



Much Woolton Catholic Primary School

'With Jesus we Love, Learn and Grow'

School Policy for Prayer & Liturgy

Approved by the Governing body in October 2025

Signed _____ Chair of Governors

Signed _____ Head teacher

To be reviewed and revised in October 2026

MISSION STATEMENT

With Jesus we Love, Learn and Grow

To do this we will:

- Be a Christian community that follows Jesus in living out Gospel values; 'With Jesus' (Christ centred)
- Be a beacon of light that shines out to others, sharing faith, hope and love; 'Love' (Community)
- Provide opportunities for all to grow and achieve by igniting a desire for life-long learning; 'Learn and grow' (Education)

Objectives: Christ Centred

- Provide quality celebration of the word and enriching liturgical celebrations
- Enable our children to acquire an excellent religious education and develop their relationship with God
- Encourage a sense of justice, peace and stewardship of our global community

Objectives: Education

- Provide a stimulating curriculum that develops a passion for learning, curiosity about our world and enables children to be agents for change
- Value our pupils and staff, appreciating their uniqueness and individual talents, enabling them to be the best they can be
- Have high expectations of ourselves and others in all that we do
- Strive for all to reach their full potential by building resilience and having high aspirations

Objectives: Community

- Create a safe, happy environment where all feel valued and welcomed
- Develop positive links between the school and parish
- Recognise that each person is an extraordinary work of art
- Take an active role in the stewardship of our local and global community that enriches the lives of others

Introduction

Our School Mission Statement states that: -

“With Jesus we love, learn and grow”

In order to fulfil this Mission Statement and the recommendations of the Bishops’ Conference, Much Woolton School places great importance upon the daily Act of Worship.

The aim of this policy is to clearly communicate to staff, parents and pupils the manner in which Celebration of the word will be delivered in this school.

Aims:

Celebration of the word at Much Woolton aims to: -

- Create a caring, Catholic Community within which all feel welcome, valued and respected and in which the faith life of each individual will be nurtured and developed according to the values and teachings of the Christian Gospels.
- Provide experiences of a loving and worshipping community.
- Provide the opportunity for pupils and staff to come together to worship God.
- Give opportunities for pupils and staff to consider spiritual and moral issues.
- Give pupils and staff opportunities to explore their own beliefs
- Encourage participation and response, whether through active involvement in the presentation of worship or through listening and joining in the worship offered.
- Promote a common ethos and shared value.
- Reinforce positive attitudes.

The Character of Celebration of the Word in a Catholic School

Celebration of the word in a Catholic School, while respecting diversity of belief and commitment, will be Catholic in character.

It will reflect the tradition of the Church and will have Christ at its heart.

Our policy at Much Woolton is to try to ensure that we are both pro-active and reactive.

Pro-active in the sense of planning and anticipating what is appropriate for all pupils to know, understand and be able to reflect upon.

Re-active in the sense that we shall be able to react to people’s life situations, and the joys and sorrows, the hopes and uncertainties which are experienced therein, with warmth, patience, understanding, love and hopefully a little wisdom.

The context of this prayer and liturgy policy

‘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.)

Statement of requirement

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily celebration of the word (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). 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 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 Lead

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.

4. Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

The timing and organisation of daily Celebration of the Word at Much Woolton is flexible. There may be a single Act of Worship for all pupils or separate acts for pupils in different classes or year groups. Celebration of the word may take place in the classroom, the hall, the church or the outdoors; in fact, it may take place wherever a group are gathered and have the urge to praise God. Each class teacher has allocated time each day (See class time-tables), the time allowance being in line with policy i.e. the specified time for the age of the child.

Once a week the Act of Celebration of the Word takes place as part of a whole school assembly. The other days it takes place in class groups.

Each week at Much Woolton, the whole school comes together to emphasise the unity of our community. This assembly is usually led by the Head of School. It takes the format of formal prayers followed by an Act of Celebration of the word. The focus is usually based on the 'Wednesday Word' – sharing Sunday's Gospel. Appropriate resources are displayed on a focus table. School announcements are then made and presentations for good work, behaviour, attendance etc.

At St. Mary's Parish, a Whole School Mass is held each term, where pupils from EYFS to Year 6 come together to celebrate and pray as a community. In addition to this, several other masses and liturgies take place both in school and at St. Mary's. These include the Year 4 First Holy Communion Mass, the Year 6 Leavers' Mass, the Welcome Service for new parents, as well as special services for Ash Wednesday, Christmas Carols, Christingle and Easter. Children in Year 4 are given the opportunities to celebrate the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.

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.

Review

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

Appendix 1a

Weekly Celebration of the Word Planner

Appendix 1b

'Come and See' Respond planner

Appendix 1a & 1b

MUCH WOOLTON CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL – CELEBRATION OF THE WORD WEEKLY PLANNER Class
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WB	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
THEME					
GATHER					WHOLE SCHOOL ASSEMBLY - CELEBRATION OF THE WORD
LISTEN					
RESPOND					
GO FORTH					

REJOICE

Celebrate: The children’s new knowledge and understanding our family trees and the family of God in Scripture.

PLAN

Decide from all the children have remembered what will be included. Share some refreshment at the end.

GATHER

Consider how the children will begin the celebration.

WORD – LISTEN

Listen to some scripture from the topic read or enacted in some way.

RESPONSE

How will the children respond to all they have heard?

GOING FORTH

How will the celebration be concluded?

