

Sacred Heart Catholic School

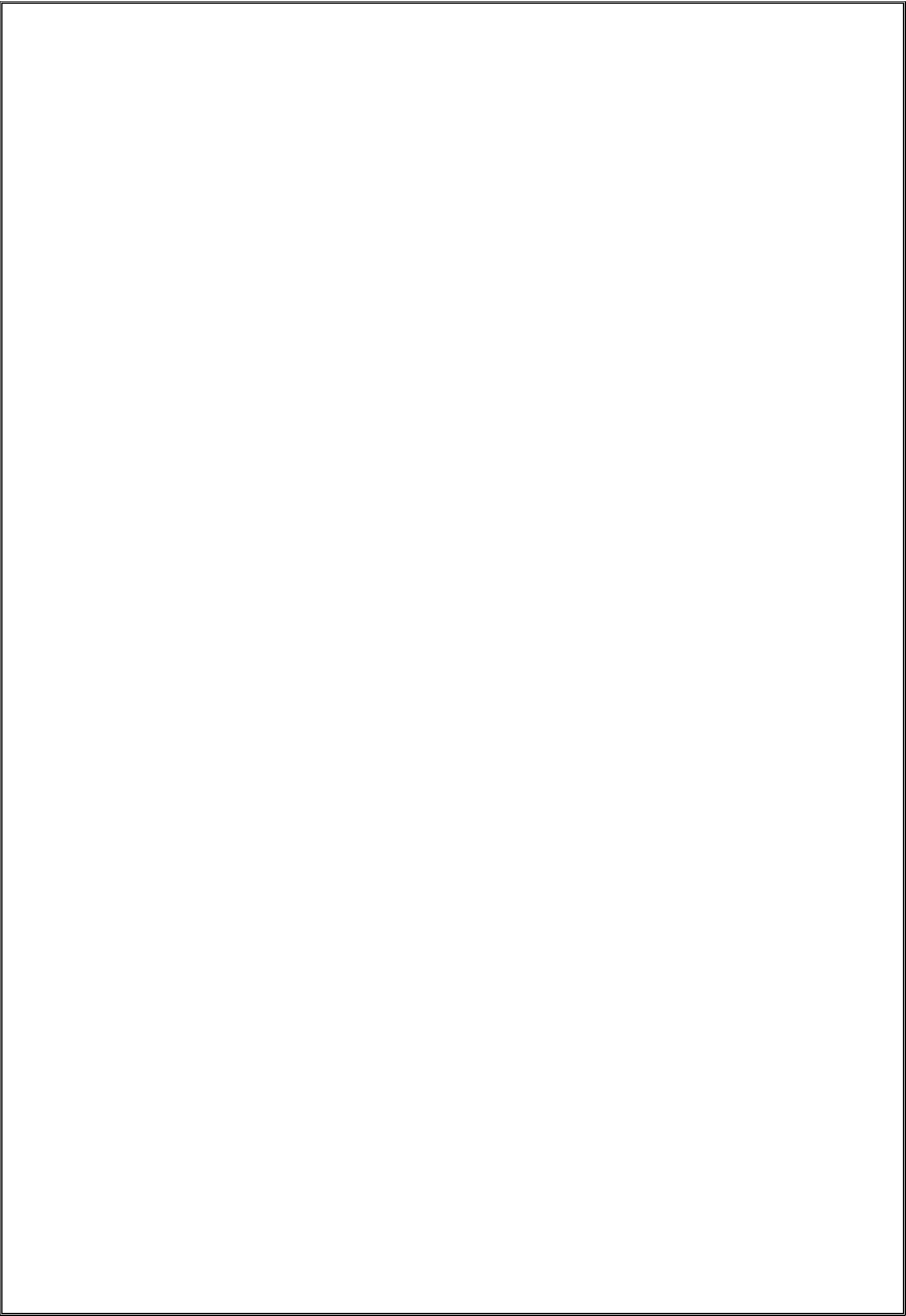


Prayer and Liturgy Policy

*Based on To Love You More Dearly: The Prayer and
Liturgy Directory for Catholic Schools (2023)*

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all
circumstances; for this is the will of God in
Christ Jesus for you.*

[1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18](#)



Sacred Heart Mission Statement

At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, we live out our mission:

Sacred Heart Catholic School is a loving community where we love and learn together with Christ at the heart of all that we do. We aspire for every child to become a confident, curious, and resilient learner through hard work, perseverance, and pride. We foster empathy, compassion and forgiveness, encouraging a positive attitude so children can achieve excellence and apply their gifts for the benefit of others. We uphold the value and dignity of every person, showing respect, celebrating diversity, and welcoming those of all faiths and none. Through togetherness, service, stewardship of creation, and care for one another, our children and staff will strive to live out the Gospel in practical and meaningful ways.

Prayer and liturgy are central to our life as a Catholic community. They are the moments when we stop, recognise God's presence, give thanks, and grow in our relationship with Him.

Sacred Heart pupils regularly worship alongside our parish community at Sacred Heart Church and take an active role in leading liturgical celebrations throughout the year.

Prayer and liturgy are visible in every classroom and shared space, reflecting our commitment to placing Christ at the heart of school life.

Our Vision

At Sacred Heart, 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 foster encounter with Christ, growth in discipleship and missionary discipleship.

Through progressive experiences of prayer and liturgy, pupils are formed as joyful disciples who know they are loved by God and called to share that love with others.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life and mission of Sacred Heart Catholic School and permeate every aspect of school life.

The impact of prayer and liturgy is evidenced through pupils' confidence in leading prayer, their knowledge and understanding of Scripture and Catholic traditions, and the extent to which Gospel values shape relationships across the school community. Through prayer and liturgy, pupils are formed as disciples of Christ, inspired to respond to the Gospel through service, justice, stewardship of creation and concern for those in need.

Statement of Intent

Following *To Love You More Dearly*, the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, we aim to:

- Place daily prayer, Celebration of the Word and liturgical celebration at the centre of school life.
- Give pupils a rich experience of the Church's liturgical, sacramental and devotional life.
- Enable pupils to participate in, plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy.
- Form pupils as disciples of Christ through Scripture, prayer and reflection.
- Follow the rhythm of the liturgical year and the traditions of the Church.

Rationale

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of a Catholic school. Prayer draws us into relationship with God, while liturgy is the public worship of the Church.

Through prayer and liturgy, we:

- encounter Christ
- deepen faith
- grow in discipleship
- strengthen our Catholic identity
- participate in the mission of the Church

Understanding Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer is the raising of the heart and mind to God, both personally and communally.

Liturgy is the public prayer of the Church through which Christ continues his saving work.

While all liturgy is prayer, not all prayer is liturgy.

At Sacred Heart, pupils experience both personal prayer and the liturgical life of the Church through Celebration of the Word, Mass, devotional prayer and the liturgical seasons.

Aims and Objectives

At Sacred Heart we aim to:

1. Foster a personal relationship with God through prayer.
2. Form pupils in faith, hope and charity.

3. Develop knowledge and understanding of the Church's prayer and liturgical life.
4. Enable active participation in prayer and liturgy.
5. Provide a wide range of prayer experiences.
6. Celebrate the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian life.
7. Develop a sense of belonging to the school, parish and wider Church community.
8. Promote Gospel values and Catholic Social Teaching.
9. Encourage reflection, service and missionary discipleship.
10. Develop pupil leadership in prayer and liturgy.

The Eucharist holds a privileged place within the prayer life of the school. Through the celebration of Mass, pupils encounter Christ in Word and Sacrament and are strengthened for lives of discipleship and service.

Nature of Prayer and Liturgy

In accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, prayer and liturgy at Sacred Heart are:

- Formational
- Participatory
- Scriptural
- Liturgical
- Inclusive
- Missionary

Prayer and liturgy provide opportunities for encounter with Christ, formation in discipleship and growth in missionary discipleship.

Forms of prayer and liturgy we use include:

- **Daily Classroom Prayer** – at the start and end of the day, before and after lunch.
- Regular Celebration of the Word planned in accordance with the liturgical year and the needs of the community.
- Pupil-led Celebration of the Word – planned and delivered by pupils with support from staff.
- **Whole-school masses** – to mark key feasts, seasons, and school events.
- **Liturgies for the liturgical seasons** – Advent, Lent, Easter, Pentecost.
- **Sacramental preparation** – in partnership with the parish.
- **Devotional prayer** – e.g. the Rosary, Stations of the Cross and Adoration.
- **Celebration of the Word** – providing opportunities to gather, listen, respond and go forth through Scripture.
- **Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass** – including Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament where appropriate

Pupils will experience Celebration of the Word, Eucharistic Adoration, devotional prayer, and opportunities to pray elements of the Liturgy of the Hours appropriate to their age.

The Structure and Rhythm of Prayer and Liturgy

The rhythm of our prayer life follows the **liturgical year**, with particular attention to:

- **Advent & Christmas** – waiting and welcoming Christ.
- **Lent & Easter** – repentance, renewal, resurrection joy.
- **Pentecost** – celebrating the Holy Spirit and mission.
- **Ordinary Time** – growth in faith and daily discipleship.

See *Sacred Heart's Annual Plan of Provision* (APOP).

Prayer and liturgy are planned using the structure recommended by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory:

1. **Gather** – bring the community together in God's presence.
2. **Listen** – hear and reflect on the Word of God.
3. **Respond** – in prayer, song, or symbolic action.
4. **Go Forth** – live out what we have prayed and heard. (*See planning documentation*)

Shared prayer tradition

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils will have progressively encountered, learned and prayed the prayers identified within the Prayer and Liturgy Directory and diocesan guidance, including:

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Sign of the Cross | • Eternal Rest |
| • Our Father | • Angelus |
| • Hail Mary | • Apostles' Creed |
| • Glory Be | • Nicene Creed |
| • Act of Contrition | • Responses used at Mass |
| • Morning and Evening Prayer | • Diocesan and school prayers |
| • Grace Before and After Meals | |

Resourcing

Sacred Heart allocates an annual budget to support prayer and liturgy, including resources, sacred spaces, liturgical music and staff formation and training.

Sacred prayer spaces are maintained throughout the school as focal points. These provide visible signs of faith and support pupils in daily prayer and reflection.

Appropriate resources, music, artefacts and staff time are provided to ensure high-quality prayer and liturgical experiences.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governance

Governors ensure that Prayer and Liturgy remain central to the Catholic life and mission of the school and are provided in accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.

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 who is responsible for 'Prayer and Liturgy' in the school (Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator) - Mrs Anne-Marie Bell
- There is a named Governor who is responsible for 'Prayer and Liturgy' within the Governing Body: Mrs Pauline Baptist
- The 'Prayer and Liturgy' policy is updated regularly and shared with appropriate stakeholders
- There is a budget for 'Prayer and Liturgy' that reflects its centrality to the life of a Catholic school.

The Headteacher

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

- Prayer and Liturgy is central to the Catholic life of the school and is provided in accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.
- Works in partnership with the Prayer and Liturgy Lead.
- 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.

Prayer and Liturgy Leader

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 and Termly 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 a 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 the 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 feedback 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 (Rev. Canon Christopher Thomas – Parish Priest) and parish (Sacred Heart Catholic Church).
- Liaison with the Diocesan Advisory Service and others is maintained to ensure they keep updated with best practice.

Teaching staff

Teachers and teaching staff should ensure that:

- They understand their responsibilities for Prayer and Liturgy.
- Lead daily classroom prayer with their pupils, making it age-appropriate and reflective of the liturgical season.
- Support pupils in planning, preparing, and leading class and whole-school liturgies.
- Model reverence, participation, and enthusiasm for prayer and liturgy.
- Integrate opportunities for prayer and reflection within the wider curriculum.
- Make use of provided resources and contribute feedback on their effectiveness.
- Encourage pupil leadership in prayer by gradually giving them responsibility.
- Collaborate with the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and colleagues to ensure consistency across the school.
- Communicate with parents (where appropriate) to extend prayer life into the home.

Parents

We recognise parents 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.

Pupils Participation and Leadership

In accordance with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, pupils are progressively formed to participate in, plan, lead and evaluate prayer and liturgy according to their age and stage of development.

Pupils are encouraged to take increasing responsibility for preparing prayer spaces, choosing scripture, writing intercessions, selecting music, leading prayer and evaluating prayer and liturgy. Through these opportunities, pupils develop confidence, leadership and a deeper understanding of their role as disciples of Christ.

Partnership with Parish and Diocese

Sacred Heart Catholic School recognises that it is part of the wider mission of the Church and works in close partnership with our parish, diocese and Catholic school community. Through these partnerships, pupils are given meaningful opportunities to encounter Christ, participate in the liturgical life of the Church and grow as disciples.

We actively support parish and diocesan initiatives, including participation in diocesan celebrations and events, the Jubilee Year, online liturgical opportunities and formation programmes. Pupils and staff regularly join the parish community for key celebrations such as Education Sunday and the Feast of Christ the King, and we work closely with the parish in

supporting the preparation of children for the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion.

The parish priest and parish community are welcomed into school throughout the year for Masses, Celebrations of the Word, liturgies and other significant events. In turn, the school seeks to be visibly present within the parish and local community, strengthening the relationship between home, school and Church. Through these partnerships, pupils develop a deeper understanding of belonging to the local, diocesan and universal Church and are encouraged to live as active members of the Catholic community.

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 and Accessibility

At Sacred Heart Catholic School, 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.

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 Review

Monitoring focuses on the quality, consistency and impact of prayer and liturgy and informs school improvement, staff formation and strategic development. Monitoring and evaluation will include:

learning walks

prayer and liturgy observations

planning scrutiny

pupil interviews and voice

staff voice

evaluation by liturgy leaders and

chaplaincy teams

governor monitoring

parish feedback

Monitoring outcomes inform future planning, staff formation and school improvement.

Related documentation

- Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- Planning and Celebrating Prayer and Liturgy with Young People - A practical and pastoral expression of The Prayer & Liturgy Directory for Nottingham Diocese
- Sacred Heart Annual Plan of Provision

Policy Review: Annually by the Governing Body in consultation with staff, parents and the diocesan education service.

Written by: Anne-Marie Bell

Approved by: Sacred Heart Governing Body

Date approved: September 2026

Date to be reviewed: September 2027