



*In the Light of Jesus  
we Learn to Shine*

## Prayer and Liturgy Policy

*'Our schools must be worshipping communities, for true worship in spirit and truth is a sign of our living as a Christian community'*  
(Our Catholic Schools – Mgr Kevin McGinnell)

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School we believe that prayer brings everyone together into the **presence of God**. It is a vital part of our life and draws us together as a community; it is our loving response, in word and action to God. Therefore, we aim to implement our mission statement, through thought, word and action.

### Aims

- to give the children in our care the opportunities to explore their feelings and attitudes towards different life experiences;
- to help them towards a deepening relationship with God;
- to help staff develop their prayer life and spirituality;
- to come together as a caring community to pray, reflect, celebrate, praise, worship, thank and recognise God in our lives.

**Collective Worship** takes place throughout the school on a daily basis in whole school, year groups or classroom context:

- Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday Collective Worship led by members of the School Leadership Team;
- Tuesday and Friday worship through hymns led by members of the Chaplaincy Team;
- Daily class or Year group collective worship led by class teachers, including the Prayer Bags;
- Half-termly/termly before school reflective prayer sessions, open to all in the Family Room. These sessions have added to the Prayer life of the school by providing a dedicated, time at the start of the day, for all members of the school community to spend time in reflection;
- Weekly before school reflective liturgies held for staff during Advent and Lent;
- Beginning and end of term whole school collective worship led by Head teacher;
- During the Advent Term the Year 5 and Year 2 staff and pupils, Chaplaincy Team and the school choir lead the Nativity and Carol service in St. Joseph's Church; open to all staff, parents, parishioners and governors;
- Year groups lead liturgical celebrations at the end of the Lent Term; whole school Advent and services in Lent are led by Fr. John, Fr. Andy, Deacon Jim or members of the SLT;
- The children's work, behaviour and attendance is rewarded and celebrated at these assemblies by receiving certificates and awards in recognition of achievements and acts of living the school mission statement e.g. 'Celebration certificates', 'Roll of Honour', 'Top Table', 'Class Captains', 'Attendance' and 'Learning Log' awards;
- The Parish Priest, Deacon and local clergy visit the school to support the delivery of the Come and See programme.

- During Advent & Lent staff prepare and lead weekly liturgies for colleagues before the start of the school day.
- Family workers lead weekly liturgies for parents during Advent & Lent.

## **Mass**

We believe that the celebration of Holy Mass should draw together all the elements of liturgy with clear simple themes, using language and music appropriate to our community:

- School Mass for KS2 children at the beginning and end of each School Year and new term;
- Annual Diocesan Staff Mass;
- Annual Diocesan Schools Mass;
- Year group masses and Liturgies are held on some Feast Days and other special events in the life of the school e.g. Year 3 Thanksgiving First Communion Mass, and the Year 6 Leavers mass. The Parish Priest of St Joseph's, supported by other priests and deacons in the Deanery celebrate the mass on these occasions;
- On the First Friday of each month Year 2 pupils attend mass at St. Joseph's Church and KS2 pupils attend parish masses;
- School end of year Thanksgiving Mass.

Some of our children have yet to receive the Eucharist, therefore we aim to give them experiences of age appropriate forms of worship e.g. assemblies, liturgies of the Word etc.

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that collective worship and assembly are distinct activities and may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but there will always be an opportunity for personal reflection and spiritual development.

**Monitoring:** The Head teacher and RE Subject Leader(s) will report termly to the Governors on priorities relating to this policy.