

## **Prayer and Liturgy Policy for St Peter's Catholic Primary School**

*"Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God."*

St John Damascene

### **Mission**

Learning together, loving God, becoming the best I can, is our mission here at St Peter's. Throughout opportunities of prayer and liturgy, we provide children with spiritual reflection on what this means. Throughout our day we learn together, not just in class but through our worship experiences, we learn how to be closer with God. We show our love for God and love of others. This is reflected through everything we do here at St Peter's. By learning about and loving God we become closer to him and therefore are working at becoming the best that we can be in the eyes of God.

### **Aims of Prayer and Liturgy**

Prayer and Liturgy provides children with those quiet moments where they can reflect upon life and become closer to God. It helps to provide children with knowledge, understanding and a deeper experience of Catholic prayer through a variety of forms. It is a significant part of our school culture and children enjoy taking part in the experiences offered to them. Children are also given the opportunity to plan and lead prayer and liturgy.

### **Legal requirements**

Prayer and Liturgy is a legal daily requirement which is distinct from curriculum time. For Catholic schools this requirement is made explicit within the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham which states: "Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.

At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>"

Prayer and Liturgy is an important part of a child's spiritual development, however; if you wish to withdraw your child from these experiences then it is your right as a parent or guardian to do so. Please contact the Head Teacher directly to discuss this.

### **How we meet our stated aims through the different forms of liturgy and collective worship**

During the school week we provide provision for Prayer and Liturgy daily through a variety of ways. Prayer is said together as a class, at least four times a day. Children help to lead this prayer and also offer the prayers with intentions of their own. Each morning in school, there is also an opportunity for prayer and liturgy as a whole school through a Gospel focussed assembly, teacher or key stage led assemblies, prayer services both child led and adult led, celebration assemblies and also Mass. At certain points of the liturgical year there is also opportunities for each class to prepare and be part of an Advent service as well as an Easter reflection upon the Stations of the Cross. St Peter's also joins with other cluster schools to take part in prayer and liturgy during advent and Lent, as well as celebrating a Mass offered for Vocations together too.

Children pray well and confidently together in their classroom. Each class has a prayer area which offers opportunity for individual or private petitions. Children also pray at the four main parts of the school day.

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<sup>1</sup> Archdiocese of Birmingham 'Instrument of Government for Catholic Voluntary Aided Schools.'

Prayer and liturgy is timetabled and monitored by the R.E co-ordinator and over-seen by the Head Teacher. Each staff member has a timetable and every class and member of teaching staff is given an opportunity to plan and lead prayer and liturgy.

### **Mass**

The prayer and liturgy timetable indicates which member of staff is responsible for planning Mass with their class, for that week. Readings are shared and bidding prayers are written with the children, for the Mass of the Sunday previously. Mass takes place in the school hall however; there are many opportunities for the children to visit St Peter's Church in Bloxwich and share Mass there. Father David Doran is regularly involved throughout discussion and is provided with a timetable of the Masses that will take place. Throughout the year there are also opportunities for classes to attend Masses in St Peter's on a Sunday for those families who are involved in Sacramental preparation for their child.

### **Links with the Parish Community and Parents**

St Peter's Primary school is part of the parish of St Peter's in Bloxwich. We share Masses in the parish and have Parish visitors attend Masses at school.

Our Parish priest requests that parents or guardians who have Catholic children in Year 3 and Year 6, attend Mass regularly in order to prepare for their Sacraments.

School also tries to involve the parents in prayer and liturgy by inviting them in to share in experiences such as Mass but also through prayer bags which are sent home with children. Parents are regularly invited to Mass and celebration assemblies. The details of these are always available on newsletters and on our website.

### **Prayer Areas/Sacred Spaces**

Prayer areas within class are always visible. They are a focus point of every classroom. They are to be kept clean and tidy with relevant artefacts on them for the liturgical season. Each area has a bible on display. Prayer areas also provide an opportunity for private prayer for the children. There is always an interactive prayer place at each prayer area, where children can write their own prayers. Also prayer areas can be found situated in other public places within the school. Children are responsible for the prayer areas along with the class teacher who over-sees that what has been chosen is appropriate for display on the area. Prayer areas are monitored by children and the RE co-ordinator.

### **Resources**

Resources for prayer and liturgy are generally kept within each of the classrooms in school. There is a variety of resources available, such as: bibles (age appropriate for each year group), candles, pebbles, rosary beads, cloths appropriate for each point of the liturgical year, music amongst many more. Prayer area monitors have access to these resources in order to change the prayer areas according to the correct liturgical season. There is also a central storage point for RE resources should anyone wish to use these within their classroom.

### **Monitoring**

The RE co-ordinator and Head Teacher are responsible for the monitoring of prayer and liturgy. Currently, Father David is the link Governor for R.E. Prayer and Liturgy observations are completed and discussed with members of staff in order to improve the opportunities St Peter's provide.

### **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

All opportunities are inclusive and allow equal opportunities. Where necessary, prayer services are differentiated to accommodate children's differing needs. Adult support is always available to support children who require it during prayer and liturgy.

### **Health and Safety**

All children have a signed consent form that allows them to walk up to St Peter's Church. Adult to child ratio is also taken into account when classes walk up to the Church. Live flame candles are used during Mass which are placed on the Altar. In the classroom, battery powered candles are used to avoid any naked flames. At Advent the wreath is lit, however Staff monitor the height of the leaves and the height of the candles to ensure that this does not become a fire risk.

### **Review date**

The policy was edited on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 and will need a further review in September 2023.