

Here in the St. Polycarp's Family we follow in the footsteps of Jesus through playing, praying, loving and learning together.

# St Polycarp's Catholic Primary School



## Prayer and Liturgy Policy

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**D Walker: November 2023**

**Review Date: November 2026**

### **Collective Worship**

We believe that Christian worship 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 a relationship, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

In light of our school mission statement, we believe that all children should gradually experience worship and liturgy at St. Polycarp's, with an emphasis on involving them actively in ways that are suited to their age and stage of personal, social and religious development. All teaching and support staff take care to ensure that as many children as possible have a part to play in any celebration.

### **The place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School**

Worship in this school is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. It is an experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Collective Worship can take various forms, all of which attempt to help children understand the elements of liturgy, which include gathering, listening to the Word, responding and going forth reflectively and prepares them to share in the liturgical life of the Church.

To encourage 'community', children and adults participate within school Masses and Collective Worship. Parents are encouraged to attend all Masses. These may be festive as well as prayerful and are occasions for sharing positive feelings for each other.

Pupils are introduced to a variety of experiences of worship:

- Celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist in whole school/KS2 Mass in church.
- Reconciliation services (during Advent and Lent for KS2).
- Celebrations that reflect thanksgiving, special days, feast days (throughout the year for the whole school).
- An opportunity to reflect silently on the word of God (whole school Collective Worship, liturgies within the classroom, Masses and in prayer areas around the school as well as our outdoor spiritual area).
- An opportunity for spontaneous and formal prayer (whole school Collective Worship, liturgies within the classroom, Masses and in prayer areas around the school as well as our outdoor spiritual area).
- Making full use of music, song, art and drama (whole school Collective Worship, liturgies within the classroom, Masses and in prayer areas around the school as well as our outdoor spiritual area).

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### Collective Worship

<b>Mon</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>Wed</b>	<b>Thurs</b>	<b>Fri</b>
Separate Key Stage Collective Worship Lead by Headteacher	Phase Collective Worship Lead by each class on a rota.	KS2 Collective Worship & Song Lead by Head of Key Stage and Music Teacher	KS 1 Collective Worship & Song Lead by Music teacher and RE Coordinator	Whole School Collective Worship Lead by Headteacher Main Hall

The theme of the Monday Whole school Collective Worship is based on the Sunday Gospel. Themes for Friday Collective Worship are based on the Church's Liturgical Year and other school events and celebrations.

The themes of the year group Collective Worship are identified on the timetables organised by the RE Co-ordinator. Children are enabled to plan the Collective Worship and play a central part in its delivery.

During Collective Worship and Song sessions the Gospel reading of the day and prayers are said before the children sing hymns of praise.

In addition, teachers hold Collective Worship in their classroom. For Key Stage 1 the Gospel reading is linked to the previous Sunday's Gospel, whilst for Key Stage 2 the Gospel reading is the Gospel reading of the day.

### Masses

Celebration of the Eucharist takes place at St. Joan of Arc's Catholic Church.

Whole School Masses are celebrated at the beginning and end of every school year, at Christmas and Easter and on Feast days. Year 3 children plan and attend a special Mass to celebrate their First Holy Communion. They invite Year 2 to attend with them and parents are welcome.

Whole School Masses are held on Wednesday. Key Stage 2 children take it in turn to plan these Masses. Children are involved in the planning process and parents are welcome.

Once each term the children will attend parish Mass at 11am on a Wednesday. Most year groups are buddied up allowing older children the opportunity be responsible for assisting a younger year group. These Masses will be communicated to the parents via the year group newsletters who are welcome to join.

In addition to Masses, the parish priest provides Spiritual Journey sessions, to allow children time to reflect on their spiritual lives.

### Prayer

Children are encouraged to look at prayer as a conversation with God in which we must also be silent to listen to what He wishes to communicate to us. They are made aware of the many ways in which God makes himself known: through creation, other people, the Sacraments and through his Word. We aim to help children go beyond seeing prayer as a petition, and help them to explore the prayers of adoration, thanksgiving, praise and repentance.

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Amongst staff, prayer is nurtured at the start of staff meetings. All teaching and support staff worship with the children.

Each class has a focal area, which is significant to the current Come and See theme, to help the children reflect prayerfully. These are interactive and the children are encouraged to take responsibility for/decorate these areas with artefacts, statues, flowers, and cloths (appropriate to Liturgical colours). Each class focal area has a Bible, candle, crucifix and class prayer diary. Children are encouraged to use this area to pray for their own intentions.

An additional focal area is set up in the New Teaching Hall, which is used as a quiet area as well as a focal area for prayer during Collective Worship. There is also a focal area in the school reading corridor that appropriately marks the changing liturgical seasons. This area focuses on the Sacred Heart. Outside Year 1 classrooms there is a prayer area focussing on Our Lady. The RE co-ordinator is responsible for managing these focus areas but all staff and children are able to contribute ideas to them. Children are encouraged to use these areas to pray for their own intentions.

Formal prayers are said at the beginning and end of each day and before and after lunch. Spontaneous prayers and reflections are given equal place throughout the school day and during RE lessons.

There is a focal point in the school entrance with a display indicating seasons throughout the Church's Liturgical year. Mass and Collective Worship timetables are displayed here for parent and visitor information.