



ST PETER'S  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## Prayer & Liturgy Policy

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

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We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for those with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

## **With Christ as our guide, learning together, loving God and each other, becoming the best we can be**

### **1. Introduction**

The Mission statement sets out our work as a school “with Christ as our guide”. Our mission as a Catholic school is therefore to set all that we do in the context of knowing and following Jesus Christ. This aspect of the school’s work is monitored as part of the annual cycle of self-review under CSI, and is externally evaluated via Diocesan inspections.

### **2. 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.)

As a De La Salle school, St. Peter’s is part of a worldwide community with a longstanding tradition of De La Salle education to enable young people to be the best they can be. As a learning community, we believe that all are involved in the process of learning and aim to provide our students with the very best in Catholic education. We aim to develop their talents to gain personal fulfilment in life so that they leave our school with confidence and with belief in God, in each other and in themselves.

### **3. Aims:**

We believe that through high quality prayer and liturgy supported by engaging Religious Education; and underpinned by effective pastoral and Chaplaincy processes, that all members of our school community can come to know Christ, who invites us to become the best we can be. As such, the aims of this policy and the practice in the school are to:

- i. Seek to enable students and staff to come to know the person of Jesus Christ.
- ii. Ensure strong leadership and management of all aspects of the Catholic Schools Inspectorate framework across the school.
- iii. Ensure that all students have regular opportunities for spiritual and moral development throughout their time in our school.
- iv. Ensure that high quality Religious Education is provided and that provision meets the directives of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.
- v. Ensure that our status as a Catholic school is reflected in all aspects of our work.

### **Objectives:**

- i. To ensure that prayer and liturgy reflects the life of the Church in its seasons and feasts.
- ii. To secure the provision of a daily act of worship across the school.
- iii. To deliver high quality religious education that is valued by students, staff and parents as a core subject.
- iv. To foster consciously the spiritual development of all students and staff.
- v. To support the work of the chaplaincy and RE teams in raising standards and providing for the spiritual and moral needs of students.

### **4. Statement of requirement**

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all students, 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).

At St. Peter’s we recognise 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 students can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)). Arrangements for students whose parents have expressed the right of withdrawal, or Sixth-form students who have expressed this right to withdraw from school prayer and liturgy is organised by the Head of Year. We do, however, have a strong tradition of being fully inclusive, and whilst we respect parental and Sixth Form student wishes, we encourage discussion of concerns to avoid students and students feeling excluded.

The school’s provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil students’ entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which students 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.

### **5. Responsibility**

#### **(a) Governance**

The governors, as guardians of the Catholic school’s life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

- there is a link governor with oversight of the CSI and prayer and liturgy
- 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;
- to review the progress being made against annual development targets, and to set the strategic direction for the following year in consultation with the SLT.

- there is a member of the Senior Leadership Team responsible for the Catholic Life of the school including prayer and liturgy. They will co-ordinate the review and implementation of this policy and report to the governing body on behalf of the Headteacher.
- the prayer and liturgy policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders;
- there is a budget for prayer and liturgy, overseen by Chaplaincy, 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.
- to monitor school performance under the CSI framework

**(c) Member of the Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for oversight of CSI**

- To ensure quality of provision across all sections of the CSI Framework.
- To advise and make recommendations to the Governing Body regarding current performance and planned developments.
- To support the Senior Leadership Team in taking a leading role in proactively ensuring the centrality of prayer and worship in the life of the school.
- To provide support to the Chaplaincy team with planning the prayer and liturgy themes for the year

**(d) Chaplaincy**

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 students, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*;
- students 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 students;
- 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 (CASO) and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

**(e) Staff Leading Assemblies (e.g. SLT, Year Leaders, Chaplaincy)**

- It is the responsibility of the person conducting the assembly to ensure acts of prayer and liturgy are carried out and that the presentation is reflective of the theme of the week and includes the school's mission statement and a prayer.
- The use of music, drama, video, or visual aids may supplement the more traditional elements of talks, readings, and prayers.

**(f) Tutor**

- It is the responsibility of the tutor, or staff member escorting a tutor group, to accompany and remain with the tutor group throughout liturgy of the word to assist with supervision. In the event of over-running into lesson time, which should not be a frequent occurrence, staff may leave whilst proceedings continue.
- Tutors should organise and ensure daily morning prayer takes place in tutor time. They should create appropriate conditions for morning prayer and encourage their tutees to participate fully in prayer and liturgy. They act as appropriate role models for students and authentic witnesses to the life of the school.

**(g) All staff**

- will actively engage with, promote and uphold the ethos of the school and they conduct themselves in accordance with the school's mission statement. They lead by example in their participation of morning prayer and liturgy of the word, enabling each other and students to grow in their faiths.

**(h) Parents & Carers**

- agree through the home-school agreement to enable the work of the school through their support of school life. Parental contribution to the prayer life of the school can be made through attendance to events, the weekly prayer shot or through their own prayers for the school.

**6. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision**

At St Peter's, we combine our celebration of the word with assemblies and morning prayer during tutor time, helping to ensure that prayer and liturgy takes place within a broad educational framework.

Students are encouraged to take an active part in both planning and leading prayer and liturgy over the course of the year. The school is committed to an active approach to prayer and liturgy in the belief that it is a significant element in our attempts to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all. In this context prayer and liturgy assumes its rightful importance and reflects the ethos of our school. We, as a school, are fully committed to ensuring the social, moral, spiritual and cultural beliefs of all are met. This includes taking into consideration those who may have religious affiliations, and those, who do not.

#### **Morning prayer**

- Daily morning prayer at both our Primary and Secondary phases begins with the sign of the cross and the invocation “Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God”. This acts as a reminder that we are part of the global De La Salle community and of our shared core principle of Faith in the Presence of God. Weekly whole school staff meetings being in the same way.
- The prayer and liturgy theme for the week is overseen by the Chaplaincy team and is the weekly focus for ‘Prayer Shots’ (the wider school community and family prayer group).

#### **Masses**

- In addition to welcome masses at the start of each academic year which take place at Our Lady Queen of Peace church, we also celebrate masses throughout the year following the liturgical calendar and with other local diocesan schools.
- We also celebrate the feast day of St. Peter and St. Paul with a mass together as a whole school community.

#### **The Sacraments**

- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place each week at our Secondary site.
- Reconciliation is offered with the support of the local clergy at both the primary and secondary phases of the school.

#### **Liturgies**

- These take place across the year in line with the liturgical calendar. They are structured in keeping with the traditions of the Church and the Word of God is at the heart of the celebration.

#### **Assemblies and Celebration of the Word**

- Assemblies are held every day, with each year group attending once a week. Members of the Senior Leadership team, Heads of Year, Chaplains and other senior staff lead assemblies in accordance with the theme of the week; this also links into morning prayer activities ensuring continuity and cohesiveness.
- In exceptional circumstances, this may be delivered using alternative methods such as via Teams or Loom. This ensures that every child takes an active part in prayer and liturgy and the needs of all are met.

#### **Retreats**

- A programme of retreat days is also in place within both the primary and secondary phases of the school. We also offer opportunities to take part in the Kintbury Experience at St. Cassian’s retreat centre

#### **Other experiences**

- The Chaplaincy team coordinate a regular schedule of prayer groups and other activities such as Youth Alpha, yearly events such as Remember those we love and opportunities to participate in youth events such as the CYMFED Flame gathering.
- Staff prayer and other events such as Coffee & Clergy are also coordinated over the course of the year.

### **7. 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. Both sites have Chapels and as spaces for prayer and liturgy, they 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.

### **8. 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.

### **9. 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 key stakeholders. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

- Monitoring via meetings (at least termly) between Link Governor and SLT Line Manager
- Monitoring by SLT line management via engagement with Quality Assurance Processes and Line Management
- Review via termly updates to the FGB

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

### **10. Communication**

This policy will be primarily communicated to all stakeholders via publication on the school website