

St. Anthony's Catholic Academy

Prayer and Liturgy Policy



***‘Be shining lamps, giving light to all around you’
Venerable Catherine McAuley***

Policy updated: June 2024

Policy Review: June 2025

Signed by: Chair of Governor

M. A. Galbraith

S

Aims for Prayer & Liturgy:

St. Anthony's aims to provide opportunities for pupils and staff to come together in community to worship God. Collective Worship will reflect the traditions of our Church and our Mercy Tradition, taking into account the spiritual and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who form part of the worshipping community in church.
- Those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church.
- Those from other Christian traditions, faith communities or none.

We endeavour to do this by:

- Helping to develop the faith of each individual within our community;
- Ensuring that our School is a caring community;
- Giving pupils an insight into and understanding of Gospel values;
- Developing a sense of mission;
- Encourage those who form part of the worshipping community in church;
- Help those for whom school may be their first and only experience of church;
- Include pupils from other Christian traditions, or none or from other faith backgrounds;
- Provide an educational experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain.

Therefore, at the start of each day staff and pupils will pray together the school prayer. Our prayers will reflect our belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, our Mercy Ethos, Mission & Values which are underpinned by the Gospel and Church.

Our Vision

Our school has a rich history and like all Catholic schools we provide a nurturing, caring and loving environment where spirituality, Catholic ethos and faith permeate everything we do.

As a learning community we provide all individuals with the opportunity to flourish in a way that is rooted firmly in the values of the Gospel. By placing Christ at the centre of all that we do and recognising learning as the fundamental focus of all our work we are achieving our mission objective to ensure that each child can 'be shining lamps, giving light to all around them'.

As a Catholic school we are proud to worship, and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. Walking around our school you will 'feel' our Catholic ethos in the air - the way we talk to one another, the way we support and trust each other and the way we are driven to succeed in our mission.

The staff of St Anthony's promote a dedication to excellence which empowers our pupils to excel and achieve whilst expanding their horizons in a nurturing environment. Our commitment to high-quality teaching, focus on mastery of knowledge and partnerships with parents and carers and the local community provides a richness of experience that enables all to develop their God given talents.

Our ethos and practice are proudly rooted in these beliefs and in our Mercy Tradition. As a school we aim to be:

Christ-centred - The Mercy academy recognises the dignity of the human person and the command of Christ to love and care for each other. We aim to build up self-esteem among individuals and create a community marked by caring and belonging that leads to personalised learning.

Faith enlightened - In the Mercy academy faith, culture, and life are in dialogue and harmony. The Catholic faith is at the heart of academy life and is integral to its liturgies, rituals, symbolism and prayer spaces.

Build communities - The Mercy academy shows social responsibility for the world we inhabit. It should work towards creating a world where everyone can live lives of dignity and decency with respect for life. The academy is a community where parents, staff and pupils share a common vision as a community of warmth and love.

Show concern for the poor, especially women and girls - The Mercy academy sets as its clear aim to work towards eradicating suffering and its causes. It seeks to create compassion as the driving force in the search for justice for those at the margins of the community. Students should be educated to question the status quo and to be active for social change and the promotion of equal opportunities.

Pursue excellence - The Mercy academy enables every pupil to achieve her potential. It is committed to high quality teaching and learning and to building a community of reflective learners working to the highest standards. Respect is at the heart of the academy community. There is a commitment to inventiveness and change.

Collective worship at St. Anthony's will include:

- Weekly assembly which will be coordinated by the Senior Leadership Team & Head of House & Wider Staff Body
- Daily prayer and reflection in tutor groups coordinated by Chaplain
- Weekly Form Masses (subject to availability of clergy)
- Prayer & Liturgy focused on the liturgical calendar / school year / Our Mercy Ethos
- Staff prayer at the start of meetings and briefings

Collective worship aims to enable all members of the community to:

- Reflect upon the mystery that is God;
- Provide opportunities for students and staff to pray together
- Heighten student's awareness of questions related to the ultimate mysteries of life
- Grow in liturgical understanding with specific reference to the Catholic tradition;
- Respond to life's challenges, enjoy celebrations and comfort/console at times of difficulty;
- Celebrate the richness and diversity of creation (environmental stewardship)
- Give opportunities for silent contemplation, reflection, personal response and prayer;
- Express our faith as a Christian community
- To support and enhance the personal development of our students

Collective worship will follow the diocesan format of:

1. Welcome/Gather:

How we come together, the setting, the environment.

2. Word:

How the Word of God is proclaimed.

3. Worship/Response:

The response to the Word leads into a time of prayerful reflection which may be accompanied by a symbolic action or a time of silence.

4. Witness/Mission:

Provides the students with something to hold on to from the experience that they can take this into their daily lives.

Pupil participation and leadership:

- All pupils participate in liturgy and prayer. For pupils of other faiths careful consideration is taken to ensure that their participation is appropriate.
- All pupils contribute to leadership of liturgy and prayer through at least one of the following; preparation, delivery and evaluation.

Role of the Leader of Catholic Life & Mission:

- Provide and offer training and support for Chaplain and teaching staff
- Point of contact for all staff for matters pertaining to the Catholic Life & Mission
- Identify and meet the training needs of those involved in chaplaincy in school
- Oversee the organisation of Catholic Life & Mission within the school
- Assistance with sacred spaces (school chapel)
- Opportunities to meet and discuss ideas and problem-solve together
- Assistance with the planning and preparation of key Liturgical celebrations including major feasts and seasons
- Ensure the website reflects the Catholic Life & Mission of the school community
- Lead the monitoring of Catholic Life & Collective Worship to ensure this is regularly evaluated
- Oversees how the school environment reflects the particular charism of the school
- Provide opportunities to develop the social, moral, spiritual and cultural dimensions of students and staff

Role of the Chaplain (further details in appendix 1):

- Make prayer engaging and meaningful for staff & pupils
- Increase involvement of our young people in the prayer life of their school
- Develop whole school spirituality events including retreats and liturgies
- Develop links with the local parish community
- Lead on any and all events associated with the Catholic Life & Mission of the school that will enhance the personal development of our students
- Support the monitoring of collective worship and be part of the self-evaluation process

Role of Head of House:

- Support the delivery of meaningful weekly prayer and reflection through assembly
- Model the Catholic Life & Mission through enthusiasm for and participation in Prayer & Liturgy
- Encourage involvement in Prayer & Liturgy
- Support the monitoring of collective worship and be part of the self-evaluation process

Role of Form Tutor:

- Support the delivery of meaningful daily prayer and reflection
- Model the Catholic Life & Mission through enthusiasm for and participation in Prayer & Liturgy
- Encourage involvement in Prayer & Liturgy

Appendix 1

The Role of the Chaplain:

- Support the leader of CL&M in formulating a written policy for Prayer & Liturgy
- Support the leader of CL&M in the development plan for Collective Worship
- Ensuring that Collective Worship is appropriate to the age, aptitudes, and faith backgrounds of pupils
- Ensuring that Collective Worship takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it
- Organising themes for Worship
- Developing staff confidence and expertise e.g., through modelling different prayer styles
- Supporting with transition of pupils in Year 6/7 and Sixth Form

Planning, recording, monitoring, and evaluating

- Maintaining and developing effective procedures and documentation that will provide evidence for inspection and governor reports
- Support in the observation of acts of Collective Worship and providing feedback
- Informing the leader of CL&M of standards and developments in Collective Worship
- Gather and collate feedback from staff and students

Communication:

- Communicating to members of the school community the significance and content of Collective Worship
- Encouraging positive attitudes towards Collective Worship
- Support the leader of CL&M with induction for newly appointed colleagues of school policy regarding Collective Worship
- Communicating with parents, governors, and the parish community
- Liaison with the Diocesan Department for Education

Professional development/Ongoing formation:

- Support the leader of CL&M with the leading and organisation of in-service training and ongoing formation for Collective Worship
- Attending appropriate in-service courses, reporting back and leading staff training (where necessary)
- Keeping up to date by personal reading and professional development

Resources:

- Evaluating existing resources and providing resources to support staff and students with prayer and liturgy
- Developing the resources available for Collective Worship including visual aids, artefacts, music, visitors, new and relevant books, posters etc.
- Budgeting efficiently
- Ensure that symbols and icons of the Catholic faith are displayed throughout the school.