



**St Cuthbert's
Catholic High School**
Live life in all its fullness

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

2023-2026

Person responsible for Policy:	Curriculum Leader RE /Senior Leadership Team
Committee responsible for Policy:	Ethos
Date To Governors:	November 2023
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Review Due:	September 2026 and every three years thereafter
Is this Policy to appear on school website:	Yes

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Our Mission

St Cuthbert's is a Catholic High School, in which students, staff, governors and friends will work together as a Christian family to live the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ to love God and our neighbour (Mark 12:29-31) by:

- learning to know and accept the love of God by the way we treat each other and work together (Matthew 7:12)
- respecting and embracing all cultures and recognising that as individuals we are unique (Genesis 1:26)
- developing the gifts, talents and aspirations of all students and staff (Matthew 25:14-30)
- providing the best education for all students and helping them to **live life in all its fullness** (John 10:10)
- accepting the support of those in our community who work for the good of the school (Luke 10:25-37)
- reaching out to those who need our help in our world (Mark 1:39-42)
- protect and take pride in all aspects of our environment so that we become stewards of God's creation (Psalm 8)

Our Vision

A vibrant community, uniquely created by God, which embraces everyone, especially those in need and celebrates difference. Enabled by a staff, dedicated to our Catholic ethos and a culture of excellence, our young people will be inspired to know more, and be more.

Our Core Values based on Gospel Values

Courage

Commitment

Compassion

Community

School Motto

Life in all its fullness. This comes from John 10:10 'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.'

Rationale and Methodology

'I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.' John 10:10

Saint Cuthbert's is more than just a school. We are a very special community; which has Christ at its centre. As a Catholic school our core values are rooted in the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. The work entrusted to us is to help each person to recognise their dignity as a child of God and to reach their full potential. Our school motto comes from John 10:10 where Jesus says, 'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.' Our purpose is to ensure that each of our young people can live happy, successful and fulfilled lives both now and in the future.

'Every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth. ' – Pope Francis.

Part of our mission as a Catholic community is to ensure that students encounter Jesus, the living God. They encounter God in many ways in our school but one important way is through the opportunities we provide for prayer and liturgy.

Each student is on their own faith journey and we journey beside them. We aim to meet students where they are and encourage them to ask questions about their own purpose and faith. We recognise each student as made in the image of God, all with different starting points, gifts and qualities. The opportunities we provide allow students to experience a wide variety of prayer experiences which are always age appropriate, well planned, engaging and relevant. As well as deepening their own faith students explore the beliefs of others and gain a deeper connection with the school and global community, they are a part of. As a part of our prayer and liturgy program students are challenged to put their faith into action and apply what they experience to the world around them. Students are tasked with living out Catholic Social Teaching, making a contribution to society and a difference to the lives of their neighbours.

As a school we give priority to prayer and liturgy when setting budgets, allocating resources, appropriate and dedicated spaces and time for staff and pupils to prepare, reflect and join in.

Legal 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"**.

Aims

Collective Worship within St Cuthbert's offers opportunities to:

- † consider and celebrate the values of the gospel
- † offer opportunities for reflection, meditation and prayer
- † experience the sacred and to develop an awareness of the presence of God in others and in oneself
- † encourage an awareness of and a compassion for the needs of the world community
- † foster a sense of joy awe and wonder in all creation
- † affirm and develop the individual and to build and encourage community
- † develop a sense of enquiry and to encourage a search for human meaning
- † explore social, moral and spiritual values in a cultural context
- † support students and staff on their personal spiritual and religious journey

Provision

Formal Prayer and Liturgy

The purpose of formal prayer and liturgy is bring staff, students and the wider community together to celebrate the sacraments and important events within the liturgical year.

These events are planned by Mrs McDonagh - CL of RE and Strategic Lead of Catholic Life along the RE team, other school staff, Fr. Swanson, the Year 11 Senior Team and student Chaplaincy Leaders.

Prayer and worship can take place with classrooms, the school Sport's Hall, the Chapel, the Drama Theatre, in other places within the school grounds and within local parish churches.

The styles and types of prayer and liturgy offered ensures a wide range of engaging and creative experiences of the breadth and richness of the Catholic tradition.

Where and when formal prayer and liturgy takes place

- Staff briefings
- For staff at 8.05 on Fridays in the school chapel
- Year 11 Leaver's Mass
- A whole school thanksgiving Mass is celebrated at the end of each academic year
- Year 7 Mass of Welcome at the beginning of the academic year to welcome students into the St. Cuthbert's family
- Voluntary Mass is celebrated in the chapel during Lent, Advent, on St. Cuthbert's Day and other holy days of obligation
- Year 7 celebrate class masses as a part of their induction into our school community

- Ash Wednesday service
- Liturgies are celebrated in year groups for Christmas, Holy Week and Easter
- Opportunities for Reconciliation during Advent and Lent
- Program of prayer experiences for form groups held in the chapel during form time
- Christmas Carol Service for the wider community
- Remembrance Day service by the school memorial garden

Invited visitors and families

- Prayers, reflections and Sunday Gospel readings are shared on the school website to encourage families to pray at home and take part in the prayer life of school.
- Governors and other members of the community and parishes are invited to share in some of our celebrations e.g. whole school end of year thanksgiving Mass, Christmas Carol Service, etc.

Form time prayer and liturgy

Our form time prayer is known as Sacred Time. Sacred Time is held every morning during form time.

Our Sacred Time follows a schedule of themes which are linked to the Sunday Gospel reading and the Liturgical Calendar. The themes are planned and shared by Mrs McDonagh. The prayer theme of the week is shared throughout the school via the student information screens located throughout the building.

Resources

All staff are given the themes at the beginning of the year. Staff are also provided with the Gospel reading of the week, an explanation of the theme and reading and links to any other relevant topics or events.

There is a planned Sacred Time resource for each day of the week which is shared with staff through the school computer system and via the school website. All of these resources are provided by Mrs McDonagh. Staff are encouraged to create and share their own resources too. This means that staff can utilise their own gifts and ensure that the acts of worship are appropriate to their own form group. Formal Catholic prayers and traditions e.g. Lord's prayer, May the month of Mary, November the month of remembrance, etc. are embedded within the weekly resources and prayer themes. Prayer resources use a wide variety experiences like meditation, Lectio Divina, videos, songs and opportunities for students to write their own thoughts and prayers. Prayer resources are current and relevant so that all students regardless of where they are on their faith journey can access them. Prayer resources link to international and national events e.g. Anti-bullying Week, Remembrance Day, International Day of Peace, Black History Month, etc.

Collective Sacred Time

On each day of the week one year group has a thirty-minute act of worship in the Drama Theatre. Each of these acts of worship is led by a member of staff or visiting speakers and follows the school calendar of themes. No notices or year group business is done during these times. Students enter/leave the Drama Theatre in silence and begin/end by making the sign of the cross.

Sacred Time in form

A Sacred Time bell is rung at 8.50 each morning which signals the start of this special time. This time is dedicated solely to Sacred Time so no notices and meetings take place once the bell has rung. Sacred Time begins with the sign of the cross. Form tutors have the responsibility to ensure that Sacred Time is done correctly and that a prayerful atmosphere is created. Form tutors may lead sacred time or may select students to lead. The Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Year lead some Sacred Times within form sessions.

Student Involvement

Students are encouraged to take an active part in the planning and delivery of acts of worship both in Collective Sacred Time and in form groups.

- The Year 11 Senior Team plan and lead at least one week of collective Sacred Time.
- Other groups of students plan and lead Collective Sacred Time on occasions e.g. The Equality and Diversity Group, The Youth SVP group, History Leaders, etc.
- The Year 11 Senior Team deliver some form Sacred Time form sessions.
- Students lead acts of worship by performing dance, drama or music. They also read scripture readings and prayers during services.

Chaplaincy Leaders

These are a group of students that apply for this prestigious role within school. They come from different year groups within school. Students submit an application form at the beginning of the year. Once appointed as Chaplaincy Leaders they are presented with a badge in front of their year group.

- The Chaplaincy Leaders plan and deliver Sacred Time for forms in chapel or within their form rooms.
- The Chaplaincy Leaders also plan and deliver prayer time in the Chapel on a Thursday lunchtime which is open to all students.
- Chaplaincy Leaders assist in the planning of Masses and other liturgies.
- They take on key roles during services e.g. welcoming students, readers, etc.

Access to Sacramental Programmes

- St. Cuthbert's supports the Archdiocese of Liverpool in preparing students for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Animate Youth are invited into school annually to help educate students about the meaning and importance of Confirmation.
- The RE programme of study covers the theology of Confirmation in year 8.
- Information about Confirmation and how to enroll is sent home to parents and is available on the school website.

Retreat Programme

- Year 8 have the opportunity to go to Savio House on retreat.
- Year 10 have the opportunity to go on retreat to Rome.
- Chaplaincy Leaders and members of the chaplaincy group go on retreat in the Summer term.
- Year 10 and year 11 students are encouraged to take part in the Diocesan pilgrimage to

Lourdes, supporting elderly and infirm members of our community. The school assists in fundraising efforts to help support travel costs, etc. A member of the Lourdes team visits school annually to advertise the pilgrimage to our young people.

Drop down experiences

St. Cuthbert's Values Day

During the Summer term St. Cuthbert's celebrates our annual Value's Day. This day celebrates our school mission and reminds us all how we can live out the teachings of Jesus through our school values. Students have the opportunity to take part in different workshops and meet different speakers, charities and visitors. They day finishes with the celebration of a whole school mass.

St. Cuthbert's Day

St. Cuthbert's feast day on the 20th March is celebrated annually in school. There is the opportunity to attend Mass at lunchtime and there is a whole school liturgy and celebration that reminds us why St. Cuthbert is a role model and how we can follow his example.

The Chapel

The chapel is an important sacred place that is at the heart of our community which is open to all.

- Chapel is used at lunchtime for our Chaplaincy Groups. Our school Equality and Diversity Group, Youth SVP and Chaplaincy Leaders meet and run activities in the chapel weekly.
- Drop-in prayer sessions for students are held in the chapel during Thursday lunchtime.
- The chapel is used for form Sacred Time, Mass and other acts of worship.
- Staff reflection is held in the chapel on Friday morning at 8.05am.
- The Chapel is also utilised for 1-1 sessions with students as well as small group interventions.
- The chapel is available every lunch and afterschool for anyone that wishes to use it for private prayer and reflection. The chapel has a place for prayers to be left and worry prayer box.

Staff Training

- ITT trainees and new members of staff receive CPL sessions on Catholic Life which includes information about prayer and liturgy.
- CPL sessions are provided for all staff as a part of the whole school CPL calendar.
- A Formation Inset Day is held for staff annually.
- The RE Department are always available to provide guidance and support for staff with regards to Catholic Life, prayer and liturgy.
- A small library for prayer and liturgy resources is available for staff and students in the Chapel.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Prayer and Liturgy

- Prayer and liturgy is monitored through termly learning walks and drop-ins by SLT, Heads of Year and CL of RE and is part of the school's annual review cycle.
- Student Voice, Parent and Carer Voice and Staff Voice surveys are conducted at regular intervals to provide indications for further improvement.
- Prayer and liturgy training and resources are provided as part of the induction process for new staff.