



# St Paul's Catholic Primary

## Spirituality, Prayer and Worship Policy

All staff and governors at St Paul's are encouraged to believe that, no matter where we are, whatever place we are in, Christ is there with us.

"The Lord tells us that the first task in life is 'Prayer.' Not prayer of words like a parrot, but the prayer of the heart, gazing on the Lord, hearing the Lord, asking the Lord." *Pope Francis 8.10.2013*

### Mission Statement

*We journey together: loving learning; daring to discover;  
caring for all; with Jesus as our guide.*

#### **Rationale:**

Spirituality is the essence of being human – to be related to God. Here at St Paul's, we recognise that we are created by God, in His image and likeness. We understand that He is calling us into a relationship with Him through His Son Jesus, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus proclaimed, '***I am the Way, the Truth and the Life***' (*John 14:6*). It is by following Him that we grow in Christian faith, love and hope, which is of crucial importance to our full human growth.

In order to develop this relationship with God, we understand that prayer 'raising of the mind and heart to God' is of the essence and through prayer we will experience the importance of the Gospel and the need to live by it.

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our own personal prayer, we will experience the life of God within ourselves, and through liturgical prayer, we will experience our need for the life of our community.

**Prayer:**

... Is the raising of one's mind and heart to God. It is the means by which we encounter God and develop a relationship with Him. Prayer, in the Catholic tradition, takes place at different times and indeed at any time throughout the day and set within the framework of the Liturgical seasons of the year. Prayer can take many forms, but must be in a way in which we place ourselves before God.

**Worship:**

... Is the adoration of God, the acknowledgement of God as creator and Saviour. All acts of Worship include prayer, and can be personal or communal.

**Liturgy:**

.... Is the communal Worship centered on Christ, lived and practiced by the Catholic Church. For schools, Liturgy is Worship expressed through gesture or posture, which incorporates elements of rites and rituals, and signs and symbols of the Church. Careful planning and preparation are essential to good Liturgy.

**Our Aims:**

- To nurture and celebrate the uniqueness of each individual as a member of God's family through a worshipping community.
- To assist the Church in its mission of making Christ known to all people.
- To ensure that the Catholic Faith and the Good News of Jesus Christ, is at the heart the experience for every member of the school community.
- To ensure success through having a coherent vision building on the distinctiveness of our Catholic school.
- To assist parents, the primary educators of their children, in the education and religious formation of their children.
- To ensure that all pupils are able to fulfill their God-given talents, to be the best that they can be, and receive every opportunity to thrive and achieve academic excellence.
- To provide an environment where all members of our school community, through a variety of opportunities for prayer, are encouraged to deepen their personal relationship with God.
- To encourage sensitivity and to promote an appreciation of the wonder and mystery of God and His creation.
- To ensure that spirituality is incorporated into all curriculum areas and re-inforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition.
- To explore the use of language, music, mime, drama and art through worship and prayer.
- To create a real sense of belonging and community among pupils, teachers and all other staff members.
- To celebrate Mass with our parish family and foster strong links with our community.
- To prepare all children for life in modern Britain, and celebrate the diverse world we live in.

**In preparation for Prayer & Worship, children at St Paul's will be encouraged to:**

- feel valued as individuals
- feel safe and secure

- choose appropriate readings
- devise their own prayers and pray in their own way
- arrange the worship space and prepare an appropriate focus
- consider the liturgical time of the year
- welcome any visitors
- participate fully

**Teachers and all staff at St Paul's will:**

- create positive relationships where high self-esteem is fostered
- provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment for all pupils
- have the opportunity to discuss and contribute to the school's approach to worship and liturgy
- invite parents and parishioners into school for class celebrations, liturgies and Masses when appropriate
- keep parents involved and informed through parentmails, newsletters, assemblies, Masses, reports and other special events in school
- acknowledge moments of awe and wonder when they occur, any time & any place
- participate fully

**The Learning Environment**

All classrooms will nurture spirituality and prayer.

**Non-Negotiables:**

- Foster a bright and stimulating learning environment with a prayer table and display related to the Church season and the topic being taught through 'Come & See'. The key focus area or prayer table should have a Bible, crucifix, candle and any other objects or symbols which will encourage reflection and spontaneous prayer.
- Provide an environment where children are encouraged to understand prayer as a conversation with God, in which we must also listen to what God wishes to communicate to us. Children will be made aware of the many ways in which God makes himself known, through creation, the sacraments, other people and through His Word.
- Develop an environment where prayer is more than a petition. We will help children to explore prayers of adoration, thanksgiving, praise and repentance. All children are given the opportunity to pray through a variety of media including all genres of writing, dance, music, singing and drama. Prayer opportunities are planned for at least three times a day.
- Prayer will be a part of each Religious Education lesson, and will take place in the form of prayer, meditation or reflection.

**The planning, content and delivery of Collective Worship:**

Collective Worship is planned:

- Following the structure as indicated on Adshare, and following the St Paul's school calendar, and with reference to the Church's seasons and the liturgical year. Scripture will be the focus in most

- To involve consultation with the Parish Priest(s) (from Thames Ditton, Cobham and Claygate) and will respond to the ever-changing situations within the school and the wider community.
- To develop pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship.
- All assemblies will involve prayer.
- Services of Reconciliation will take place yearly.

### **Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing**

Religious Education, Spirituality, Prayer and Worship and the Catholic Life of the school are monitored in-line with the whole school monitoring processes.

Triangulated opinions and advice is sought from the Diocesan Primary R.E Adviser, to ensure accuracy in our judgements.

Each topic is taught following the programme 'Come & See', and includes a whole class act of worship. *Assessment for Learning* (AfL) continually takes place.

### **Role of the Governing Body**

- To ensure spirituality and prayer is nurtured by having a dedicated link R.E. Link Governor
- To monitor alongside the R.E. Co-ordinator and SLT how effective the Catholic life and spirituality prayer and worship life of the school is
- To challenge, question and evaluate, alongside the school Leadership Team, on the standards of spirituality, prayer and worship

### **Role of the Parents**

*"As it is the parents who have given life to their children, on them lays the gravest obligation to educate their family. They must be recognised as being primarily and principally responsible for their education."*

***Second Vatican Council Declaration on Catholic Education***

We believe that parents have the responsibility to support their children and the school in implementing the school Mission Statement and school policies.

We will, with the help of the local parish community, support all parents to uphold their responsibility to the best of our ability.

### **Legal Requirements:**

**All state-funded schools are required to hold a daily Act of Collective Worship for all pupils\*. This is made explicit for Catholic schools in Canon Law and in the Trust Deed for Voluntary Aided schools and funding agreement for academies, which require that 'Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.'**

*\*Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from Collective Worship (see right of withdrawal policy):*  
<http://www.abeducationsservice.org.uk/ContentDocuments/1194.PDF>