# ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# Prayer and Liturgy policy

**Mission Statement**

We are a Roman Catholic Community committed to:

Mutual respect, positive encouragement and participation.

Recognising the different personal and educational needs of all pupils.

The delivery of the full national curriculum together with a religious education syllabus approved by the Catholic Church.

The highest standards of teaching, learning and performance.

Maintaining a supportive partnership with parents, the parish, and the wider community.

The professional development of all staff.

**Approved by: Awaiting ratification**

**Last reviewed on: May 2026**

**Next review due by: May 2027**

**Aims:**

The pupils at St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary school:

- through work, to develop their full potential as part of the community and as a unique person made in the image and likeness of God.
- through worship, to learn to know and love God and to recognise and respond to the person of Christ in others.
- through witness, to celebrate Gospel messages of justice and peace.

**Introduction:**

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in a Catholic school 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.

**Statement of requirement:**

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; Instrument of Government, clause 2

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)).

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

**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) 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.

(c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

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 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 and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice

(d) Staff

It is expected that staff will:

- Provide opportunities for pupils to pray
- Provide pupils with meaningful prayer experiences
- Assist pupils to develop the language of prayer
- Teach pupils the traditional prayers of the Church
- Help pupils to develop habits of prayer

## 4. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

| Prayer, worship and Liturgy celebration | | | | |
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| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Celebration of the Word<br><br>Whole School<br><br>Headteacher or Senior Leadership Team<br><br>Focus: Sunday's Gospel | Celebration of the Word<br><br>EYFS&KS1<br><br>Pupil led<br><br>Focus: Liturgical year<br><br>OR<br><br>KS2 In class prayer | Celebration of the Word<br><br>EYFS&KS2<br><br>Pupil led<br><br>Focus: Liturgical year<br><br>OR<br><br>EYFS & KS1 In class prayer | In class prayer | Three-week rotation<br><br>Celebration Assembly<br><br>CSJ Assembly<br><br>Class assembly (based on CSJ or Class Topic) |

| Masses |
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| • Whole School Masses are celebrated on special Feast Days/Celebrations.<br>• Class Masses are celebrated in school, the Parish community is invited to join the school.<br>• A whole school reconciliation service takes place – Advent and Lent.<br>• Year 6 classes celebrate the culmination of their life with a special Leavers' Mass, to which their families are invited.<br>• Celebration of the Eucharist and seasonal Liturgies are celebrated regularly both in school and in Church.<br>• Lenten services are led by our priest |

| School Celebrations |
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| • EYFS and KS1 pupils arrange nativity performances in the school hall<br>• Ash Wednesday: The parish priest leads an Easter preparation service for our school community.<br>• Year 6 lead Stations of the cross for the school.<br>• Yearly CAFOD assembly and workshops.<br>• Big Lent walk.<br>• The crowning of Mary takes place every in May.<br>• Weekly infant prayer group at lunchtime.<br>• Weekly timetabled class visits from Parish Deacon. |

## 5. 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 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

## 6. 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.

## 7. 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 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

## 8. Review

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