Prayer and Liturgy Policy

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School

19 West End Road, Old Costessey, Norwich. NR8 5AG

Part of the St. John the Baptist Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

We try to follow Jesus by loving each other and caring for God's world.

Wisdom, Love, Might, Let there be Light!

Last reviewed on:	March 2025
Next review due:	March 2027

School Mission Statement:

We try to follow Jesus by loving each other and caring for God's world.

School Motto:

"Wisdom, Love, Might, Let there be Light!"

We aim to make the children who attend St Augustine's feel cared for and secure in surroundings where Catholic values are practised, and where their gifts and abilities are recognised and developed in an atmosphere of respect and friendship.

In planning prayer and liturgy across our school, we attend to the development of the whole child: the physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual."

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory guidance from the Department for Education which sets out what is expected of organisations and individuals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Mission Statement

We try to follow Jesus by loving each other and caring for God's world.

Our school mission statement and teaching of the Catholic Church underpins teaching and learning within our school.

St. Augustine's, like all Catholic Schools, is distinctive because our entire educational policy and approach is inspired by and flows from the vision of life which is enshrined in our faith tradition. Our Catholic faith perspective is not simply an added extra but it is integrated into the whole life of the school and permeates the whole curriculum. At St. Augustine's we believe that a Christian vision of life allows human beings to be more complete as persons. It is our aim to present it, live it and celebrate it, without imposing it on pupils or parents.

This aim will be achieved by giving due attention to Standards, Quality, Efficiency and Ethos.

- To achieve the highest possible standards in relation to the pupils' age and ability.
- To provide the children with teaching of high quality and a curriculum which meets their needs and the requirements of the national curriculum.
- To plan realistically and use the school's resources efficiently to ensure good value for money from the available funds.
- To help the children develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and to achieve good standards in personal relationships.
- To encourage a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and the ways in which it and other religious traditions seek to express the significance of human life.

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School
Policy for Prayer and Liturgy

Context

'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.)

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;70 9.4 Model prayer and liturgy policy 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.

Implementation and Review of Policy

Implementation of the policy will take place after consultation with the Governors. This policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Head teacher, RE Co-ordinator, Governing Body and Staff. The review date is noted on the front page of the policy document.

The Nature of Collective Worship

We believe that Christian 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 a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The Place of Collective Worship in Our School

Worship in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Collective worship takes into account 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

The Aims of Collective Worship

We believe that Collective Worship in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils 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 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 reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to.'

The Liturgical Calendar

We ensure that pupils are aware of the Liturgical calendar and key events in the Church. The symbolism of colours is evident as part of our RE prayer tables in classrooms and assemblies:

- Purple for penance (seen during Advent and Lent),
- Red for the Holy Spirit and martyrdom (seen at Pentecost),
- White for important feasts,
- Green for the ordinary times of the year,
- Blue is associated with Mary and our patron Saint Augustine of Canterbury.

Each month of the year has a special focus and we aim to reflect upon this in school:

- January is the month of the Holy Name of Jesus.
- February is dedicated to the Holy Family.
- March is a month devoted to St. Joseph.
- April is dedicated both to devotion to the Eucharist and devotion to the Holy Spirit.
- May is the month when Mary is especially remembered.
- June is the month of the Sacred Heart when we remember especially the great love Jesus has for us.
- July is the month dedicated to the Precious Blood of Our Lord; the Feast of the Precious Blood is the first Sunday of the month.
- August is dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament, and increased adoration of the Eucharist is encouraged.
- September is traditionally dedicated to the Holy Angels.
- October is the month of the Rosary.
- November is the month when the Holy Souls (the deceased) are prayed for.
- December is dedicated to Advent and the coming of Christ.

Collective Worship in Our School

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;
- Develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way;
- Give pupils positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church.

Children will be encouraged to participate fully in the Liturgical life of the school in various ways:

- Individually, as a group or whole school
- Acts of Worship led by the Head Teacher, or members of staff
- Whole School Liturgy celebrating Liturgical feasts led by individual classes
- Class prayers led by the teacher or children
- Class Act of worship led by teacher or children
- Engaging in the arts to participate in exploring stories and prayer
- Gospel Assembly
- Singing Assembly
- Celebration (Praise) Assembly - To celebrate children's achievements
- Attend Our Lady and St. Walstan's Catholic Church for masses throughout the academic year
- Inviting guest speakers to join in acts of worship e.g. CAFOD, Food bank.
- Ignite mission invited to our school for workshops and retreats.

Collective worship in our schools will be:

- Properly planned
- Effectively resourced
- Monitored
- Evaluated

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).
- 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) Head Teacher

The head teacher, 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) RE Leader (Coordinating Prayer and Liturgy)

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 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.
- 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 head teacher 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.

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. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy are 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 throughout the year, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly. The monitoring process will involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.