The Dunstan Catholic Educational Trust Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Agreed by the DCET Ethos and Standards on: 11th June 2025

Review Date: June 2026

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments and Changes	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
2	04/06/25	Updated to reflect prayer and liturgy directory	11/06/25	Clifton Diocese	E&S

We are a community of Catholic schools together aspiring to give children an all-round education rooted in Christian values in a nurturing
environment where they flourish, become lifelong learners and fulfil their potential.

1. **The context of this prayer and liturgy policy**

'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.)

2. **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.

3. **Responsibility**

(a) Governance and Trust Board

The governors and Trust Board, 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.

4. **Overview of prayer and liturgy provision**

Our Vision:
We are a community of Catholic schools together aspiring to give children an all-round education rooted in Christian values in a nurturing environment where they flourish, become lifelong learners and fulfil their potential.

Our Mission:
TOGETHER WE LOVE, WE LEARN, WE LIVE
Our Values:
• Curiosity
• Stewardship
• Resilience
• Forgiveness

• Respect
• Love

Rationale:
The gathering in prayer and liturgy of the school community is an important educational and spiritual activity and will form part of the Religious Education programme which the school has developed for its pupils.
Aims:
• To grow in Christian love through the teachings of scriptures
• To acknowledge and respect difference
• To engage and elicit response
• To forgive and to be forgiven

Legal requirements
We acknowledge the legal requirement that there must be a daily prayer and liturgy for all pupils. The prayer and liturgy is not designated curriculum time and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including religious education. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from Prayer and Liturgies, although in line with our mission statement we would encourage participation by all.

Prayer and Liturgy should be:
• Memorable and enjoyable
• Engaging and elicit response
• Well-resourced and planned
• Flexible and respond to special occasions
• Related to age, ability and background of others
• Have a sense of occasion
• Inclusive (children and staff)
• Have spiritual content
• Relate worship and prayer to aspects of their own life
• Enable children to explore their own beliefs
• Teach children how to worship and lead worship.

Important elements of Prayer and Liturgies
• We gather: (we come together as part of God's family and make everyone welcome) – consider music, resources, setting, seating arrangements
• We listen: (God speaks to us and we listen) – biblical reading, prayer, reflection
• We respond: (we respond to the Word of God) – ritual movement, actions to song, response to prayer
• Go forth: (we want to share the Good News) – sending out, something to hold onto for daily life

Organisation of Prayer and Liturgies:
Day Prayer and Liturgy
Monday: Gospel Liturgy – reading from previous Sunday
Tuesday: Key Stage Celebration of the Word
Wednesday: Class led Celebration of the Word either Teacher / pupil led
Thursday: Celebration of the Word (hymn practice)
Friday: Celebration of the Word - Laudate

Planning:
Prayer and Liturgies are planned following a structure of liturgical year and the wider

curriculum and Gospel Values. Scripture will be the focus of most Prayer and Liturgies.
• With flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community.
• To develop in pupils' skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead prayer and liturgies rather than always participating or contributing in a token way.
• To enable the 'Chaplaincy Team' to advise and support the development of Prayer and Liturgy throughout the school.
• Focus on prayer

Prayer and Liturgies are recorded:
• Through displays, collections of pupil's contributions (happy books), prayers, reflections, photographs
• Powerpoint presentations
• Videos

5. **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 Catholic character of the school is reflected in religious artefacts and images on display throughout the building. Dedicated spaces for prayer and liturgy will be furnished and maintained as such and updated to reflect the Church's liturgical season. Staff training and formation costs will be funded separately to ensure that all staff are able to fulfil their responsibility to contribute to the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

6. **Training and formation**

All new staff will be 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 will be identified and addressed through training and formation. There will also be the opportunity for whole-staff professional development 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.

7. **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly, and at least annually, and involve all key stakeholders: pupils, parents, staff, clergy, and governors. Areas for development will be identified and issues raised will 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.