

**Tyfu mewn Cariad**

**YSGOL SANT JOSEFF**



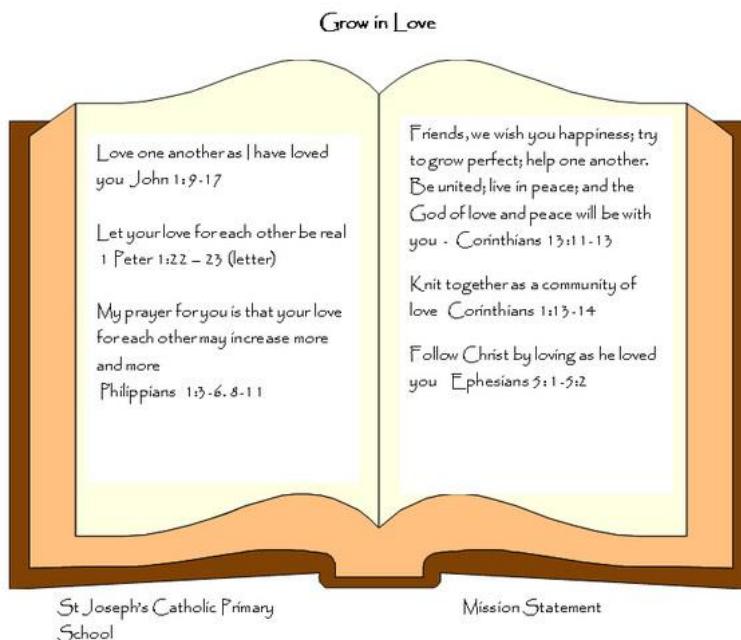
**BAE COLWYN**

**Grow in Love**

## 2. Prayer and Liturgy Policy

**Policy Valid until Spring 2027**

**Policy owned by Religious Education Curriculum Leader**



**For and on behalf of the  
Board of Governors** .....

**Headteacher** .....

**Date:** .....

## **The Nature of Prayer and Liturgy**

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 with God, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.(1)

### **Legal Requirements.**

We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils (2). This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act for all pupils, or separate acts in school groups. We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said either by the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that prayer and liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering, but the difference between the two will always be made clear.

Prayer and Liturgy not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education.

In this school, as with any Voluntary Aided School, responsibility for arranging Prayer and Liturgy rests with the Governing Body after consultation with the Head teacher.

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

We endorse the belief that Prayer and Liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church
- Those from other Christian traditions - or none
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Prayer and Liturgy in this school is more than just a legal requirement. It is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

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

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate something of the mystery of God
- To reflect on spiritual and moral issues
- To explore their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit

- To develop a common ethos and shared values
- To enrich religious experience
- To grow in liturgical understanding and development
- To reinforce positive attitudes
- To participate fully
- To take time out ‘to wonder at’, ‘to come to terms with’ and ‘to give worth to.’

### **Principles**

All Prayer and Liturgy in this school will:

- Give glory and honour to God
- Be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- Give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the Church (3).

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- be kept small wherever possible or appropriate to help to personalise the experience;
- be short and appropriately paced (children’s attention span lasts in any one activity for an average of one minute per year of life i.e. 5-6 minutes for Foundation Phase and 7-10 minutes for Key Stage 2);
- be simple, including a range of experiences offered in a variety of groupings and in a variety of settings.

At St Joseph’s school we believe that our school Mission Statement is to be affirmed through Prayer and Liturgy. The Mission Statement is at the heart of our school and central to our Prayer and Liturgy. In this way, the pupils will be given the opportunity to understand on a daily basis its importance within our school.

Consideration and reflection on the scripture references underpinning our Mission Statement “Grow in Love” will form the central structure around which we give children the opportunity both collectively and individually to Prayer and Liturgy. The forms that this takes are:

Whole school Prayer and Liturgy

Class based Prayer and Liturgy

Mass

Celebration of the Sacraments

### **Whole School Prayer and Liturgy**

Full time pupils at St Joseph’s will meet twice each week to worship as a whole school. Pupils will assemble in a circle in the school hall to share, reflect and give praise for the work that takes place within the school.

At the beginning of each week pupils and staff will gather together for quiet reflection on the aspect of the Mission Statement to be the focus for the week. We will offer up our efforts to God, in prayer and silent reflection. This reflection will then be echoed through classroom Prayer and Liturgy and recalled within the whole school Prayer and Liturgy at the end of the week when we will reflect and give thanks for all that has taken place within St Joseph's.

These reflections are organised as follows:

1) Celebrations –Following the completion of a unit of work within the recommended diocesan scheme of work, a whole school celebration will take place. Each class will focus on the aspects of the work completed within a particular topic, and will share these with the rest of the school. These will be planned to include a wide range of diverse activities and will enable all to see the continuity and progression of the topic as a whole, and to reflect and rejoice.

2) Sharing Assemblies - Following the same structure as detailed above pupils will share other curriculum area work that they have been undertaking within a particular week .Pupils will have the opportunity to give thanks for the work of the school and witness the wide range of work undertaken within the school. All will be given the opportunity to take part

3) Assemblies- Following a more traditional format pupils will come together to pray and reflect on the events of the week in line with the aspect of the Mission Statement forming the basis for our reflection. Whole school reflection based on scripture readings relevant to the current RE topic, and linked to the focus from the Mission Statement, will form the central part of this Assembly. The achievements, talents and efforts of all within our community will be celebrated in the light of our reflections.

### **Class based Prayer and Liturgy**

Each day at St Joseph's school will start and end with a prayer and will include a prayer before and after dinner.

On the days when whole school Collective Worship is not undertaken pupils will be given the opportunity to reflect and consider their day within a prayerful situation in the light of the particular scriptural reference forming the focus for the week or the RE topic being studied. Depending on the age of the class, opportunities will be given for pupils to vocalise their own thoughts within a prayerful situation. A variety of strategies to facilitate reflection will be utilised across the school and may include:

- Prayer using a candle as a focus
- Use of the Bible as a focus
- Guided meditation
- Guided visualisation
- Praying with the imagination
- Praying with icons, pictures, photos or posters as a focus

- Spontaneous prayer
- Praying with a mantra
- Traditional prayers
- Praying with artefacts e.g. stones, flowers etc
- Praying with music
- Using readings from a favourite prayer book as a focus
- Praying through dance, movement, action or gesture

### **The Planning, Content and Delivery of Prayer and Liturgy**

Prayer and Liturgy will be planned:

- following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, the diocesan scheme of work, significant dates and the curriculum. Scripture will be the focus in most acts of worship
- involving consultation with appropriate parties and reference to school aims and policies
- with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community
- to develop in pupils skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.

### **Recording**

Prayer and Liturgy is recorded:

- on a liturgy planner to keep note of themes, leaders, pupil groupings and resources
- through displays, collections of pupils' contributions, prayers, reflections, photographs, videos etc.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The school's provision of Prayer and Liturgy will be monitored and evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of all pupils and whether pupils are making progress in acquiring skills and abilities in organising and leading worship.

### **Resources**

Each classroom has a focus area for Prayer and Liturgy.

All staff have a copy of the guidelines for Prayer and Liturgy and materials of their own choice to support Prayer and Liturgy in the classroom.

## **Voluntary Worship and Retreats**

The school is committed to giving the staff the opportunity to attend religious retreats organised by the Diocese as they arise.

## **Eucharist**

Eucharistic celebrations in school will highlight a special occasion and will be celebrated with children whose faith development has reached an appropriate stage. The same general principles will apply to planning a Eucharistic celebration as other acts of school worship, therefore opportunities for children to participate will be maximised.

We believe that children are best introduced to prayer, the sacraments and particularly the Eucharist in a step by step approach.

In school, therefore, the 'Liturgy of the Word', rather than the Eucharist will be the norm.

In Foundation Phase worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory rites in the Mass and/or The Liturgy of the Word

At Key Stage 2 worship includes:

- short, simple liturgies with ritual and variety
- occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites in the mass or The Liturgy of the Word; or the Eucharistic Prayer; and or the Communion Rite.

## **The Co-ordinator for Prayer and Liturgy**

The RE Co-ordinator will also coordinate Prayer and Liturgy at the school.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

This policy is monitored by the Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinator and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff and governors in line with the SDP cycle of review.

### **Explanatory Notes:**

*(1) is important to be clear about our use of terminology when dealing with the whole area of 'Collective Worship' in schools. 'Collective Worship' is a term used in legislation in this country but is not a phrase we use readily in a Catholic context. 'Prayer' and 'Liturgy' are terms more commonly used in our context and are explored in greater depth in the guidelines.*

*(2) Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Collective Worship. However, given the importance of Collective Worship in a Catholic school, parents and prospective parents need to be made aware of the fact that it can never be confined to 'timetabled slots' but may take place in a variety of contexts other than those which are specifically structured.*

**This policy is available in translation on request.**