

Date ratified at Full
Governors' Meeting
4 July 2024



Review
Full Governing Body

PRAYER AND LITURGY POLICY

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

**Part of St John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust
Company No: 7913261
Registered Office: Surrey Street, Norwich NR1 3PB**

THE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

*I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full
(John 10:10)*

We are a joyous and inclusive Catholic school, inspired by the love of God and the teachings of Jesus, specifically faith, hope, forgiveness and peace.

Our community is committed to a rounded education that develops knowledgeable, morally informed and compassionate young leaders.



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact the Company Secretary on 01603 611431 and we will do our best to help.

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Context

'The celebration of Catholic liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and should develop a mature spiritual life.'

(Marcus Stock (2012), Christ at the Centre, Catholic Truth Society, 23.)

A key dimension of our shared humanity is the quest for spiritual meaning, prompted by the Holy Spirit. Our prayer life at Notre Dame High School is rooted in Catholic Church teaching about what it is to be truly human in Christ, what it means to live *'life to the full'* in relationship with others, presented within a positive framework of Christian virtue.

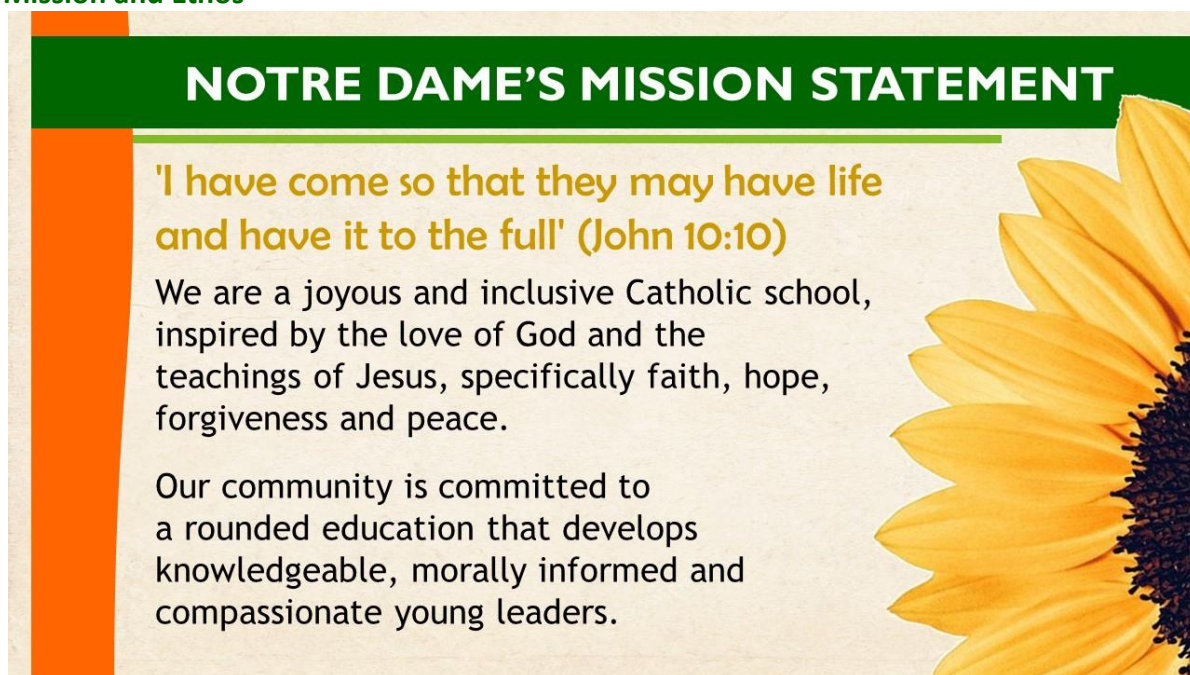
Our school forms part of a global community of educational establishments set up by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Alongside Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching, our school's ethos continues to be informed and inspired by the writings and charism of St Julie Billiart, foundress of the Order.

**"Be like the sunflower
that follows every
movement of the sun,
and keep your eyes
always turned towards
our good God." *St Julie***



Dissemination

Copies of the policy will be given to all members of the Governing Body and relevant teaching and nonteaching members of staff. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school's website and paper copies can be provided on request. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum are also published on the curriculum section of the school's website.

A graphic with a green header containing the title 'NOTRE DAME'S MISSION STATEMENT' in white. Below the header, on a light beige background, is the quote 'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full' (John 10:10) in orange. Underneath is a paragraph in black text: 'We are a joyous and inclusive Catholic school, inspired by the love of God and the teachings of Jesus, specifically faith, hope, forgiveness and peace.' Below that is another paragraph in black text: 'Our community is committed to a rounded education that develops knowledgeable, morally informed and compassionate young leaders.' To the right of the text is a close-up image of a yellow sunflower.

NOTRE DAME'S MISSION STATEMENT

'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full' (John 10:10)

We are a joyous and inclusive Catholic school, inspired by the love of God and the teachings of Jesus, specifically faith, hope, forgiveness and peace.

Our community is committed to a rounded education that develops knowledgeable, morally informed and compassionate young leaders.

Our school mission statement and the teaching of the Catholic Church underpins all teaching and learning within our school. Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, emotional) and we believe that Prayer and Liturgy is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes.

The respectful recognition of the common humanity which we all share is the foundation for our life together. That recognition is expressed, above all, in a profound respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each human person rooted in the belief that each of us is created in the image and likeness of God.

'Have hearts as wide as the world'
St Julie Billiart

Statement of Requirement

The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily collective worship (prayer and liturgy) for all pupils, including those in the sixth form (Section 70, 1988 Education Act) that is in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schedule 20; Instrument of Government, clause 2). Academies in England are required by their funding agreement and Articles of Association to comply with similar requirements (The Mainstream Academy and Free School: Supplemental Funding Agreement, December 2020; Model Articles for Catholic Academies, February 2019).

The law requires all maintained schools to recognise and respect that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children up to the age of 16 from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)). Sixth-form pupils can choose to withdraw themselves from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1B)).

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy will fulfil pupils' entitlement to experience the range of liturgical treasures of the Church, including a shared repertoire of prayers and liturgical music with which pupils in the school will be familiar. Prayer and liturgy are not designated curriculum time. In the context of the Catholic school, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for Religious Education.

Statement of Inclusivity

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

Our school welcomes students and staff of every faith and no faith alike, as we are all called God's children. Our community is culturally broad, with pupils and staff coming from many different parts of the world and cultural traditions, enriching our understanding of diversity as part of God's creation. All our staff are committed to supporting the Catholic ethos of the school and the spiritual journey of our students.

The clear link between ministry and faith means that it is inappropriate to ask someone who is from another religious tradition, or none, to perform a liturgical ministry. A teacher can facilitate classroom prayer even if they cannot with integrity lead it. The Lay Chaplain will support the teacher with guidance to ensure that the class experiences the full range of Catholic prayer.

In celebrations of the word and liturgy, staff and students of other faith traditions or none are invited to share these actions. Though they are unable to join in prayers, songs, and responses which are grounded in the Christian tradition, they can support the prayers of others through their respectful presence. The school respects their religious integrity by not asking them to make the sign of the Cross or say the responses and prayers.

Responsibility

a) Governance

The governors, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission, have a responsibility to ensure that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is a named person(s) who is responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school (the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator)
- the prayer and liturgy policy is updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- there is a budget for prayer and liturgy that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

b) Headteacher

The headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community, ensures that:

- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- they work in partnership with the leader(s) for prayer and liturgy
- those responsible for prayer and liturgy in the school have been given appropriate training and formation to ensure that all guidance is followed and adhered to
- there are suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school.

c) Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

Those responsible for prayer and liturgy ensure that:

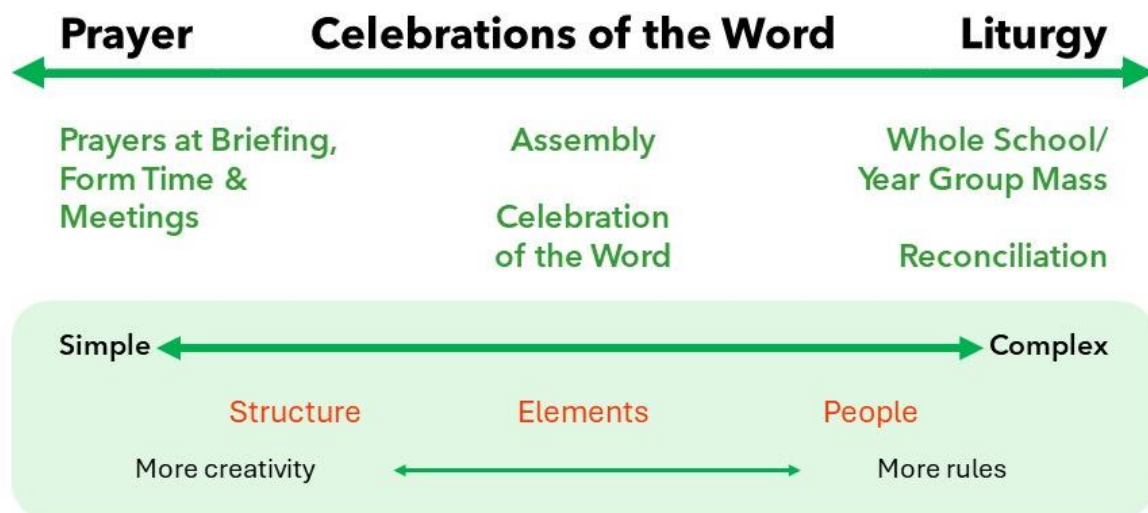
- prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school and therefore are in line with the guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- there is an Annual Plan of Provision for prayer and liturgy across the school year which identifies liturgical seasons and key celebrations, as well as opportunities for the celebration of the Sacraments
- there is daily planned prayer for all pupils, appropriate to age and ability, as outlined in the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- pupils are supported in their liturgical formation to take an active role in the planning, preparation, and delivery of prayer and liturgy according to their age and capacity, and in a manner which facilitates their progressive participation
- resources to support the planning of prayer and liturgy are appropriate and readily available to staff and pupils
- induction on prayer and liturgy takes place for new members of staff as required
- staff have access to effective training and formation opportunities
- monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy take place regularly and feed back into planning for future liturgies
- monitoring of prayer and liturgy is reported to the headteacher and governing body to support whole-school development and the Catholic life of the school
- there is collaboration with local clergy and parishes
- liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision

Prayer, celebrations of the word, and liturgy form a continuum with silent meditation at one end and a celebration of Mass at the other. We are invited as a community to:

- **recognise** God's action in our lives and the life of the school
- **express** together our needs and those of the whole human family
- **offer** thanks for all that is good

These collective times of prayer provide a space for all to reflect on their spiritual journey, be nourished by what they see and hear and be encouraged to live lives in the service of others.



Prayer	Celebrations of the Word	Liturgy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple structure • One or two elements • Balance of familiarity and creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured (often in four parts) • Elements drawn from liturgy • Place of scripture • Contrasts and creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taken from official books • Complex structures • Many elements • Range of ministry

At the most human level, we invite all who are present at Celebrations of the Word and liturgy to engage in four related actions:

1. **To be present:** pupils bring themselves to the celebration, with all that is going on in their lives and in the world. Being alert to this is the first step in engaging with any form of worship.
2. **To experience:** to engage in what is happening through the senses – at the most basic, to see and to hear.
3. **To reflect:** to ask what has been experienced, and what it means to their lives.
4. **To respond:** to ask how to take forward what has been experienced into living a good life.

Taken together, these actions map out the way in which a liturgical celebration can mark a stopping-point on a spiritual journey. Depending on their religious faith, Catholics, other Christians, members of other religions and faith communities, as well as non-believers, will engage in these actions in different ways, and the explicit religious content of the event will assume different meaning and weight.

a) Prayer

*“Prayer unites us; it makes us brothers and sisters.
In prayer, God keeps calling us, opening our hearts to charity.”
Pope Francis*

Prayer has been traditionally described as ‘lifting up of the hearts and minds to God’, which means it involves our whole person – our head as well as our heart. Communal prayer forms an essential dimension of daily life in our school. Each prayer time has a clear, simple structure, giving space for an appropriate time of silence.

Communal staff prayer takes place at the start of the day with Staff Briefing:

Monday: Sunday's Gospel reading
Wednesday: Common Prayer
Friday: Hymn

Communal student prayer for Years 7-11 takes place at the start of the day in Form Time:

Monday: Sunday's Gospel reading
Tuesday: Lectio Divina (focussing on a line from the scripture and its relevance to our lives)
Wednesday: Common Prayer
Thursday: Relevant quote from the writings of St Julie Billiart and advice to support our mental wellbeing
Friday: Informal prayer of thanksgiving

Communal student prayer for Year 12-13 takes place in the following ways:

Weekly Tutor Session: Prayer inspired by the previous Sunday's Gospel theme including a Common Prayer and personal reflection. Students expand on this by making links with issues in their lives/community/wider world through Catholic Social Teaching
Culture and Faith Studies: Students are regularly invited to pray in their weekly CFS lessons including times of spiritual reflection

The weekly staff bulletin includes an introduction to the weekly theme, based on Sunday's Gospel. All meetings start with either a common/informal prayer either linked to the weekly theme from Sunday's Gospel, or an appropriate spiritual quote such as from Pope Francis or St Julie Billiart.

*"Always begins with gentleness; that is the way the Spirit of the good God inspires."
St Julie Billiart*

Families have access to our weekly prayer via the homepage of the [school website](#) the Notre Dame App and our [fortnightly newsletters](#).

b) Celebrations of the Word

Forms, Year groups and the whole school come together at specific times to celebrate their collective identity. These celebrations take a variety of forms. Although not directly taken from liturgical books of the Church, the proclamation of scripture is at their centre. They draw upon elements of the liturgy such as its texts, symbols and gestures, which help to reinforce their Catholic nature, but used with greater creative freedom than in a Liturgy.

Each Year Group have a weekly assembly led by our specially trained assembly leads. They are provided with a set of resources to inspire their assembly created by our Lay Chaplain.

Every assembly includes the following elements:

- The preceding Sunday's Gospel
- **SEE** a relevant issue
- **DISCERN** how the Gospel reading and Catholic Social Teaching informs our understanding of the issue
- **ACT** on what has been taught by applying it in our everyday lives

- A final prayer of thanksgiving or intercession including a time of silence for private reflection

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

	OUR COMMON HOME Protect our planet and share natural resources.		PRIORITY TO THE POOR Help the vulnerable and those in need first.
	HUMAN DIGNITY Respect for ourselves and each other.		SOLIDARITY One global family standing together and supporting each other.
	THE COMMON GOOD Develop a fair and just global society for all to flourish.		SUBSIDIARITY & PARTICIPATION Listen to each other to make decisions that will benefit all.

'Have hearts as wide as the world' St Julie Billiart

Form Groups are invited to our Chapel at specific times of the year for prayer services to mark key moments in the liturgical year such as Advent and Lent. The services are planned by the Lay Chaplain and members of the School Council. The services are then led by Form Tutors and students.

Year Group Celebrations are led by our Lay Chaplain using an adapted version of the Celebrations of the Word for Weekday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (revised edition 2013). Student volunteers help to plan and lead appropriate parts of the celebration.

Whole school celebrations of the Word, take place at key times in the Liturgical year such as our Advent Service, to celebrate the start of our Founder's Day Sponsored Walk and to celebrate the end of our school year. Members of our Student Chaplaincy Team and SHINE music group help to plan and lead the celebrations in accordance with the [Prayer and Liturgy Directory](#) (CES).

c) Liturgies

"The Eucharist is Jesus who gives himself entirely to us, feeding on Him and abiding in Him through Eucharistic communion — if we do so in faith — transforms our lives into a gift to God and to our brothers and sisters." Pope Francis

The most familiar forms of the liturgy celebrated in our school are the Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. They are led by a priest and follow liturgical books such as the Roman Missal and Lectionary. The readings are said and the hymns are led by staff or students who receive Holy Communion at Mass. Staff and students of other faith traditions and non-believers support the liturgy through their respectful presence.

Voluntary weekday Mass is said every Thursday before school in our Chapel for staff and students. These Masses are often said for a special intention such a family member who has recently passed away.

We celebrate the start of the school year with a whole school Mass at the Cathedral of St John the Baptist. This also helps us to further strengthen links with our local parish church. Our Y11 and Y13 students have special Leavers' Masses to mark the end of their courses.



Special feast days and Holy days of Obligation such as Ash Wednesday are celebrated when they fall on a school day.

The Saint John the Baptist Catholic Multi Academy Trust have an annual pilgrimage to Walsingham. Student and staff representatives attend a Mass at the Catholic Shrine in which each school assists in leading readings, prayers and hymns. Staff and students also represent the school at special Diocesan celebrations including the Diocesan Schools Mass.



The Sacrament of Reconciliation is provided to students in our Chapel during Lent depending on Priest availability. Staff and students can also arrange reconciliation at any time of the year by request.

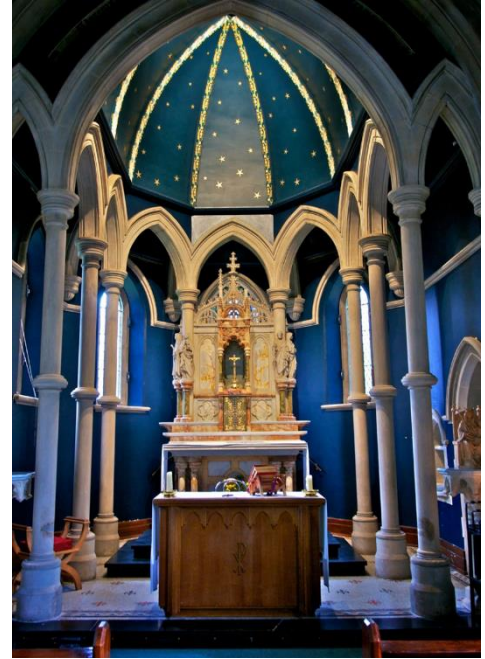
Resourcing

Prayer and liturgy are central to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic school, and this is reflected in the annual budget allocation and available resources, including staff time, chaplaincy provision, and dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy.

The school employs an existing member of teaching staff as a part time Lay Chaplain. This provides a Chaplaincy presence in the school every day to promote the school's mission, provide training and organise the prayer life of the school.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated space for prayer and liturgy in our Chapel. It is open to staff and students to pray and/or be in a place of calm throughout the day. Our Sports Hall, St John's Hall and Canteen have been appropriately equipped to facilitate celebrations of the word and liturgies.

Religious artefacts and images are on display throughout the school and every room displays a crucifix. Our TV screen displays throughout the school provide reflections on the weekly theme and important celebrations of the liturgical year.



Staff training and formation costs are funded to ensure that all staff are able to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

Training and Formation

*'Do not conform to the pattern of the world,
but be transformed by the renewing of your mind'
Romans 12:2*

All new staff are supported during induction and beyond, so that they fully understand the responsibility they carry within their individual role for leading prayer and liturgy in the school.

Any individual training needs are identified, especially for staff who have not worked in a Catholic school before and are provided with appropriate training and formation. Whole-staff professional development is provided at least once a year, so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and relevant staff are well supported to lead as required.

The Lay Chaplain will receive ongoing formation by attending the termly Diocesan Chaplains' meetings, The Notre Dame Schools annual conference and the Association for Catholic Chaplains in Education annual conference.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy takes place regularly and involves all key stakeholders including students, parents/carers, staff, clergy, and governors.

Areas for development are to be identified and issues raised are to be actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

Review

The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors.

*'Do your best and after that, go on simply.
God gives the growth when it pleases Him.'*
St Julie Billiart

Appendix: Links to Resources

- [Prayer and Liturgy Provision Plan](#)
- [TODAY](#): Daily prayer resource
- [SJB CMAT Chaplaincy Page](#): Weekly theme resources
- [Monitoring Forms](#)
- [Our Mission and Ethos](#) (NDHS Website)

