is present and active in all authentic human experience. We already have a graced life and worship is naming and celebrating this reality in the Christian tradition. God is reached through the Word and adored within it. Creating a sacred space for worship is to create a space where the unity of God and creation is reverently symbolised and celebrated. Worship and the words and rituals we use should not sever us from the ordinary circumstances of our lives but rather unite us more closely to them.

- Worship remembers and celebrates the marvellous things God works in our lives. It celebrates God’s presence in our lives. Worship should not feel like an interruption from a different world. It is a spontaneous response to life.
- Collective Worship 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.
- Worship will be at the very heart of every Catholic school and must reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities.

All liturgies involve the praise, thanksgiving and adoration of God and are, therefore, acts of worship. However, not all worship will be liturgy as it may or may not include symbol and action. An assembly is any experience of gathering/assembling in school. It may include an act of worship but the difference between worship and assembly must always be clear.

## **Legal requirements**

The law requires all maintained schools:

- Provide daily collective worship for all pupils including in the sixth form (section 70, 1988 Education Act)
- Acts of collective worship are not to be designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school this means that time of collective worship are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum for Religious Education
- Recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Collective Worship.
- Foundation Governors in voluntary aided Catholic schools have a statutory responsibility to preserve and develop the religious character of their schools.

The governors and the headteacher are responsible for ensuring that there are daily timetabled opportunities for all children to take part in prayer and liturgy.

Our school must ensure that:

- There is a named person who is responsible for organising Collective Worship across the school. At St Wilfrid's this responsibility is shared between Lara Cannavan and Justine McEniff with support from Mrs Elaine Morrissey as Prayer and Liturgy Governor.
- Collective worship, in the form of prayer or liturgy, happens for all pupils daily
- All pupils are able to access the prayer and liturgy offered within the school day
- Collective Worship is well resourced, both in regard to content and the continued professional development of those planning and leading, this includes enabling pupils to plan and lead
- There is regular and comprehensive monitoring of Collective Worship which clearly demonstrates the living of our school's Catholic mission
- It will be an inclusive experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

## **Aims:**

To this effect, we believe that prayer and liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all children and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a positive attitude to those of other cultures and faiths
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- To participate fully
- To take time to grow close to God in the stillness of His presence.
- To take to develop a sense of 'awe and wonder'

Acts of prayer and liturgy take place daily and will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

To achieve this, prayer and liturgy will be appropriate to help to personalise the experience, be appropriately paced, be accessible and include a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and settings.

### Assemblies

Weekly assemblies provide an opportunity for the school community to join together in listening and responding to the Word of God and praising Him in prayer and song. Children are encouraged to be quiet and reverent during times of reflection, to actively participate in spoken prayers and to be active participants in celebration, sung prayers and action songs in a joyful and appropriate manner.

- Gospel Celebration of the Word is led by the Headteacher or RE leader every Monday morning for KS2 and Monday afternoon for EYFS/KS1. This includes time for prayer, worship through hymns and a focus the Sunday Gospel.
- A whole school celebration assembly is led by the Headteacher or member of the SLT on a Friday morning. This includes time for prayer and a celebration of children's achievements.
- Additional assemblies throughout the year that may be in response to relevant events, e.g. Mission assembly, Saints assembly, Remembrance, Harvest, fundraising or appeal assemblies.
- Catholic Social Teaching (CST) assemblies. At the start of each half term the Headteacher launches that half term's CST principle with an assembly. During the half term a class will lead an assembly which will include scripture, prayers, music, movement and reflections linked to the school's CST programme for that particular half term.
- We have special assemblies or services, led by the RE leads to mark our journey through the Liturgical Year, for example; weekly Advent liturgies, services of reconciliation in Advent and Lent and to say the Rosary.
- The Music team working in conjunction with the RE leads, hold regular singing practice which includes traditional and modern hymns.

## **Classroom Prayer and Liturgy**

Each class has a prayer focus area and a well-stocked resource box. Appropriate liturgical items such as a crucifix, images, Good News Translation Bible, cross, candle or other such articles are often the focus for reverence. Cloths and religious symbols/artefacts are changed according to the liturgical seasons, calendar of saints or to mark the months of Mary. RE leads provide clear guidance to assist with this.

Classroom prayer and liturgy resources also include children's planning cards for the participating in, preparing and leading classroom Celebration of the Word. They are different for each Key Stage. Every class have nominated Prayer and Liturgy Leaders who contribute to and lead daily prayer time in the classroom in different ways. Children are encouraged to evaluate this activity to reflect upon their experience. Prayers are said daily in each classroom at the beginning and end of the morning and afternoon sessions – or as a whole school or Key Stage if we have gathered for an assembly. These are usually occasions for communal prayer and children are also encouraged to engage in their own silent prayer or add to the prayers which are being said.

As part of their progression in prayer in our Religious Education curriculum, children may encounter different prayers to examine or learn. All children participate in planning for and leading acts of prayer, which may be integrated into RE lesson time. Prayer leaders and children's prayer and liturgy planning resources are used in all classes with planning records being maintained in blue classroom prayer folders.

Classroom prayer can take place in a variety of ways including silent prayer, reflective prayer and meditation (introducing the practices of lectio and visio divina), song and celebration, sharing a scripture or thought for the day or a prayer session with a specific themed focus. This is in addition to or alongside the well-established 4-step prayer model: Gather-Listen-Respond-Go Forth structure where our children use the structure as another way of meeting Jesus through scripture.

Our children are given the age-appropriate opportunities to set up, plan and lead classroom prayer time and are active participants at all ages.

## **Prayer and liturgy across the school**

At St Wilfrid's we recognise that Holy Mass is the source and summit of our faith. Celebrating the Sacrament of the Eucharist through Holy Mass is an important part of our Catholic Life and identity and we invite families, parishioners and other guests to Mass. We celebrate Mass in school throughout the school year marking the following events:

- New school year
- St Wilfrid's Day (12<sup>th</sup> October)
- All Saints or Remembrance
- Christ the King: the Universal Church
- Advent
- Epiphany
- Ash Wednesday

- Holy Thursday
- Easter
- Ascension or Pentecost
- First Holy Communion celebration Mass/Solemnity of St Peter and Paul
- Leavers Mass

Each July, we work closely with Fr.Paul to pre-plan a timetable of Masses for the academic / liturgical year ahead. In addition, this includes a carefully planned programme for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion (Year 4). The children are active participants in these Masses and due to their regularity, the children join in with Mass responses and signing (including the traditional high points of the liturgy) with respectful confidence. Additional sacramental activities take place through the year for example Reconciliation services during Advent and Lent. Advent reflection liturgies take place for each week of Advent to carefully prepare our children for the coming of our Lord Jesus at Christmas.

We also regularly welcome visitors into school to help lead prayer and liturgy including Teresa Nixon from St John's in Hartford and our CAFOD representative, Nicola Tratalos.

We recognise that for many children their primary experience of the Mass is through school Masses and celebrations. As such, we acknowledge the importance of our role as imparters of the Catholic faith and traditions and aim to lead by example in respect to behaviour, reverence and participation in the Mass. We are a very inclusive community and invite non-Catholics from Year 4 upwards to come forward to receive a blessing at Mass. Non-Catholic members of staff are encouraged to liaise with the SLT or RE leads on any areas they require any guidance or support with in relation to the Eucharist or the Mass as a whole.

### **Home, School and Parish Partnership**

We have worked hard to develop effective links between school, our families and our local parish of St John Vianney, to enrich the faith of our children.

Our Parish Priest, Father Paul Standish takes an active part in school life through regular visits. The link between school, home and parish is particularly visible in Mass preparation and through our 'With You Always' sacramental programme preparation.

We utilise RE newsletters, Headteacher weekly letters, parents' evenings and annual reports alongside social media to keep our families fully updated on the prayer life of our school.

St Wilfrid's supports many charities locally, nationally and internationally with particular commitments to the Northwich foodbank, the local Joshua Tree children's cancer charity, CAFOD, Mary's Meals and the Caritas, Good Shepherd Fund.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

At least once a year the school's prayer and liturgy provision will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making



progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading such activities. All teachers are responsible for the monitoring and development of the prayer life of the children under the guidance of the SLT and RE leads.

### **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

A central message of the Catholic Faith is that although we are all different, God loves each one of us equally, regardless of background, gender or ability. It is therefore vital that we recognise and cater for the individual needs of children, acknowledging that all children have different talents and gifts and that these should be celebrated. Each child is recognised as unique, a child of God, with individual needs which we accommodate in the organisation of our prayer and liturgy activities.