

**St Bonaventure's Catholic Primary School**  
**Egerton Road,**  
**Bishopston**  
**Bristol,**  
**BS7 8HP**

**Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

<b>Policy Owner</b>	Headteacher
<b>Governing Body Committee</b>	Standards
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This policy is available at <http://www.st-bonaventures.bristol.sch.uk/>

## **Vision**

At St. Bonaventure's we strive to be the best we can, guided by the light of Christ. Prayer and liturgy enables us to celebrate God's presence in our lives.

We provide opportunities for all pupils to gather and celebrate in worship, giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. There are opportunities for children in class groups, key stages and as a whole school to pray together and to actively participate in the preparation of the celebration of Liturgy.

All pupils experience opportunities to participate in class assemblies, to prepare readings, prayers and content to present their views and understanding of the whole school theme, a curriculum area, or religious theme, which arises out of class activities and which is a stimulus for further reflection.

Worship at St Bonaventure's creates among pupils and staff a real sense of belonging to our christian family. Small or large gatherings can be equally valuable if the needs, the age and the development of the children are kept to the forefront. When school worship is organised we try to extend the occasion to be open to families and members of our parish.

## **Statement of requirement**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils that is in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and the liturgical norms of the catholic Church.

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)).

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.

## **Aims and purpose**

Our aims and purpose of prayer and liturgy for our pupils and staff are:

- Contemplate the mystery of God;
- Reflect on spiritual and moral issues;
- Enable children to explore their own beliefs;
- Respond to and celebrate life;
- Experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit;
- Develop a common ethos and shared values;
- Enrich religious experience;

- Grow in liturgical understanding and development;
- Pray using prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition;
- Reinforce positive attitudes;
- Encourage participation and response;
- Provide an opportunity for calm reflection;
- Take time out 'to wonder at,' 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

### **Prayer and liturgy in the life of St Bonaventure's**

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Prayer and liturgy involves all members of the school coming together, as a class, key stage or whole school to celebrate and praise God; a chance to gather and grow in faith and understanding. Parish, parents and governors are always invited to join us for some prayer and liturgy celebrations, such as termly masses celebrated in St Bonaventure's parish church, EYFS/KS1 Nativity, KS2 Carol Service, and our Leavers Mass.

Prayer and liturgy at St Bonaventure's considers the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions – or none
- Those from other faith backgrounds

Prayer and liturgy will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. Worship in our school is more than just a legal requirement: it is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

All acts of Worship in this school 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

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- Be kept small and wherever possible help to personalise the experience
- Be short and appropriately paced
- Be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and settings

We will continue to foster and deepen the children's personal relationship with God our Father daily in prayer. We do this by helping them become aware of God's Presence in their lives and of His love for them by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age. This may be in one of the following ways:

- Prayer of silence

- Spontaneous prayer
- Praying through gesture or action
- Formal prayer

All pupils are given opportunities to enable them to develop their skills so that they can prepare readings, write prayers, plan, organise and lead worship and evaluate how they led it. They receive positive liturgical experiences, related to the liturgical life of the church and the Sunday Gospel is celebrated each week in school. Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship. Children also pray formally in the morning, at lunch and at the end of the school day.

### **Organisation of prayer and liturgy**

We hold a daily act of prayer and liturgy in our school. This may include music, song, stories, shared experiences, readings from sacred writings, prayer and reflection.

We conduct prayer and liturgy in a dignified and respectful way. We tell children that this time is a period of calm reflection. We regard it as a special time and expect children to behave in an appropriate way. We ask them to be quiet and thoughtful and to listen carefully to the teachings and participate fully in prayer and hymns. We create an appropriate atmosphere by using music and sometimes candles or other objects that act as a focal point for the attention of the children.

All staff lead prayer and liturgy. The Parish Priest and other representatives of charity and CAFOD groups also visit school to conduct assemblies.

All pupils are provided with opportunities to lead prayer and liturgy. These planned opportunities take many forms and include pupils planning and leading whole school and class reflections. Pupils are provided with a structure for planning and we have a whole school progression map (EYFS-KS2) which ensures as pupils move up through the school there is progression of skills and content.

We take the themes of our assemblies from the traditions of the Catholic faith and from the themes and topics in *God Matters* and the new Religious education Directory, RED, to draw the school together in common areas of work and classroom concern. We often reflect the festivals and events of the Christian calendar. Further opportunities for children to experience awe and wonder are provided in curriculum areas such as R.E., Literacy, Art, Science, PHSME and Music.

Our assemblies reflect the achievements and learning of the children and link to our whole school themes which are based on our gospel values. We encourage the children to participate in assemblies by showing their work to the other children and raising issues that they have discussed in their classes.

Assemblies offer an opportunity to acknowledge and reward children for their achievements both in and out of school. They play an important part in promoting the ethos of the school, which is that all children are valued and all achievements are recognised.

We invite parents to their children's class assembly and we encourage them to attend, as this promotes the community spirit of the school and is a practical demonstration of the way the home

and the school work together to support the achievements of our children. Parents and friends are further invited to our many special assemblies and Masses, many of which take place in St Bonaventure's Church.

### **Recording**

Prayer and liturgy is evidenced:

- Through class displays, collections of pupil's contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs often collated on class reflection areas,
- In presentation slides,
- In class prayer and liturgy folders.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring occurs informally through pupil conferencing, staff discussion and pupil self evaluation. The RE leader and HT collaboratively make a record of the self-evaluation of prayer and liturgy at St Bonaventure's. The headteacher reports to governors on prayer and liturgy each term. It is the role of the named school governor with responsibility for religious education and collective worship to monitor the policy and practice of prayer and liturgy.

The R.E. leader plans and organises the termly/annual liturgical overview. Class teachers work with their pupils in planning together class liturgy, class assembly and class involvement in a Mass within each term. Staff meetings and Chaplaincy meetings take place throughout the year when feasts and various celebrations are discussed and planned for.

### **Arrangements for prayer and liturgy:**

The whole school comes together to worship on the following days:

Monday	Whole school Ethos assembly led by HT/DHT.
Tuesday	Head teacher prayer and liturgy linked to our whole school theme.
Wednesday	Key stage assemblies led by key stage leaders.
Thursday	Gospel prayer and liturgy led by DHT/RE leader.
Friday	Celebration assembly led by teachers, often linked to the whole school gospel theme.

### **Resourcing, training and formation**

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.

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.

**The prayer and liturgy leader**

The role will be undertaken by the head teacher.

**Review**

The prayer and liturgy policy will be reviewed at least every three years or in line with new statutory guidance if sooner.