



St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy

Mission Statement

St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is a Lasallian community where we empower all to follow in the footsteps of John Baptist de la Salle with faith that we are in the presence of God.



Together we strive to nurture and develop each other to fulfil our God given talents and potential so we can change our world for the better.

We are a caring, inclusive Catholic family where all belong and are loved. Respect, social justice and service to others is at the heart of what we do as we teach minds, touch hearts and transform lives

Newman Catholic Collegiate

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

“Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God.”

St John Damascene

Our Mission

St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is part of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and a member of the Newman Catholic Collegiate, under the patronage of St. John Henry Newman. Our priority is to help students to know Jesus Christ, his mission and his Gospel, which forms our way of living. Our vision for the Collegiate is summed up in the words **“Growing together for life”**.

Our school is a Catholic school, founded on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the teachings of the Catholic Church. Specifically, St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy, is a Lasallian Associate school, we strive to follow in the footsteps of our Patron St John Baptiste De La Salle. This policy document should be considered in the light of our School Mission Statement which underpins our work.

St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is a caring, Catholic, Lasallian school community and we teach our children that everyone is made in the image and likeness of God. We aim to foster an awareness and understanding of the presence of God in each individual child’s life and to encourage a personal response to that presence.

We believe that Christian worship in a Catholic school is concerned with giving praise, thanks and reverence to God. It is our loving response, in word and action, to God’s invitation to enter into communion with Him, made possible through the human and divine work of Jesus Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer and Liturgy, however, should also be used as a vehicle to promote the teachings of the scriptures, consider how to care for and respect our environment, recognise our God-given gifts and talents and understand how to live as Christians in love and peace, by valuing the diversity and unity of humankind, through loving tenderly, acting justly and walking humbly in the footsteps of Christ.

'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.)

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.

At St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy the responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy rests with the Governing Body; however, in the life of the school, it is predominantly led and managed by the RE team (including the Principal, the PICCL, Lay Chaplain and Head of RE), with each staff member and child taking some ownership and responsibility for prayer and liturgy (See appendix A for responsibilities).

Rationale

Prayer and liturgy will be an educational and spiritual experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. At St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy, we will continue to foster and deepen our children's personal relationship with God our Father daily in prayer. We do this by helping them to become aware of God's presence in their lives and of His love for them, by leading them to respond to Him in a manner suited to their age. This may be in one of the following ways:

- Prayer of silence
- Spontaneous prayer

- Praying through gesture or action
- Formal prayer
- Guided meditations

Prayer will not be confined to an act of worship. Children are encouraged to pray in the morning and in the evening. Worship in St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition and faith system.

The Aims of Prayer and Liturgy

We believe that Prayer and Liturgy in our school aims to provide opportunity for all pupils and staff:

- To contemplate the mystery and transcendence of God
- To reflect on spiritual, moral and ethical issues
- To explore, reflect upon and act on their own beliefs
- To respond to and celebrate life
- To experience a sense of belonging and develop community spirit
- To develop a common ethos and shared Christian values
- To enrich religious experience
- To develop a liturgical understanding of the Catholic Church's context and structure
- To teach the meaning and purpose of prayers that are part of the Catholic tradition
- To take a full and active role in Prayer and Liturgy
- To value the wonder and awe of God's creation

All acts of Worship in this school will:

- Give glory, honour, thanks and praise to God
- Be a spiritual experience, fundamental to the life of the school and its Catholic, Lasallian character
- 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.
- Be appropriately paced and offer a range of spiritual and reflective experiences offered in a variety of groupings and settings.

A Worshipping community

St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is a worshipping community: we place prayer, worship and liturgical celebration at the very heart of our expression of Catholic tradition. We actively strive to provide a varied experience of worship and to promote engagement through the creative contributions of both pupils and staff.

We understand that, through prayer and liturgy, we can develop our relationship with God and we can talk to Him in many ways. Therefore, it is our duty to provide every child with the opportunity to meet God through engagement in the spoken word, music, dance, drama, art and through silent reflection. We particularly value opportunities to nurture pupils in leading prayer and liturgy and developing prayer experiences of their own making.

We realise that, as one “instrument” of the Church, we cannot achieve this in isolation and therefore need to encourage a collaborative partnership between the home, the parish and

the school. We recognise that each of these groups has a responsibility to fulfil its role and seek to support parents in this mission.

We believe that prayer and liturgy should take into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those that 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, or none
- Those from other faith backgrounds

Linking Home-School-Parish

Parents are acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their child. They are invited to attend Mass and other liturgical celebrations, as appropriate. Emphasis is placed on helping them to understand the vital role they can play in teaching their children the importance of worship and developing the prayer life of their children.

Overview of prayer and liturgy provision at St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy

In addition to the formal prayer times throughout the school day (Line up, assembly or Fidei time), prayer and worship is an integral part of the day at St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy and is not separated from the rest of school life. Pupils all share in this important aspect of our daily experience. Children have a natural aptitude for prayer and are open to God. They respond in many ways to the world around them and their experiences at school should be full of opportunities for exploration and discovery. Teachers create an environment where these responses are developed, in recognition that they can form the beginnings of prayer. To this end, each classroom has a prayer box that reflects the liturgical season.

The prayer and liturgy coordinator is responsible for producing an Annual Plan of Provision (APoP) before the start of each academic year. The APoP outlines the structured approach through which our Catholic school nurtures its spiritual identity and implements its faith-based mission. This document integrates the school's commitment to Catholic education by detailing the planned programme of liturgical celebrations, prayer initiatives and faith-based events. It aligns with the academic calendar to coordinate whole-school Masses, classroom prayer practices, liturgical training for students, and collaborative activities with the parish community. The APoP serves as a transparent roadmap, specifying timelines, responsibilities, and collaborative roles of staff, pupils, and parents in fostering an environment where Catholic values are lived and taught.

Each fortnight pupils participate in:

- † A Gospel-based Celebration of the Word assembly to enable all pupils to access and reflect upon the weekend readings.

- † Pupil prepared prayer based on their own intentions, feast days (including Saints), liturgical season and prepared by pupils with the support of relevant staff (See appendix B for progression in pupil prepared prayer).
- † Daily opportunities for prayer in Fidei.
- † Lasallian values reflection and activity sessions.
- † The opportunity to attend Voluntary Mass.

Planning

Prayer and liturgy at St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy is planned following a structure with reference to the Church's seasons, significant liturgical dates and the curriculum. Each act of Prayer and Liturgy follows a 4-part structure:

- 1) Gather
- 2) Word or listen
- 3) Respond
- 4) Send or Go forth

Staff and children are expected to follow this format and are encouraged to record this on the planning sheet (appendix C).

- Scripture will be the focus for most acts of worship
- Prayer and Liturgy will relate to the school community in the light of the school's charism and mission and the liturgical calendar.
- There will be flexibility to respond to changing situations within the school and the wider community.
- The school will aim to teach children the skills to enable them to prepare and evaluate worship.

Mass and the Eucharist

The Mass is the source and summit of the life of the Church. The Mass, also known as the celebration of the Eucharist, is the most important action of the Church and from its celebration, the life of the Church flows. It is important therefore that the Mass is celebrated worthily and well.

Opportunities for children to participate in the Mass are given regularly parents are invited to attend.

Eucharistic celebrations will take the following forms:

- Staff Mass at the start of the academic year.
- Voluntary Mass once a fortnight
- Year group Masses across the academic year
- St Margaret Ward Day Mass in the summer term
- Our school also takes representatives to the Chaplaincy Commissioning Mass, the annual North Staffordshire Combined Schools Mass, Good Shepherd's Mass and the Deanery Vocations Mass and will take up opportunities to have an active involvement in these Masses.

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. Any 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.

Resources are monitored by SLT and the Lay Chaplain and new resources are ordered, within the budget, where required. Each class has several artefacts for their prayer box such as crucifixes, statues, candles, rosary beads, statues, bibles etc.

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.

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.

Termly and annual monitoring schedules are completed and reviewed by the PICCL and Lay Chaplain with input from SLT where required. Monitoring and evaluation of prayer and liturgy takes place in a variety of ways: Worship walks, formally and informally monitoring prayer and liturgy, pupil interviews and evidence of reflections on worship.

Termly meetings with the link governor, Roisin Maguire, are scheduled and minutes from these meetings are reported and shared with the Principal, local governing body and Board of Directors. Actions from the previous minutes are discussed at the following meeting to ensure progress and impact.

The school's provision for prayer and liturgy is evaluated annually to consider how it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school.

The PICCL, may evaluate the quality of prayer and liturgy in the school by conducting informal evaluations, with the permission and consultation with staff members throughout the school year. Staff are always invited to observe senior leader's assemblies, Celebrations of the Word and prayer times as good practice.

Inclusion and equal opportunities

All children at St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy have a right to be included in accessible prayer and liturgy unless withdrawn at parental request. Inclusion of all is a

cornerstone of Catholic belief and of our own school mission statement. Prayer and liturgy should play an active role in developing an inclusive attitude in the children themselves.

Health and safety

It is the responsibility of class teachers to follow school health and safety procedures.

Lighted candles should only be used under adult supervision during Masses and acts of worship and a safety lighter should be safely stored away from children.

Fidei tutors should use battery operated candles in class, but real candles should be used at Mass.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

This policy was agreed by the Directors in September 2025

This policy will be reviewed September 2028

Signed _____ (Chair of the Board of Directors).

Appendix A

Roles and Responsibilities

Governance

The governors, 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.

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.

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.

Appendix B

The Newman Catholic Collegiate Progression in pupil prepared prayer and liturgy

	Preparation	We gather	We listen	We respond	We send	Notes
EYFS		<p>Children to begin to lead daily prayers- 2 x prayer leaders who can begin the sign of the cross.</p> <p>Prepare the prayer table with the cloth to match the liturgy session and choose objects to match the theme of the liturgical season/theme of the prayer or liturgy.</p>			 Go Forth	
KS1	<p>Children to use Let Us Pray proforma and resources to plan and lead liturgies, facilitated by adult. Beginning of Yr1 onwards, all children to plan liturgies in groups,</p>	<p>Children to plan and prepare focal point for worship according to liturgical season or theme of the prayer/liturgy.</p> <p>Generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy.</p>	<p>If appropriate, choose readings to match the liturgical season or theme of the prayer/liturgy.</p>	<p>2 minute meditation facilitated by adult- children could start to lead the meditation by ringing a bell at the beginning.</p>	<p>As a class, plan the mission for children to go forth.</p> <p>Whole class to evaluate liturgy, recorded on proforma.</p>	

	facilitated by an adult.					
Lower KS2	Yr4 – Children to use Liturgical Calendar and Open Bible to support planning of class liturgies (if suitable).	Children to plan and prepare focal point for worship according to liturgical season or theme of the prayer/ liturgy being able to articulate reasons for choice. Generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy .	If appropriate, choose readings to match the liturgical season or theme of the prayer/ liturgy .	Plan their own way to respond. 3 minutes meditation led by anyone in class	Plan their own mission for children to go forth. Whole class to evaluate liturgy , recorded on proforma.	
Upper KS2	Children to use Liturgical Calendar to support planning of class liturgies . Children to use Open Bible online resource to select a reading linked to the theme provided on liturgical calendar. Children to then find the passage in Bible to add to their prayer focus. Children to generate	Children to plan and prepare focal point for worship according to liturgical season or theme of the prayer/ liturgy being able to articulate reasons for choice. Generate their own way of gathering to begin the liturgy .	If appropriate, choose readings to match the liturgical season or theme of the prayer/ liturgy . Plan how the reading will be shared – drama etc.	Plan their own way to respond. 3-4 minutes meditation prepared and led by anyone in class.	Individual/group evaluations of the Prayer/ liturgy with follow up of recommendation. Children are encouraged to give reasons for their responses and recommendations.	Children encourage active participants throughout. Child led worship in UKS2 to overseen by an adult, and guided only when necessary.

	their own gather, listen, respond and go forth according to the theme. They may use songs, actions, prayers, classroom resources within the liturgy .				
KS3	Pupils to generate their own gather, listen, respond and go forth according to a theme of their choice and record this on the planning sheet. They may use songs, prayers, photos, news articles, topical issues, issues concerned with social justice within the Prayer time.	Pupils plan and prepare resources for prayer. Powerpoint or handouts may be made. Pupils set out the prayer box and invite all to join in the Sign of the Cross together. The theme is explained by pupils	Appropriate readings to accompany the theme chosen will be chosen and read by pupils. They can be directed to the readings from the previous Sunday, or use Open.bible topical Bible to help select an appropriate reading for the theme.	An appropriate response will be generated by pupils. Silent questioning, focus on Lasallian values, examination of conscience, written response, etc	Pupils are encouraged to reflect on how their actions impact others and how they can be more Lasallian in their lives, students may decide on a weekly challenge to put the message of the assembly/prayer time into action.
KS4/5	Pupils to generate their own gather, listen, respond and go forth according to the theme of their choice	Pupils plan and prepare resources for the liturgy. Powerpoint or handouts may be made. Pupils set out the prayer	Appropriate readings to accompany the theme chosen will be chosen and read and explained by pupils. They can be	An appropriate response will be generated by pupils. Silent questioning, focus on Lasallian	Pupils are encouraged to consider how Lasallian values and CST allow us to engage with social justice issues and guide our decision making. Pupils to

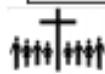
	<p>and record this on the planning sheet. They may use songs, prayers, photos, news articles, topical issues, issues concerned with social justice within the Prayer time.</p>	<p>box and invite all to join in the Sign of the Cross together. The theme is explained by pupils and the reason for choosing the them. What is the impact of this theme?</p>	<p>directed to the readings for the week, or use Open.bible topical Bible to help select an appropriate reading for the theme.</p>	<p>values, CST, examination of conscience, written response, etc</p>	<p>reflect on how to be young Lasallians and the benefits of this for the world. Students may decide on a weekly challenge to put the message of the assembly/prayer time into action.</p>	
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Appendix C

Pupil planning sheet

Pupil led Prayer Planning Sheet

Date of Prayer	Pupils Names	Year Group	Fidei Group



Part One: We come together as part of God's family

Things to consider:

- The environment (where will the prayer box be? How will the seats be laid out? Are the lights on or off? What resources do you need?)
- Starting prayer (will you start with the Sign of the Cross or introduce the theme first? Will you play music to settle everyone?)

gather



Part Two: God speaks to us and we listen

Things to consider:

- Readings (which Bible reading will you use? Will you include a prayer or a poem?)
- Who will lead the readings? Do you want your Fidei group to read anything or just silently reflect? Who will explain the readings to the group?
- Will you play music during this part of prayer?

Theme:

Resources:

Part Three: We respond to the Word of God

Things to consider:

- Participation (How will you encourage your Fidei group to reflect on what they have heard and seen?)
- Respond (How do you want your Fidei group to respond to the readings? Prayer, discussion, reflective questions or prayerful silence?)



discuss

Part Four: How we share the Good News

Things to consider:

- Taking the message further (How will you encourage your Fidei group to take the message forward into their day? Do you want your Fidei group to write anything down, make a pledge?)
- Mission (Will you give your Fidei group a prayer card, a challenge, a big question to consider or a task to complete?)



Be Part 5

Appendix D

Common Prayers

Age Phase	4-5 (EYFS)	5-7 (KS1)	7-9 (Lower KS2)	9-11 (Upper KS2)	11 – 14 (KS3)
Prayers	The Sign of the Cross The Lords Prayer Hail Mary	Morning Offering - KS1 Grace before meals – KS1 Grace after meals – KS1 Prayer at the end of the day – KS1 Glory Be	Morning Offering – KS2 Grace before meals - KS2 Grace after meals – KS2 Prayer at the end of the day – KS2 The Apostles' Creed An Act of Contrition Angel of God The Prayer of St Richard of Chichester Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love	The Rosary The Magnificat Come, Holy Spirit	The Benedictus The Angelus Hail Holy Queen The Memorare Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you Eternal Rest Diocesan Prayer for Vocations