

St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

‘Let all that you do be done in love’.

(1 Corinthians 16:14)



I. Intent

I.a. Our School Mission

The mission of St Augustine's Catholic Voluntary Academy is that of Jesus Christ; to build a teaching and learning community where we show due regard for the development and understanding of the uniqueness and dignity of each person, based on the Gospel values of love, justice, caring for others, aspiring to be the best you can be, mutual respect, honesty, acceptance and forgiveness. At St Augustine's, each child is valued as a unique individual, a child of God, made in the image of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In partnership with parents, the parish and with God's grace, we aim to provide a community in which children grow and experience the love of God, self, and neighbour, fulfilling our school mission statement:







**'Let all that you do be done in love'.
(1 Corinthians 16:14)**

As a school community, we are committed to:

- ✓ contributing to the development of faith in the school community, recognising that each child comes with different experiences of their own faith and culture, which have value and are to be appreciated and built upon.
- ✓ striving to enhance and deepen a child's relationship with God through prayer, worship, and liturgy.
- ✓ building upon and developing the existing links with homes and parishes, encouraging, and developing good relationships with all children and adults who are involved in our school community.
- ✓ ensuring that the curriculum is appropriate to the perceived needs of the children and that the approach to teaching and learning will always be based on the attitudes and values of the Gospel.

I.b. Our School Virtues

Our school virtues influence the whole school culture at St Augustine's. They shape everything we do, every decision we make, and are the central thread interwoven throughout our curriculum, our behaviour system and our pastoral support. Our pupils and staff endeavour to live these out every day.

-  Love of Learning and Determination
-  Hope and Confidence
-  Honesty and Forgiveness
-  Love and Respect
-  Friendship and Kindness
-  Love of Neighbour and Self Control

I.c. Aims

At St. Augustine's, liturgy is far more than a statutory requirement. It is crucial to the spiritual life of the school and to pupils' moral and spiritual development. Liturgy is an important part of our school's Catholic ethos.

We believe that liturgy names and celebrates God's presence in our lives. In our Catholic school, it is particularly concerned with giving glory, honour, praise and thanks to God. Liturgy is our loving response, in word and action, to God's invitation to enter into a relationship with Him, made possible through the work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Liturgy at St Augustine's aims to provide an opportunity for all staff and pupils:

- ❖ to encounter Christ in their daily lives
- ❖ to contemplate something of the mystery of God, giving thanks and praise to Him
- ❖ to reflect on and promote spiritual and moral values in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church
- ❖ to explore their own beliefs
- ❖ to experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- ❖ to develop a common ethos and shared values
- ❖ to enrich religious experience
- ❖ to grow in liturgical understanding and development
- ❖ to reinforce prayers which are part of the Catholic tradition
- ❖ to reinforce positive attitudes
- ❖ to participate fully
- ❖ to take time out 'to wonder at', 'to come to terms with' and 'to give worth to'

I.d. Principles

All Acts of Worship in this school will:

- ❖ give glory and honour to God
- ❖ keep scripture at the heart of each worship
- ❖ be a quality activity, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic character
- ❖ be inclusive and accessible to all, regardless of belief and background
- ❖ give children positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age, aptitude and family backgrounds, in order to prepare them for the liturgical life of the church

In order to do this, celebrations will:

- ❖ be child-led and child-friendly
- ❖ be relevant to the class and school in order to personalise the experience
- ❖ be time-sensitive and appropriately paced
- ❖ include a range of experiences offered in a variety of settings and in a variety of groupings
- ❖ be engaging and use a range of creative approaches such as dance, drama, art and song
- ❖ be welcoming to members of the wider school community

I.e. Legal Requirements

As set out in the Education Reform Act (1988), liturgy should be '*wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character.*' At St Augustine's, liturgy is held in a Catholic context and focuses on the teachings of Christ and traditions of the Catholic Church.

We acknowledge that it is a legal requirement for there to be a daily act of worship offered for all pupils. At St Augustine's, this can take place at any time during the school day and will be either an act of liturgy for the whole school, or acts of worship taking place in school groups. An assembly that includes a prayer does not fulfil this requirement as liturgy and assembly are two distinct activities.

Daily acts of worship are not designated curriculum time under regulations and will not be subsumed under any part of the curriculum, including Religious Education. Liturgy falls outside of the 10% curriculum time allocated to RE as outlined by the Diocese.

2. Implementation

“For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.” Matthew 18:20.

Prayer and liturgy are central to the life of the school and form part of routine gatherings for pupils and staff. We offer a variety of different types of prayer and worship at St Augustine’s including: scripture; meditation; prayer; silence; reflection; song and liturgical music. Pupils participate in them by, for example, reflecting in silence, joining community prayer with confidence and singing readily.

Prayer naturally punctuates the school day through our Morning, Lunchtime and Evening prayers. Staff meetings always start with a time of prayer and reflection, and all those present are invited to share in whatever way they feel comfortable.

We endeavour to provide prayer and liturgy opportunities that are engaging, of a high quality and accessible and relevant to pupils. Staff are increasingly confident in supporting pupils to plan and lead well-constructed prayer and liturgy.

2.a. Timetable

An overview of the different types of worship we offer at St Augustine’s:

	Type	Place	Time	Leader	Evaluation
M	Gospel Worship	Hall	2.45pm	LW (chaplain)	Teachers on rota
T	Praise and Worship	Hall	2.30pm	CP/TC	OM (termly)
	Child-led Worship	Classrooms	3.00pm	Pupils	Pupils to evaluate in class
W	Class-led Worship	Hall	2.45pm	Classes on Rota	Chaplaincy Team: using evaluation station
T	Virtues Worship	Hall	2.45pm	Teachers on Rota	OM (termly)
F	Celebration Worship	Hall	2.45pm	JO/TC	

2.b. Planning

At St Augustine’s, liturgy is thoughtfully planned by both staff and pupils, depending on the type of worship taking place.

Liturgy is planned:

- ❖ with scripture as its focus
- ❖ using ‘let us pray’ resources where suitable
- ❖ with reference to the Church’s liturgical calendar
- ❖ linked to the RE ‘Come and See’ Curriculum where appropriate
- ❖ to include something to see, hear, think about and do, to ensure that it is inclusive and engaging
- ❖ to promote the ethos and mission of the school
- ❖ to develop pupils’ skills that enable them to prepare, organise and lead worship with increasing independence (See Appendix 1)
- ❖ with flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community

2.c. Delivering

Liturgy always begins with the Sign of the Cross. At Saint Augustine's, when we light the candle, the leader begins with 'Jesus is here' and we respond 'His spirit it with us'. This reminds us that Christ is at the centre of our faith and our Christian community. Acts of Worship are delivered with reverence and respect for the spiritual and liturgical content and, if appropriate, for the sacred spaces in which they are celebrated. Use of the altar or a prayer focus is encouraged.

A record of liturgy is maintained through:

- ❖ our online platform, Seesaw, where images, videos and comments are uploaded and shared with families
- ❖ a class worship journal which includes evidence of planning, leading and evaluating worships
- ❖ prayer spaces around the school
- ❖ our online platform, Padlet, where where images, videos and comments are uploaded as part of our evaluations

2.d. Evaluating

Pupils and staff are regularly invited to evaluate liturgy at St Augustine's. Evaluations remind us that it's important to pause and reflect on our current practice, and they support us in further developing our planning and delivery of liturgy.

Pupils evaluate whole school and classed-based worships with increasing independence, appropriate for their age and ability. This can take the form of:

- ❖ Verbal feedback as a whole class
- ❖ Written feedback on templates
- ❖ Verbal and written Padlet comments

Staff regularly evaluate whole school acts of worship using NDCYS formats, which are then used to inform future planning and delivery of whole school worships.

Families are invited to evaluate masses and liturgies when they attend. This can be verbally or with a written comment.

2.e. Liturgical Calendar

At St Augustine's, our opportunities for liturgy reflect the liturgical seasons. Pupils follow the liturgical calendar closely and use this to inform the themes when planning their own liturgies. Liturgies are celebrated and activities are planned to recognise relevant themes and significant events in the church calendar.

An example of these might include:

- ❖ Month of Mary: Rosary mission, Mary liturgy, Mary themed prayer spaces, Lectio Divina
- ❖ Lent: Lenten Prayer Club, Stations of the Cross, Laudato Si, Lent Retreat
- ❖ Advent: Advent Prayer Club, Advent liturgy, travelling crib, Advent Retreat

2.f. Mass

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers”. (Acts 2:42)

We recognise and revere the most Holy Sacrament of the celebration of the Eucharist. We believe it is central to our roles as being members of the Body of Christ and the redeeming life graces and blessings it provides.

We firmly believe in the importance of celebrating the Mass by:

- ❖ Providing opportunities for school and parish masses throughout the academic year
- ❖ Celebrating Mass at the key times of the school year to highlight special occasions (such as St Augustine’s Day)
- ❖ Attending and celebrating Holy Days of Obligation with the Parish

2.g. Enrichment

An addition to the routine opportunities for prayer and worship offered at St Augustine’s, we provide various enrichment opportunities.

For example:

- ❖ Prayer Area Activities
- ❖ Chaplaincy team activities
- ❖ Travelling crib
- ❖ Rosary Mission
- ❖ Stations of the cross
- ❖ Advent and Lent Retreat
- ❖ CAFOD National Assemblies
- ❖ Themed days, such as CAFOD’s ‘Family Fast Friday’
- ❖ Advent and Lent Prayer Club

2.h. Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy team is made up of a group of children from across the school who volunteer to assist in supporting the Liturgy and Catholic Life of the school. The Chaplaincy team is led by the School Lay Chaplain and Catholic Life Lead.

The Chaplaincy team have responsibilities within their classes, including assisting in planning and leading Worships, organising evaluations and evidencing liturgies appropriately. They are involved in planning and leading whole school liturgies during the school year, but especially during Advent, Lent and Eastertide. The Chaplaincy team are also involved in missionary discipleship projects and outreach work, such as George’s Food Hub.

3. Impact

3.a. Liturgy Monitoring

Monitoring of Liturgy across the school is completed by the Liturgy Lead in school. Monitoring activities include but are not limited to: liturgy observations; pupil interviews; staff questionnaires; prayer area monitoring; worship journal and SeeSaw 'book-looks'. Findings are recorded and analysed to inform next steps.

Monitoring of parent views are gathered through parent questionnaires. The designated Governor for Religious Education and Liturgy is to monitor the policy and practice of Liturgy within the school, and to liaise with the Head Teacher, Liturgy Leader and R.E. Subject Leader.

3.b. Policy Monitoring

This policy is monitored by the Liturgy Leader and designated Governor, and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole staff and Governors every two years.

3.c. The Right of Withdrawal

We expect all children to attend and participate fully in liturgy and Mass. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from attending religious worship and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child during this time. Parents do not have to explain or give reasons for this. This complies with the 1944 Education Act and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The Headteacher will maintain a record of all children who withdraw from Liturgy.

Appendices

- ❖ Appendix I: Liturgy Skills Progression