

Bishop Ellis Catholic Voluntary Academy Prayer and Liturgy Policy



Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement is rooted in Scripture


‘I have come that you may have life – life in all its fullness’
(John 10:10)

At Bishop Ellis, we aim to help everyone develop in their journey of faith with God in a positive learning environment
as we live out our mission to:

Love God
Aspire to be our best
Be honest
Forgive
Care

Our School Motto

We love. We pray. We learn. We play.

Approved by: LGB		Date: June 2024
Signed: Sam Davies- Chair of Governors		
Last reviewed:	May 2024	
Scheduled date of next review:	September 2026	

Introduction

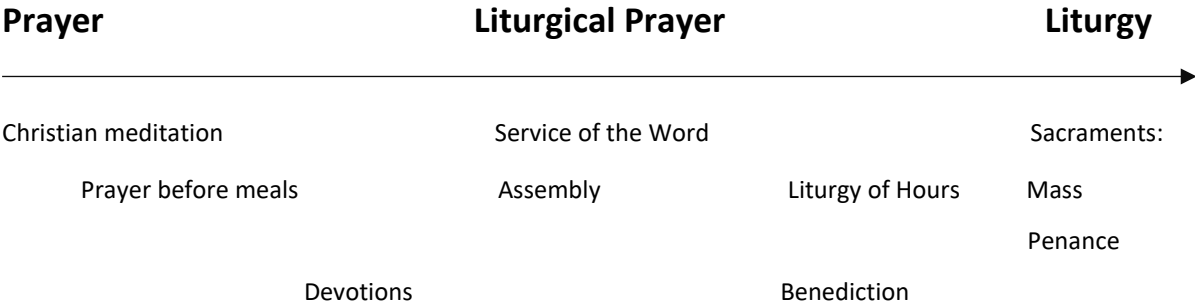
Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

(From the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory, September 2022)

In any school there will be a range of prayer and liturgy: classroom prayer, meditation, assemblies, devotions, special services for times in the school year, celebrations of Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Each form of prayer and liturgy will have its own character dependent on the circumstances, size and age of the group, the place of celebration and its content.

Definition of Terms

Prayer, Liturgical Prayer, and Liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass on a Solemnity of the Church (e.g., Ascension of the Lord) at the other. Of course, there are areas of overlap between the categories.



Prayer	Liturgical Prayer	Liturgy
Simple structure	Structured (often 4 part)	Taken from official books
One or two elements	Elements drawn from liturgy	Complex structure
Balance of familiarity & creativity	Places of Scripture	Many elements
	Contrasts and creativity	Range of ministry

In Catholic terminology ‘worship’ is not generally used to name and describe a distinct type of prayer or event. Worship is about living our lives in a way that recognises that everything we have is a gift from God and that everything we do gives glory to God. That, of course, does include prayer but the scope is broader. With that understanding of worship it will be seen that that the purpose of education in a Catholic school is to know and love Christ and to open the vision and imagination of all pupils to the wonder of living in God’s world, and the responsibilities that follow from this.

Under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 there is a statutory duty to inspect and report on denominational education (that is religious education) and collective worship in schools designated as having a religious character. For this reason, the term ‘Collective Worship’ has been kept as the headline judgement by the Catholic Schools Inspectorate but throughout the framework it is referred to as prayer and liturgy. This policy addresses the shift in vocabulary and is an interim response to the draft Prayer and Liturgy Directory. It is based on a policy devised by the Hexham and Newcastle Catholic Diocese

The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy 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 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.'¹

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 the Come and See RE curriculum.

The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of Bishop Ellis Catholic Voluntary Academy

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

Prayer and liturgy 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.

¹ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and liturgy in Bishop Ellis Catholic Voluntary Academy (CVA) 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.'

Principles

All acts of prayer in Bishop Ellis CVA will:

- Give glory and honour to God;
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character;
- Enable pupils to develop skills so that they can prepare, organise and lead prayer times;
- 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.² Celebrations will be appropriate to the age and groupings of the children.

Planning, content and celebration

Prayer and liturgy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, Come and See, feast days, the curriculum and significant dates e.g. CAFOD Family Fast Day, Holocaust Memorial Day. Parishes and parents are invited to participate in some celebrations. A variety of prayer styles will be used appropriate to the age of the children and the occasion.

Staff in school gather weekly for prayer and reflection as part of staff briefing.

The Timetable of Prayer and Liturgy is as below:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Gospel Worship	Liturgical song	Child Led Worship	Lectio Divina	Christian Meditation/ Personal Prayer

² Directory for Masses with Children, paragraph 9.

A yearly calendar is shared with parents and carers.

Leading Prayer and Liturgy

As faith leader of the school, the Headteacher will plan and lead prayer and liturgy. On occasions this will be led by other members of the senior leadership team. The class teacher will lead class prayer and liturgy. Children are taught to plan and lead prayer times according to their age.

Recording

Prayer and liturgy is recorded in the whole school worship and class worship folders

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and liturgy is monitored using prayer and liturgy monitoring forms. Children and adults will choose the most appropriate. These are also recorded in the worship folders.

LITURGICAL SENSITIVITY / COMMENT ON EACH SECTION

Liturgy
EVALUATION SHEET

THEME:
DATE:
LOCATION:
LED BY:
EVALUATED BY:

PERSONAL IMPACT / WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY?

“ ” 😊
“ ” 📖
“ ” ★

GATHER - ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP +
THE WORD - ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP +
RESPONSE - ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP +
MISSION - ENGAGEMENT LEADERSHIP +

Next time we could...

LOOK OUT FOR...

- Gathering Song
Sign of the Cross
Welcome
Opening Prayer
Penitential Prayers
Theme
- Correct Responses
Reflection
Explanation
Intro to Scripture
- Whole Group Action
Asking Prayers
Thanksgiving Prayers
Silence
- A Mission
Follow-up Activities
Closing Prayer
Sign of the Cross

CREATIVITY AND VARIETY / WHAT DID YOU SEE, HEAR, THINK AND DO?

SEE

HEAR



THINK

DO

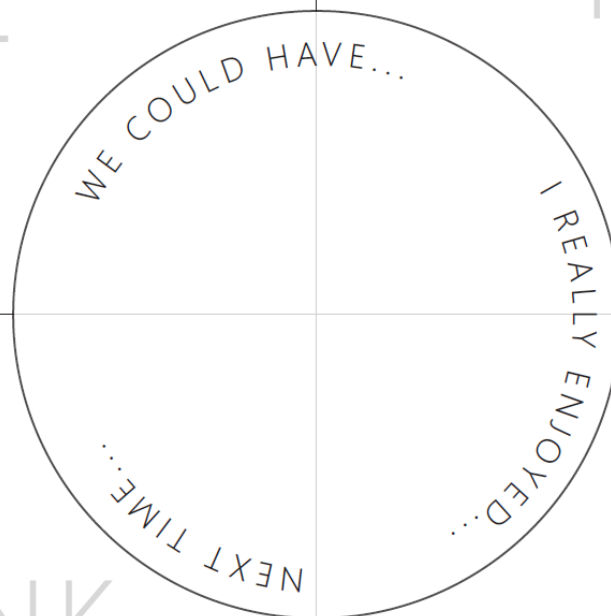
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SEE

HEAR



THINK

DO

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP / FIVE MINUTE FEEDBACK



A voice cries out, "Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord!" - Mark 1:3



Copies of these are available in the staff Sharepoint
Following monitoring, training needs will be identified and outcomes used to inform the school's CSED (Catholic Schools Evaluation Document).

Resources

There are a wide range of resources available in each classroom which include but not limited to

- Bibles
- Prayer books
- Crucifix
- Rosary beads
- Artefacts
- Statues
- Cloths in liturgical colours

The class teacher is responsible for managing access to these in the classroom.

There are similar resources available to children working with the lay chaplain. The lay chaplain is responsible for organising these.

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'³

Focal points in each classroom and throughout the school will reflect the liturgical season and will reference Come and See topics. In this way they will be an outward sign of the school's ethos.

Retreats

Children in year 6 have the opportunity to attend the Briars Residential Centre run by the Nottingham Roman Catholic Diocesan Youth Service.

³ Christ at the Centre Rev Marcus Stock, 2005

There are mini retreats organised in school.

There is a comprehensive plan to celebrate the Jubilee Year 2025 Pilgrims of Hope.

Other opportunities

We have close links with our parishes St Theresa's in Birstall and The Divine Infant of Prague in Syston. We support parish events and parishioners are invited to attend mass in school.

Eucharist

There is a yearly plan for when Mass is celebrated in school

The Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

Andrew Monaghan

Policy Monitoring and Review

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator 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

The Role of the Coordinator for Prayer and Liturgy

- Formulating a written policy for prayer and liturgy
- Ensuring that there is a development plan for prayer and liturgy included in the school development plan
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy is appropriate to the age, aptitudes and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the principles of the 'Directory for Masses with Children'
- Organising themes for prayer times
- Assisting the governors and headteacher to carry out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy including withdrawal from Collective Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g. through modelling different prayer styles

Planning, recording, monitoring and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation
- Observing Acts of Prayer and Liturgy and providing feedback
- Informing the headteacher of standards and developments in prayer and liturgy

Communication

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of prayer and liturgy
- Reporting to and consulting with the governors and headteacher regarding matters of concern and development
- Acting as consultant to colleagues
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy
- Informing newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding prayer and liturgy
- Communicating with parents, governors and the parish community
- Liaison with St Thomas Aquinas lead lay chaplain.
- Liaison with the school lay chaplain
- Liaison with the Diocesan Education Service.

Professional development/Ongoing formation

- Leading and organising inservice training and ongoing formation for prayer and liturgy
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training
- Keeping up to date by personal reading

Resources

- Evaluating existing resources
- Developing the resources available for prayer and liturgy including visual aids, artefacts, drapes, music, visitors, leaders, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently

[Consideration will be given to the establishment of a planning group, which might include, the coordinator, the headteacher, deputy, staff, pupils, governors and school chaplain. It would be part of the role of the coordinator to lead this group.]