

# St Mary Magdalen's Primary School



*The family of St Mary Magdalen's is  
Centred on Christ to create  
Inquisitive individuals  
Who feel empowered to  
Engage in the world in which they live*



## PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY



**Date of Implementation: Autumn 2023**  
**Date of Review: Autumn 2024**

**Signed RE Lead : Mrs M Clark**

## Mission Statement

**The family of St Mary Magdalen's is  
Centred on Christ to create  
Inquisitive Individuals  
Who feel empowered to  
Engage in the world in which they live**

**Every child has the right to an education. (Article 28 UNCRC)**

**Education must develop every child's personality, talents & abilities to the full.  
(Article 29 UNCRC)**

## The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy at St Mary Magdalen's 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 relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

'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.'<sup>1</sup>

## Legal Requirements

It is a legal requirement that there is a daily 'act of worship' offered for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single 'act of worship' for all pupils, or separate 'acts of worship' in school groups. Holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. Prayer, liturgical prayer and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between will always be made clear.

The 'act of worship' is not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy lies with the Governing Body after consultation with the headteacher.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from 'Collective Worship'. However, given the importance of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents will be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured, within Come and See RE curriculum.

## The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of St Mary Magdalen's Catholic School

Prayer and liturgy are an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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<sup>1</sup> *Christ at the Centre* Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

Prayer and liturgy consider 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.

### The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy at St Mary Magdalen's Catholic School aims to provide opportunities for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore personal beliefs
- To respond to and to celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and to develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To pray using 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.'

### What is considered good practice?

- Child led or supported child led planning dependent on age (scaffold and question children)
- Where pupils not only lead acts of worship but are skilled in preparing acts of worship.
- A 'sacred space' is created through a focal point, music, lighting etc. to remind us of the presence of God.
- Scripture, the Word of God, is given prominence by being read from a book and placed down reverently.
- There is a clear theme and message. Opportunity is taken through the choice of themes for the pupils to become familiar with the traditions, customs and practice of the seasons and feasts of the Church and topics relevant to pupils' lives are reflected upon in the context of the Word of God and the teachings of the Church.
- The 4-part structure: Gathering, listening (Word), Responding (Prayer and symbolic action), and Mission.
- If planned: Evidence of the planning and evaluation of provision (including photographs).
- If spontaneous: Fluid, child led, reactive to current events and no need for 4-part structure.
- Adults are good role models.

When practical, other adults/parents are invited to share (not simply observe) in the time of worship.

- Silence is used effectively to allow time for thought, prayer and reflection. Meditation (guided or silent) is used as a way of looking inward and the impact of the worship.
- There is effective use made of music for creating a prayerful atmosphere, silent reflection, singing, liturgical dance or for responses to prayer.
- It is a learning experience but the focus is on worship and not on teaching.
- Gathering and leaving is conducted appropriately.
- There is evidence of a variety of approaches: telling a story, describing a situation or event, using images, special objects, dance, drama, music etc.
- Creative prayer methods used.
- There is opportunity for individual and communal prayer in a variety of forms e.g. spontaneous, litany, intercession, meditation, traditional etc.
- When intercessional prayers are read, these are child written and theme based.

Intercessions begin with:

We pray for... (parish, school, sick, wider world and special any intention)

- Opportunity is taken to use liturgical responses and actions.
- It encourages thinking about the needs of others linked to Catholic Social Teaching.
- It affirms relationships and provides the opportunity for the collective sharing of joys and sorrows (reactive to current events or breaking news stories).
- It helps to promote a common ethos and shared vision (Laudato Si, Catholic Social Teaching).
- Language used is suitable for the age group.
- There is a direct link between faith and everyday life.
- The senses are engaged.
- It affirms relationships and provides opportunity for the collective sharing of joy and sorrow.
- Links to the global world and inclusive to everyone no matter their faith.

## Planning Worship: A Guide to the Process



Gather



Word (Listen)



Response



Mission

- Preparation: When, where, who, what? What resources will I need? Create a focus.
- Gather: How will we begin? How will I create an atmosphere of prayer?
- Word: What will be the scripture focus and decide how to present it.
- Response: What will we do in response to listening to God's Word e.g. prayer and symbolic action.
- Mission: What will I do to help the pupils take the message away with them?

## Leading Prayer and Liturgy

	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
Week 1	gam HT leads a whole school liturgical prayer in hall-linked to Sunday's Gospel		Class led liturgy in studio, led by pupils and parents invited to participate. The rest of the key stage will attend.	Child led liturgical prayer in class led by a small group of children. Children will lead once a term.	Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.
Week 2	gam Teacher leads key stage liturgical prayer in hall/studio				

Statements to Live by will be shared in Monday's liturgical prayer and the Rights Respecting article of the week. These will then be displayed in class and talked about throughout the week.



### Spontaneous Prayer

Children and staff are encouraged to lead spontaneous prayer, this can be in response to the wider world or current affairs. Children are encouraged to write their own prayers to share during daily prayer time and these are celebrated by members of SLT. Children have access to a prayer box where they can place any prayers they have written.

### Daily Prayer

Children and staff say the 3 prayers throughout the day. Morning offerings, Grace before meals and Home time prayer<sup>2</sup>. Children are welcome to share their own prayers here or say traditional prayers e.g. Our Father, Hail Mary. Children are also taught a progression of prayers, age appropriate and these are said regularly throughout the day/week.

<i>Phase / Term</i>	<i>Autumn</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>
<i>EYFS</i>	<i>Sign of the Cross Morning Prayer Grace before Meals Evening prayer</i>	<i>To begin attending Whole School Liturgical Prayer</i>	<i>Hail Mary</i>
<i>KS1</i>	<i>As above, plus... Our Father</i>	<i>Prayer to my Guardian Angel</i>	<i>Eternal Rest Glory be to the Father</i>
<i>LKS2</i>	<i>As above, plus... Apostles Creed</i>	<i>The Confiteor</i>	<i>Act of Contrition Come Holy Spirit</i>
<i>UKS2</i>	<i>As above, plus... The Memorare</i>	<i>Gloria</i>	<i>Hail Holy Queen</i>

### Recording

Prayer and liturgy are recorded in class Prayer book using prayer planner proforma<sup>3</sup>, or following 4 step structure. Photos and videos to be uploaded to Twitter/X and saved on staff shared folder.

### Monitoring and Evaluating

Prayer and liturgy are monitored using prayer and liturgy monitoring form.

Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document). Children will evaluate their

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<sup>2</sup> See appendix 1

<sup>3</sup> See appendix 2

liturgical prayers, through evaluation sheets<sup>4</sup> and record good comments about their prayer time from the participants.

Questions to help evaluate:

- Was the main emphasis on worshipping God?
- Have pupils been involved in the planning, preparation and leading of the act of worship?
- Was a 'sacred space' created using a prayer focus related to the theme, music, images, objects etc?
- Were pupils actively involved in the worship?
- Were a variety of approaches used e.g., story-telling, use of images, drama, music etc?
- Was a time of silence given for pupils to think, reflect and pray?
- Were the pupils respectful and reverent?
- Did the act of worship follow a liturgical structure e.g., Gathering, Listen, Response and Sending Forth?
- Was prominence given to the Scriptures as the Word of God?
- Was the language used suitable for the year group?
- Was the worship linked to everyday life e.g. joys and sorrows, a special event, world matters etc?
- Was the Church's liturgical year recognised and celebrated?
- Were the pupils encouraged to think about the needs of others?
- Were prayers from Catholic heritage used?

### Resources

Each class will have a prayer box filled with all cloths needed for the liturgical year, religious artefacts, bibles and candles. Key stage 1 will have access to 'Let Us Pray' cards (adapted to school's resources)<sup>5</sup> to support children in the four-step structure. This can continue into Lower Stage 2 depending on needs of children. Each Key Stage will have access to 'Let Us Pray together' and it will be placed in a central location to aid planning. Teachers will have access to liturgical dances/hymns saved on shared drive. A prayer box will be outside the Headteacher's office to allow children to put in their own prayers that will be then used and read out in whole school liturgical prayer.

### The learning environment

'Symbols and icons of the Catholic faith when displayed in school and throughout its premises will help the school community and visitors to experience the uniqueness and sacredness of this learning environment'<sup>6</sup>

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference scripture with children's input. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos. The statement to live by will be displayed and the Right's Respecting article of the week. Daily prayers and the prayer that the class is learning will be displayed and read regularly for the children to learn.

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<sup>4</sup> See appendix 3

<sup>5</sup> See appendix 4

<sup>6</sup> Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

### **Retreats**

Year 4 attend the Emmaus Youth Village for 2 nights and Year 6 attend the Primary Festivals.

### **Other opportunities**

Masses will be attended once a term by the whole school and additionally on Holy Days of obligation.

Key Stage 2 students will attend Tuesday masses at church on a rotational schedule.

Key Stage 2 students will attend Reconciliation in accordance with the liturgical year (Advent and Lent).

Holy Communion children will serve in the Parish once a month and attend preparation classes after school monthly, led by teachers.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator (Megan Clark) and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors every two years. The Foundation Governors in particular will play a most important role.



## Appendix 1

### **Morning Prayer**

O my God you love me. You are with me night and day. I want to love you always in all I do and say. I'll try to please you. Father bless me through the day. Amen.

### **Grace before meals**








Bless us O God as we sit together. Bless the food we eat today. Bless the hands that made the food. Bless us O God. Amen.






### **Night Prayer**

God Our Father, we come to say thank you for your love today. Thank you for my family and all the friends you give to me. Guard me in the dark of night. And in the morning send your light. Amen.



Key Stage One Prayer Planner

<p><b>How will we gather?</b></p>  hear  where  people	<p><b>How will we respond to the word of God?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Action</li> <li>o Listen</li> <li>o Hear</li> <li>o Reflect</li> <li>o Prayers</li> </ul>
<p><b>What scripture will we listen to?</b></p>  Old or New Testament  Message of the scripture	<p><b>What message/action should we take home?</b></p>  What could you do at home?  What could you say to others?

<p><b>What will our prayer space look like? (draw or write)</b></p>	<p><b>What things do we need for our prayer time?</b></p>  Music  Cross  Light  Bible  Artifact
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Key Stage Two Prayer Planner

<p><b>How will we gather?</b></p> <p>See Hear Think Do</p>	<p><b>How will we respond to the word of God?</b></p> <p>See Hear Think Do</p>
<p><b>What scripture will we listen to?</b></p>  Old or New Testament <p>Message of the scripture</p>	<p><b>What message/action should we take home?</b></p> <p>See Hear Think Do</p>

<p><b>What things do we need for our prayer time?</b></p>  Music  Cross  Light  Bible  Artifact	<p><b>What things do we need for our prayer time?</b></p>
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Appendix 2



Key Stage One Prayer Planner

Evaluation: What went well?

Gather

Word

Respond

Going Forth

Evaluation: What would you change next time?

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Any Comments from people who you led in prayer?

[Appendix 3](#)



Key Stage Two Prayer Planner

Evaluation: What went well?

Gather

Word

Respond

Going Forth

Evaluation: What would you change next time?

Gather

Word



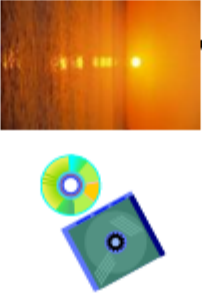


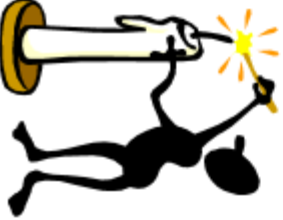
Respond

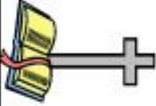



Going Forth

Any Comments from people who you led in prayer?

[Appendix 4](#)

Gather

Gather - how we come together.	
<p><b>Gather - Make the sign of the cross in</b></p>  <p><b>In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.</b></p>	<p><b>Gather - The Lord be with you</b></p>  <p><b>...And with your spirit.</b></p>
<p><b>Gather - Play reflective music as you gather in a circle.</b></p> 	<p><b>Gather - Sing 'Come and join the circle' as you make a circle.</b> (from the CD by Bernadette Farrell: <i>Share the Light</i>)</p> 
<p><b>Gather - Make the room dark, with little lighting and soft music and everyone leaves. Enter the room one at a time when you are ready.</b></p> 	<p><b>Gather - Sit in a circle, light a candle and remember that Jesus is the light of the world.</b></p> 

<p><b>Response- Reflect on the Word you have heard and choose a traditional prayer to say together. Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Hail Holy Queen, Come Holy Spirit</b></p> 	<p><b>Response- Sit in the school prayer garden and say a silent prayer of thanks</b></p> 
<p><b>Response- Have a quiet moment of reflection</b></p>  <p><b>. Then guide your finger through a prayer maze either silently or with a guided mediation</b></p>	<p><b>Response- Say a hand prayer</b></p>  <p> <b>■ INTERCESSION (Eph 6:18-19)</b>          Pray for others. Pray for the salvation of your loved ones and friends. Pray for the church growth.  <b>■ THANKSGIVING (Eph 5:20)</b>          Thank God for what He has done for you, in, for &amp; the church.  <b>■ PRAISE (Ps 146:1-2)</b>          Meditate on God's attributes &amp; praise Him for who He is.  <b>■ PETITION (1 Sam 1:27)</b>          Ask God for peace &amp; for your daily needs.       </p>
<p><b>Response- Silent meditation with a chosen mantra</b> <b>Mar-ra-na-tha</b></p>	<p><b>Response- Create a prayer paper chain</b></p> 