Diocese of Nottingham
Working in partnership with The Saint Ralph Sherwin Academy Trust

The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy



Mission Statement
At The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy, we strive to be a caring and inclusive Catholic community where Christ is at the centre of all that we do. Guided by our mission to provide a place where children learn, have fun, grow and develop in the light and love of Christ, we seek to nurture the spiritual, moral, social and emotional development of every child.

Prayer and Liturgy are central to the life and mission of our school. Through meaningful experiences of prayer, worship and reflection, we help children to encounter Christ, deepen their faith and grow as active participants in the life of the Church. Prayer and Liturgy enable our community to celebrate, reflect, give thanks, seek forgiveness and respond to God's call through service to others.

This policy is informed by *To Love You More Dearly: The Prayer and Liturgy Directory for Catholic Schools, Parishes and Families (2023)*, the teachings of the Catholic Church and guidance from the Diocese of Nottingham.

Vision
At The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy, we seek to be a prayerful community where every child and adult is invited into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

Through Prayer and Liturgy, we aim to:

- Foster encounter with Christ.
- Develop a living faith.
- Form pupils as disciples.
- Strengthen relationships within our school community.
- Encourage service inspired by Catholic Social Teaching.
- Nurture a lifelong habit of prayer.

Prayer and Liturgy support our mission of developing children who know they are loved by God and who seek to make a positive difference in the world.

Introduction
Prayer and Liturgy are at the heart of Catholic education and provide opportunities for all members of the school community to gather in God's presence, listen to His Word, respond in faith and be sent forth in mission.
In accordance with statutory requirements and diocesan guidance, all pupils participate in daily prayer. Prayer and Liturgy are not additional activities but expressions of the Catholic identity and mission of the school.

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy
Prayer is the raising of the heart and mind to God.

Liturgy is the public prayer of the Church through which Christ continues His saving work. Whilst all liturgy is prayer, not all prayer is liturgy.

Within school, pupils experience a rich variety of prayer including:

- Traditional prayers.
- Spontaneous prayer.
- Silent reflection.
- Meditation.
- Celebration of the Word.
- Liturgical prayer.
- Eucharistic celebration.
- Seasonal devotional practices.

Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy at The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy aim to:

- Enable pupils to encounter God.
- Deepen pupils' relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Develop understanding of Catholic beliefs and traditions.
- Foster active participation in prayer and worship.
- Encourage reflection upon Scripture.
- Promote Gospel values.
- Develop understanding of Catholic Social Teaching.
- Strengthen links between faith and daily life.
- Foster community and belonging.
- Inspire pupils to serve others.

Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

In accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, Prayer and Liturgy at The Priory are:

- Christ-centred.
- Scriptural.
- Liturgical.
- Inclusive.
- Participatory.
- Formational.
- Developmental.
- Mission-focused.
- Prayer and Liturgy provide opportunities for children to encounter Christ and to develop as missionary disciples who seek to live out Gospel values in everyday life.

Gather, Listen, Respond, Mission

Prayer and Liturgy across the school follow the recognised structure of:

Gather

Creating a respectful atmosphere and becoming aware of God's presence.

Listen

Listening to Scripture, Church teaching and stories of faith.

Respond

Responding through prayer, reflection, discussion, song, silence or action.

Mission

Considering how to live out the message received through practical actions and service.

Forms of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy within school may include:

- Daily classroom prayer.
- Morning prayer.
- Prayer before and after meals.
- End of day prayer.
- Celebration of the Word.
- Class Prayer and Liturgy.
- Whole-school Prayer and Liturgy.
- Eucharistic celebrations.
- Reconciliation services.
- Rosary.
- Stations of the Cross.
- Advent and Lent liturgies.
- Prayer linked to Catholic Social Teaching.
- Feast day celebrations.
- Seasonal devotions.
- Reflection opportunities.

Children experience a progressively wider range of prayer experiences as they move through the school.

Pattern of Provision

The school provides regular opportunities for Prayer and Liturgy through:

- Daily classroom prayer.
- Weekly class Prayer and Liturgy.
- Weekly phase or key stage gatherings.
- Whole-school Prayer and Liturgy.
- Liturgical celebrations linked to the Church's seasons.
- Parish Masses.
- Sacramental celebrations.
- Prayer experiences linked to Catholic Social Teaching and charitable action.

Prayer experiences reflect the liturgical year including:

- Advent.
- Christmas.
- Lent.
- Holy Week.
- Easter.
- Pentecost.
- Saints' days.
- Holy Days of Obligation.

Pupil Participation and Leadership

Pupils are encouraged to participate in, plan, lead and evaluate Prayer and Liturgy according to their age and stage of development.

Opportunities include:

- Writing prayers.
- Selecting Scripture.
- Preparing prayer spaces.
- Choosing music.
- Leading prayer.
- Reading Scripture.
- Evaluating experiences.
- Supporting liturgical celebrations.

- Participating in chaplaincy activities.

As pupils progress through school, increasing responsibility is given to enable them to become confident leaders of Prayer and Liturgy.

Shared Prayer Tradition
By the end of Key Stage Two, pupils will have encountered and prayed:

- Sign of the Cross.
- Our Father.
- Hail Mary.
- Glory Be.
- Grace Before Meals.
- Grace After Meals.
- Act of Contrition.
- Eternal Rest.
- Angelus.
- Apostles' Creed.
- Nicene Creed.
- Responses used at Mass.
- School prayers.
- Diocesan prayers.
- Pupils will also develop confidence in spontaneous prayer and personal reflection.

Sacramental and Parish Life

The school recognises the importance of its relationship with the parish and wider Church community.
Children participate in parish celebrations and sacramental opportunities where appropriate.
Sacramental preparation is supported through collaboration between families, parish clergy and school staff.
The school works closely with parish communities to strengthen children's understanding of belonging to the People of God.

Catholic Social Teaching

Prayer and Liturgy support pupils in understanding and living out Catholic Social Teaching.
Themes may include:

- Human dignity.
- The common good.
- Solidarity.
- Care for creation.
- Option for the poor.
- Rights and responsibilities.

Opportunities are provided for pupils to respond through charitable action, fundraising, stewardship and service to others.

Right to Withdraw

Prayer and liturgy are integral to the distinctive Catholic character of the school. Parents retain the legal right to withdraw their child from prayer and liturgy and should discuss any concerns with the Headteacher.

Inclusion

At The Priory, prayer and liturgy are rooted in the tradition, teaching and worship of the Catholic Church while remaining inclusive and accessible to all members of our school community.

We ensure that prayer and liturgy are:

- Age-appropriate and developmentally suitable.
- Accessible to pupils with additional needs.
- Inclusive and respectful of pupils from different cultural backgrounds.
- Respectful of those from other faith traditions or no faith tradition.

While maintaining our distinctive Catholic identity, prayer and liturgy are planned so that all pupils can participate respectfully, meaningfully and appropriately according to their age and stage of development. Opportunities are adapted where necessary to ensure full participation and engagement.

Pupils and families from other faith traditions or none are welcomed, respected and valued as members of our school community. Through prayer and liturgy, we promote the dignity of every human person, foster a sense of belonging and community, and encourage mutual respect and understanding.

In accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, we seek to ensure that all pupils experience prayer and liturgy as opportunities for encounter, reflection, participation and spiritual growth within the life of our Catholic school.

Prayer Environments

Prayer spaces are a visible expression of the Catholic life of the school.
Each classroom includes a focal prayer area that reflects:

- The liturgical season.
- Current themes.
- Scripture.
- Children's contributions.
- Religious artefacts and symbols.
- Shared prayer spaces throughout the school further support reflection and worship.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors
Governors:

- Ensure Prayer and Liturgy remain central to school life.
- Monitor provision and impact.
- Support policy implementation.
- Ensure appropriate resources are available.

Headteacher
The Headteacher:

- Provides strategic leadership.
- Upholds the Catholic character of the school.
- Monitors quality and impact.
- Supports staff development and formation.

Prayer and Liturgy Lead / RE Leader
The lead:

- Coordinates Prayer and Liturgy.
- Supports staff planning.
- Provides resources.
- Monitors provision.
- Supports pupil leadership.
- Leads evaluation and development.

Staff
Staff:

- Model prayerful participation.
- Lead Prayer and Liturgy.
- Create prayerful environments.
- Support pupil leadership.
- Promote Gospel values.
- Pupils are encouraged to engage fully in planning, leading and evaluating Prayer and Liturgy.

Parents and Carers
Parents are recognised as the first educators of their children in faith. We encourage families to nurture prayer at home and seek to support them by sharing prayers, liturgies and faith celebrations throughout the year, helping to strengthen the partnership between home, school and parish.

Staff Formation

Prayer and liturgy support not only the formation of pupils but also the spiritual development of staff, enabling the whole school community to grow together as disciples of Christ. The school is committed to the ongoing formation of staff in prayer and liturgy.

This includes:

- diocesan training
- induction for new staff
- theological development CPD
- opportunities for retreat and reflection
- support for planning and leading prayer and liturgy

Staff are recognised as witnesses to faith whose example plays a vital role in the formation of pupils.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Prayer and Liturgy are evaluated through:

- Learning walks.
- Observation of Prayer and Liturgy.
- Planning scrutiny.
- Pupil voice.
- Staff feedback.
- Governor monitoring.
- Evaluation of liturgical celebrations.

Monitoring outcomes inform:

- Future planning.
- Staff formation.
- Resource allocation.
- School improvement priorities.
- Development of Catholic Life and Mission.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by governors and school leaders to ensure continuing compliance with diocesan guidance, Church teaching and the Prayer and Liturgy Directory (2023).

Reviewed: Pentecost 2 2026
Next Review: Pentecost 2 2027