



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prayer Policy

**“With Christ at the centre, we show
Unity, Respect, Joy, Love and Courage.”**

St Mary's School Mission Statement

Policy Review Date – Summer 2023

Person Responsible –Helen Tomlinson and Claire Patrickson

Ratified by Governors – Summer 2023

Review Date – Summer 2025

1. Introduction

This policy works in harmony with the policies for R.E. and Collective Worship.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework through which the school expresses its prayer life. The governors recognise their responsibility to nurture and support the prayer life of the children and the school community. We recognise that young children have a natural aptitude for prayer. They are open to God. They respond in joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation to the world around them. The prayer life of the school will be celebrated collectively as well as individually, silently as well as in words, joyfully as well as solemnly.

2. What is Prayer? Prayer is:

- a) praising and thanking God for the gift of life
- b) a personal relationship with God
- c) the raising up of the heart and mind to God
- d) simply being conscious of the presence of God
- e) initiated by a God who creatively and persistently encourages a response
- f) being open and attentive to God
- g) about fostering community and a sense of being one with others and God
- h) as much a part of Christian life as eating, sleeping and breathing
- i) an expression of faithful love

3. Aims:

- a) to teach children how to pray, to question why they pray and to link prayer to the teachings of Jesus in the Bible
- b) to recognise that the natural joy, wonder, anger, disappointment and elation in the world is the beginning of Prayer
- c) to create and maintain a stimulating and appropriate environment where prayer can be fostered and developed fully
- d) to develop in children the awareness of God's presence in all of creation
- e) that children become aware of God's presence in the church
- f) that children may learn reverence for themselves, others and all things
- g) that prayer be both formal and informal
- h) that children have the opportunity to expand their consciousness to the pain and hurt of real people around them
- i) to develop an openness to God – to know we are all unconditionally loved by God.
- j) to give children opportunities to use/create their own prayers
- k) to teach children common Christian prayers and different sorts of prayers, introduced gradually from foundation to year 6
- l) to begin each day with a prayer, to pray Grace before lunch and a prayer at the end of the school day. (Appendix 1 contains the list of prayers to be taught from Foundation to Y6).
- m) to develop children's individual spontaneous prayer life as a method of developing their individual relationship with God

4. Different Types of Prayer

Private Prayer – to pray alone. This is very important as it is a time when we can personally connect with God.

Public Prayer – to pray with others. This is when more than one person participates in prayer together.

- Meditation – this could be based on a scripture passage, on art or music, or on a word/phrase.
- Traditional set prayers – these will include prayers of intercession to Mary, to saints and to angels
- Speaking to God – through own “made up” composed prayers by the children and as ongoing/momentary conversation/speaking to God
- The Mass – this will also include other liturgies and liturgical dance e) Hymn singing
- Scripture reading

5. Equal Opportunities

A policy for equal opportunities exists and is followed in the school. All children will be given the same opportunity to take part in the prayer life of the school.

6. Parental Engagement

A copy of all the prayers used in school will be made available to all parents (on paper request and through the school website) so that they can reinforce the use of these prayers at home.

7. Review of Policy

The policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher, RE Lead and RE Governor every three years.