

Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic High School



Prayer & Liturgy Policy

Date of Updated Policy	Sept 2026
Date of Review	Sept 2027

Prayer & Liturgy Policy

Contents	Page
Mission Statement	3
Statement of Intent	4
The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy	4
Legal and Ecclesial Requirements	5
Principles	5
Roles and responsibilities	7
Provision	10
The Chapel	13
Professional Development	14
Monitoring & Evaluation	14

Mission Statement

In Christ We Grow

Striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving.

'I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit' [John 15: 5]

The Mission Statement "In Christ We Grow – Striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving" is rooted directly in the words of Jesus in John 15:5: *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit."*

The image of the vine and branches provides a powerful foundation for our school mission. Just as branches can only flourish when they remain connected to the vine, our school community recognises that we grow and flourish through our relationship with Christ. Jesus is at the centre of our community, providing the foundation and nourishment that enables each person to develop and reach their God-given potential.

"In Christ We Grow" reflects our belief that spiritual growth is at the heart of personal growth. Through prayer, worship, learning and service, students are encouraged to grow in faith, character and confidence.

The call to "strive for excellence" reflects the Gospel's invitation to use the gifts and talents God has given us. Students are encouraged to develop these gifts and to achieve their potential, not simply for personal success, but so that they can make a positive contribution to others.

The three values of "caring, sharing and achieving" express how this growth is lived out:

- Caring – remaining rooted in Christ means recognising the dignity of every person and responding to others with compassion, kindness and love.
- Sharing – the fruits of our gifts and talents are not for ourselves alone. We are called to share our time, talents and resources in the service of others and the wider community.
- Achieving – by remaining connected to Christ, we are encouraged to grow, develop our God-given gifts and strive for excellence in all that we do.

The words "bear much fruit" provide a particularly strong link to our mission. They remind us that genuine growth in Christ should be visible in the way we care for others, share our gifts and strive to achieve our potential. In this way, our Mission Statement is not simply a statement of what we believe, but a call to action: rooted in Christ, we grow together and bear fruit for the benefit of others.

Statement of Intent

Prayer and liturgy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition. Through Prayer and liturgy we celebrate God's presence in our lives. It is our opportunity in word and action to respond to God's invitation to enter into a deeper relationship with each individual. We believe that this is made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Prayer and Liturgy enables the school community to become reflective, experience the presence of God and to develop our spiritual life at a more personal level.

We appreciate that all staff and students are on a faith journey. We try to meet our students where they are and encourage them to ask questions about their purpose and their faith. We recognise each student as made in the image and likeness of God, all with different gifts and qualities.

Prayer and Liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it, including:

- Those who are active members of the worshipping community in the Church.
- Those for whom school may be their first or only experience of Church and formal prayer.
- Those from other Christian traditions, or those who have no religious faith.
- Those from other faith backgrounds.

Our Prayer and Liturgy seeks to be inclusive, respectful and accessible, while remaining authentically Catholic and faithful to the distinctive mission and identity of our school.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

Prayer and Liturgy at Our Lady Queen of Peace aims to provide opportunities for all students and staff:

- To encounter and contemplate the mystery of God.
- To reflect on spiritual, moral and ethical issues in the light of the Gospel.
- To explore and develop personal beliefs and faith.
- To respond to and celebrate the gift of life and the presence of God within it.
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit.
- To develop a common Catholic ethos and shared Gospel values.
- To enrich and deepen students' religious and spiritual experience.
- To grow in liturgical understanding and participation.
- To become familiar with and confidently use prayers that form part of the Catholic tradition.
- To develop positive attitudes of love, compassion, justice, hope, forgiveness, tolerance and acceptance.
- To recognise and develop their God-given gifts and talents.

- To participate meaningfully in prayer and liturgy, whether through active involvement, leadership, music, reflection, silence, listening or communal prayer.
- To understand that prayer and faith should lead to action, service and a commitment to others.
- To grow “In Christ” and to bear fruit through caring, sharing and achieving.

Legal and Ecclesial Requirements

The legal requirements for collective worship are laid down in the 1988 Education Reform Act and in the Collective Worship Circular 1/94 (1993 – 1994), which was essentially an attempt to explain and enhance the 1988 Act. It states that collective worship: ‘Should aim to provide the opportunity for pupils to worship God, to consider spiritual and moral issues and to explore their own beliefs; to encourage participation and response, through listening to and joining in the worship offered; and to develop community spirit, promote a common ethos and shared values, and reinforce positive attitudes’.

It also states these acts of worship must be “wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character” for the majority of the time. They must also be “appropriate, having regard to the ages, aptitudes and family backgrounds of the pupils”

Prayer and Liturgy at Our Lady Queen of Peace is provided within the statutory requirements for schools and in accordance with the expectations of the Roman Catholic Church for Catholic education.

As a Catholic school, Prayer and Liturgy is an essential expression of our Catholic identity and is rooted in Sacred Scripture, the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Liturgical Year. It seeks to provide students with opportunities to worship God, encounter Christ, reflect on spiritual and moral questions, explore their faith and develop a deeper relationship with God.

Prayer and Liturgy is planned and delivered with due regard for the age, ability, religious background and individual circumstances of students, ensuring that opportunities for prayer and worship are meaningful and appropriate.

The school also recognises its responsibility to provide opportunities for students to participate in worship while respecting the diversity of religious and non-religious backgrounds represented within the school community.

Principles

All Prayer and Liturgy at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic High School emanates from Sacred Scripture and the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. It is central to the Catholic life and mission of the school and seeks to support the spiritual, moral and personal development of every member of our community.

Prayer and Liturgy and worship in our school:

- Must support our students in living out our school Mission Statement, "In Christ We Grow", and encourage them to embody the Gospel values reflected in our school expectations.
- Must provide opportunities to celebrate and develop our values of caring, sharing and achieving, recognising the contribution each individual can make to the life of our community.
- Enables students to recognise and develop their gifts and talents as part of their spiritual development, encouraging them to discern and respond to God's call and to share the Good News through their words, actions and service, following the example of Jesus.
- Promotes love, justice, hope, tolerance and acceptance of every person, supporting respect for diversity, inclusion and social cohesion within Our Lady's and the wider community.
- Provides opportunities for students and staff to worship God, reflect on spiritual and moral questions, encounter the teachings of the Gospel and explore and develop their own beliefs.
- Encourages active and meaningful participation, whether through leading and contributing to prayer and liturgy or through attentive listening, reflection and joining in communal worship.
- Develops a strong Catholic ethos, community spirit and shared sense of purpose, strengthening our identity as a Catholic school and our commitment to one another.
- Reinforces positive attitudes and Gospel values, helping students to reflect on how their faith can give shape, purpose and meaning to their lives and relationships with others.
- Provides opportunities for personal prayer and spiritual development through a variety of experiences, including spoken prayer, Scripture, music, art, silence, reflection and discussion, recognising that individuals encounter and respond to prayer in different ways.
- Is valued as an integral part of school life, helping to set the tone and give meaning and purpose to learning, relationships and daily living within our community.
- Celebrates and promotes the distinctive nature of our Catholic identity, ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy remains central to the mission and ethos of Our Lady Queen of Peace.
- Must comply with all relevant statutory requirements and be consistent with the expectations for Prayer and Liturgy within a Catholic school.
- Must be rooted in sound educational and liturgical principles, ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy is accessible, purposeful and meaningful, with opportunities for all members of the school community to contribute and benefit.
- Should enable students to make connections between faith and life, encouraging them to move beyond prayer and reflection into compassionate action, service and responsibility within the school, local and global community.

- Should nurture a sense of belonging, helping every member of the community to recognise that they have a valued place within the life and mission of Our Lady Queen of Peace and are called to grow “In Christ.”

Roles & Responsibilities

Governing Body

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 and mission of the school and reflect the distinctive Catholic identity of Our Lady Queen of Peace.
- Prayer and Liturgy is informed by and consistent with the guidance of the Prayer and Liturgy Directory, *The Prayer and Liturgy Directory: A Directory for Schools and Colleges*, and the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.
- There is a named person or persons responsible for Prayer and Liturgy within the school, including a designated Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator.
- The Prayer and Liturgy Policy is reviewed and updated regularly, taking account of developments in the life of the school, the Church and relevant guidance, and is communicated to all appropriate stakeholders.
- Appropriate resources and funding are allocated to Prayer and Liturgy, recognising its central importance to the life and mission of a Catholic school.
- Governors receive appropriate information about the quality, impact and development of Prayer and Liturgy as part of their monitoring of the Catholic Life and Mission of the school.

Headteacher

The Headteacher, as the spiritual leader of the school community, has overall responsibility for ensuring that:

- Prayer and Liturgy remain central to the Catholic life and mission of the school.
- Prayer and Liturgy is in line with the Prayer and Liturgy Directory and the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.
- They work closely with the Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator and other staff responsible for the Catholic Life and Mission of the school.
- Those responsible for Prayer and Liturgy receive appropriate training, formation and support to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
- Appropriate resources, facilities and opportunities are available to support high-quality Prayer and Liturgy across the school.
- Prayer and Liturgy is appropriately monitored and evaluated, with pupil and staff voice informing ongoing development.

- The school maintains a culture in which staff model reverence, participation and enthusiasm for prayer and worship, recognising their role as witnesses to the Catholic faith.

Heads of Year

Heads of Year have an important role in supporting the prayerful culture and Catholic mission of the school. They:

- Support the delivery of meaningful weekly prayer, reflection and Celebration of the Word through assemblies.
- Model the Catholic Life and Mission through active participation in and enthusiasm for Prayer and Liturgy.
- Encourage student participation and leadership in assemblies, prayer and liturgical experiences.
- Support students in developing a deeper understanding of the Liturgical Year and the Gospel values that underpin the school's mission.
- Support the monitoring and evaluation of Prayer and Liturgy and contribute to the school's self-evaluation processes, including gathering and responding to staff and student voice.

Role of the Form Tutor

The Form Tutor has a key role in ensuring that daily prayer is embedded within the life of every tutor group. Form Tutors:

- Support the consistent delivery of meaningful daily prayer and reflection, recognising daily prayer as a non-negotiable aspect of the school's Catholic Life and Mission.
- Use the weekly Prayer and Liturgy resources provided by the school to ensure that prayer is purposeful, appropriate and rooted in the Liturgical Year and Sacred Scripture.
- Model the Catholic Life and Mission through enthusiasm, reverence and active participation in Prayer and Liturgy.
- Encourage students to participate fully and respectfully in prayer and reflection.
- Provide opportunities for students to lead and contribute to Prayer and Liturgy, including readings, prayers, reflections, music and other appropriate forms of participation.
- Establish a calm, prayerful and respectful environment in which all students feel able to reflect and participate.
- Encourage students to connect prayer with their daily lives, relationships and responsibilities, helping them to live out the Gospel values of caring, sharing and achieving.

Chaplain

The Chaplain has a key role in supporting and developing the Catholic spiritual life of the school. Working closely with the Headteacher, staff, students, clergy and parish community, the Chaplain ensures that:

- Prayer and Liturgy are central to the Catholic life and mission of the school and are in line with the guidance and principles set out in the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory* and the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church.
- There is an Annual Plan of Provision for Prayer and Liturgy across the school year, identifying the Liturgical Seasons, key feast days, significant celebrations and appropriate opportunities for the celebration of the Sacraments.
- Daily planned opportunities for prayer are provided for all students, appropriate to their age, ability and stage of spiritual development, in accordance with the expectations of the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory*.
- Students are supported in their liturgical formation and spiritual development, enabling them to take an active and meaningful role in the planning, preparation and delivery of Prayer and Liturgy according to their age, ability and capacity.
- Students are given progressive opportunities for participation and leadership, developing their confidence in leading prayer, Scripture readings, reflections, music and other appropriate elements of liturgical celebration.
- High-quality resources to support the planning and delivery of Prayer and Liturgy are appropriate, accessible and readily available to staff and students.
- Prayer and Liturgy induction is provided for new staff, ensuring that colleagues understand the Catholic mission of the school and their role in supporting its prayer life.
- Staff have access to appropriate training, formation and professional development, supporting them to grow in confidence and understanding as leaders and participants in Prayer and Liturgy.
- Prayer and Liturgy is regularly monitored and evaluated, drawing on student and staff voice, observation and feedback. Findings are used to inform future planning and support a cycle of continuous improvement.
- The quality, impact and development of Prayer and Liturgy are reported to the Headteacher and Governing Body, contributing to whole-school development and the ongoing evaluation of the Catholic Life and Mission of the school.
- There is strong collaboration with the Parish Priest, local clergy and parish communities, strengthening the relationship between school, parish and the wider Church.
- The Chaplain provides pastoral and spiritual support to students and staff, creating opportunities for prayer, reflection, conversation and accompaniment throughout the school year.
- The Chaplain supports the school community in living out its Mission Statement, "In Christ We Grow", helping students and staff to recognise and develop their God-given gifts and to bear fruit through caring, sharing, achieving and service to others.

1. Formal Prayer and Liturgy

Formal prayer and reflection take place regularly throughout the school year, providing opportunities for students, staff and families to gather together in prayer, celebrate the Word of God and participate in the sacramental life of the Church.

- **Weekly year-group assemblies** take place for each year group and include a **Celebration of the Word**, providing students with regular opportunities for Scripture, reflection and prayer.
- **Chapel time is allocated to tutor groups on a rota basis**, with each session incorporating a Celebration of the Word and providing students with a more intimate opportunity for prayer and reflection.
- **Staff briefing takes place every Tuesday morning** and includes time for prayer, ensuring that the spiritual life of staff is nurtured alongside their professional responsibilities.
- **Fortnightly Mass is celebrated every Thursday in the Chapel**, led by the Parish Priest. Students and staff are given the opportunity to participate in the Eucharist and deepen their understanding of the Catholic faith.
- The school celebrates a **Year 11 Leavers' Liturgy/Mass**, giving students the opportunity to reflect on their time within the school community and to pray for the next stage of their journey.
- A **Year 7 Mass of Welcome** is celebrated for new students and their families as they join the Our Lady Queen of Peace community, formally welcoming them into the life of the school.
- **Pupil morning prayers take place at 8.30am**, providing students with an opportunity to begin the school day in prayer and reflection.
- **Whole-school Masses** are celebrated at significant points in the Liturgical Year, including **Advent, Lent and the Feast of Our Lady Queen of Peace** at the end of the academic year.
- **Liturgies are celebrated for significant occasions in the Church calendar**, including Ash Wednesday, Holy Week and Christmas, enabling the whole school community to mark these important moments together.
- **Services of Reconciliation are offered during Advent and Lent**, providing students and staff with an opportunity for reflection, forgiveness and renewal.
- **All staff INSET days begin with dedicated time for prayer**, recognising the importance of prayer and reflection in sustaining staff and placing the Catholic mission of the school at the heart of its work.
- Through these varied opportunities, the school seeks to ensure that **formal prayer and reflection are woven throughout the life of the school**, enabling the community to come together in worship while also providing opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual growth.

2. Form Time - Prayer and liturgy

- Each week, a Prayer and Liturgy theme is established in accordance with the Liturgical Year, providing a consistent focus for prayer and reflection across the school. The theme is communicated through the published assembly rota and accompanying PowerPoints.
- Every tutor group participates in an act of prayer each morning, providing students with a regular opportunity to begin the school day in prayer, reflection and connection with God.
- Each tutor group has a designated morning for the Celebration of the Word, enabling students to encounter Scripture and reflect together on its meaning and relevance to their lives.
- Form Tutors receive a weekly Prayer and Liturgy PowerPoint from the school Chaplain, providing structured resources and guidance to support the delivery of prayer and reflection within form time.
- Traditional and formal prayers, including the *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, *Glory Be* and *Eternal Rest*, are incorporated into the weekly Prayer and Liturgy resources. This supports students in developing familiarity with the prayers of the Catholic tradition and participating confidently in communal prayer.
- Tutors are encouraged to support students in planning and leading elements of Prayer and Liturgy. They are expected to establish a rota so that students have regular opportunities to take an active and meaningful role in leading prayer, readings, reflections and other appropriate elements.
- During prayer, tutors ensure that a calm, purposeful and reverent atmosphere is established, enabling all students to participate fully and encouraging respect for one another and for the sacred nature of prayer.
- Through this consistent approach, the school seeks to ensure that Prayer and Liturgy is an integral part of daily school life, enabling students to develop their prayer lives, deepen their understanding of the Liturgical Year and grow in confidence as participants and leaders of prayer.

3. Gatherings of whole year groups for the Celebration of the Word or Mass

Gatherings of whole year groups for the Celebration of the Word and Mass provide important opportunities for students and staff to come together as a community of faith. These celebrations enable students to encounter Scripture, participate in prayer and worship, and reflect on how their faith shapes their lives. They are rooted in our school Mission Statement:

In Christ We Grow

Striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit." (John 15:5)

- Whole-year-group celebrations provide opportunities for spiritual reflection, prayer and worship within the wider school community, helping students recognise that they are part of something greater than themselves and belong to a shared Catholic community.

- Celebrations of the Word and Mass are planned in accordance with the Liturgical Year, enabling students to encounter the key seasons, feasts and themes of the Catholic Church throughout the academic year.
- Our celebrations encourage full and active participation within a respectful and prayerful environment. All students and staff are welcomed and encouraged to participate appropriately in Mass and the Celebration of the Word.
- Students are encouraged to take an active role in the planning and delivery of liturgies, according to their age and ability. This may include proclaiming Scripture, leading prayers and reflections, serving, singing and supporting the preparation of the liturgy.
- Student participation helps young people to develop their gifts and talents and to recognise how these can be placed at the service of others. This reflects our Mission Statement and the call to care, share and achieve.
- Students are encouraged to reflect on vocation and purpose, considering how God may be calling them to use their gifts in the service of others and to contribute positively to the Church and wider community.
- Each tutor group is given opportunities to lead or contribute to assemblies and liturgical celebrations, ensuring that students are not simply recipients of Prayer and Liturgy but active participants in the life of the school.
- A whole-school assembly and liturgy rota ensures that celebrations are appropriately distributed throughout the year and connect with the Liturgical Year and key themes within the life of the Church.
- Music and hymn singing are used to encourage active participation and communal worship, allowing students to express their faith through music and create a shared sense of celebration.
- Through Celebrations of the Word, students are given opportunities to listen to and reflect upon Sacred Scripture, making connections between the Word of God, their own lives and the challenges and opportunities they encounter.
- Through Mass, students are given opportunities to participate in the Eucharistic celebration and to deepen their understanding of the centrality of the Eucharist to Catholic life and worship.
- Whole-year-group celebrations also provide opportunities to mark significant moments in the lives of students and the school community, giving thanks, celebrating achievement, praying for those in need and seeking God's guidance and blessing.
- Above all, these gatherings seek to help students understand what it means to "remain in Christ" and to "bear much fruit", encouraging them to live out their faith through caring for others, sharing their gifts and striving to achieve their God-given potential.

4. Access to Sacramental Programmes

- Our Lady Queen of Peace supports the Archdiocese in preparing students for the Sacrament of Confirmation. We work with Animate and local parishes to promote the importance of the Sacrament. The theology is covered in RE lessons currently within the Year 8 curriculum.

- Students wishing to make their First Forgiveness or receive their First Holy Communion are also supported through collaborative work between the school and the Parish.

5. Student Participation in Chaplaincy

- Students work with the school Chaplain and Form Tutors to support and plan liturgies, taking an active role in the prayer life of the school. Students are encouraged to lead readings and other elements of formal liturgies, providing meaningful opportunities for participation and leadership.
- The Faith in Action Programme is offered to all students in Years 7 and 8 and is promoted through form time and assemblies. Students are also able to opt into the programme in Year 9, enabling them to explore their faith through reflection, service and practical action.
- All students are welcome to participate in chaplaincy activities, ensuring that there are opportunities for everyone to engage with prayer, worship, service and the wider life of the school community.
- Our Lady's Ambassadors is a student leadership group who meet regularly to plan activities and initiatives throughout the year. They help to organise opportunities for students across the school, fundraising events and support for school charities, encouraging students to take responsibility for serving others.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 are encouraged to participate in the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, where they have the opportunity to support elderly and infirm members of the community. The school makes a financial contribution towards travel and associated costs to help make this experience accessible to students.
- The school runs a Student SVP (St Vincent de Paul) group, encouraging students to put their faith into action by supporting those in need and promoting compassion, service and social justice within our school and wider community.
- The school runs a Live Simply CAFOD project, helping students to reflect on Catholic Social Teaching and to live out their faith by caring for others, protecting our common home and making positive choices for our local and global community.
- Through these opportunities, students are encouraged to move from prayer and reflection to active service, developing a deeper understanding of their responsibility to others and their role in living out the Gospel within the school, local and global community.

A dedicated space: The Chapel

- The chapel is an important and central part of our school community, providing a welcoming and prayerful space that is open to all students, staff and families.
- Students are welcome to spend time quietly in the chapel during break and lunchtime, offering them an opportunity for prayer, reflection and stillness within the school day.
- The chapel is also used for daily Chapel Prayer during form time, helping students to develop a regular rhythm of prayer and reflection.

- The altar provides a central focal point for prayer. Students and staff are invited to place particular prayer intentions on the altar or share them with the school Chaplain, ensuring that the needs and intentions of our community are held in prayer.
- The chapel is also utilised for one-to-one meetings and pastoral support sessions with students and families, particularly where individuals are unable to access other parts of the school building, providing a calm, private and welcoming space for conversation and support.

Professional Development for Staff

- Prayer and Liturgy guidance, resources and expectations are included within the induction process for all new staff, supporting colleagues to understand and contribute confidently to the prayer life of the school.
- INSET and ongoing professional development are provided in relation to the Catholic life of the school, with a particular focus on Prayer and Liturgy. This supports staff in developing their understanding and practice, ensuring that they are confident in their role as both leaders and participants in prayer and liturgy.
- Staff are encouraged to model reverence, participation and reflection, helping to create a prayerful culture in which students can encounter and develop their relationship with Christ.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Prayer and Liturgy

- Prayer and Liturgy is monitored through prayer experience drop-ins undertaken by members of the SLT, Heads of Year, Assistant Heads of Year and the Head of RE. This forms part of the school's ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes and helps to ensure consistency, quality and impact.
- Pupil Voice and Staff Voice are conducted to gather feedback on Prayer and Liturgy. The feedback is used to identify strengths, respond to the views and experiences of the school community and inform areas for further development.
- Updates and guidance on leading Prayer and Liturgy are provided to staff throughout the year, supporting colleagues to develop their confidence and ensure that prayer experiences remain purposeful, engaging and appropriate for students.
- Prayer and Liturgy guidance, delivery expectations and resources are included within the induction process for all new staff, ensuring that new colleagues understand their role in contributing to the prayer life of the school from the outset.
- Monitoring and staff development are used to support a cycle of continuous improvement, ensuring that Prayer and Liturgy remains central to the Catholic life of the school and provides meaningful opportunities for students and staff to encounter Christ through prayer, reflection and worship.