



BLESSED DOMINIC CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School

Love Learn Believe



Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Date of Policy: September 2025

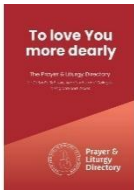
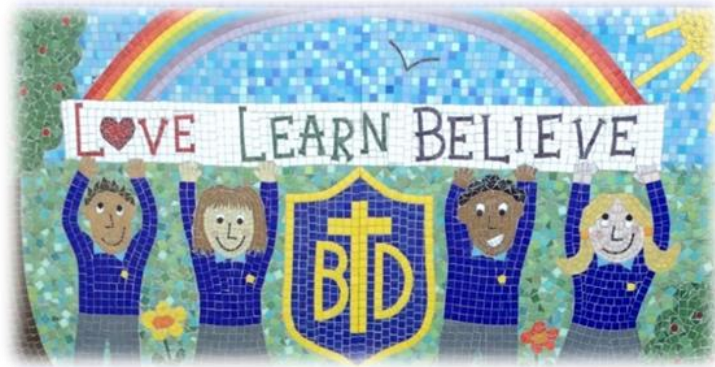
Next Review: September 2026



Mission Statement

At Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School, we pride ourselves on being a culturally diverse family. We seek to instil, in every child that we nurture, the joy and wonder of learning. As we journey together with Christ, we develop children's resilience, intellectual curiosity and creativity through our positive learning behaviours. We nurture and cherish the unique talents of all, empowering them to flourish and grow into life-long learners. Our mission is to show love, promote learning and belief in God our Father.

LOVE – LEARN- BELIEVE



This policy has been devised to be in line with 'To love You more dearly' which is the Prayer and Liturgy Directory for Catholic schools, academies and colleges in England and Wales. It is a document of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales.

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

At Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary School, we are committed to providing a daily act of prayer and liturgy, in line with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church. Prayer and Liturgy plays an integral part of daily school life and enables us all to come together as one school community in prayer and worship to God.



The law requires all maintained Catholic schools to provide an act of daily 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; 70 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)).

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) Governors

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.

(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. Definitions

Prayer – Prayer has been traditionally described as ‘lifting up of the hearts and minds to God’, which means it involves our whole person – our head as well as our heart. Communal prayer forms an essential dimension of life at Blessed Dominic.

Prayer in school happens daily and may include:

- Communal prayer,
- Traditional and spontaneous prayers such as intercessions,
- Opportunities for prayerful silence, reflection and mindfulness,
- Creative elements linked to the liturgical year,
- Catholic devotions such as the Stations of the Cross

Celebration of the Word – As the time allotted to prayer lengthens and the number of people involved grows, there is a corresponding need for more formal structures. The term ‘celebrations of the word’ is used in this Directory for celebrations which are created for the school community and not directly taken from the liturgical books of the Church. These celebrations will take many forms, but the common element is the proclamation of scripture. These include assemblies, carol services, and other gatherings of all or part of the school community for special times and occasions. They may draw upon elements of the liturgy, such as its texts, symbols, and gestures, which help to reinforce their Catholic



nature, but the various elements may be used with greater creative freedom than in the liturgy itself.

Liturgy - The most familiar forms of the liturgy celebrated in school are the Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The liturgical books, such as the Roman Missal and the Lectionary, set out the structure to be followed, the words to be spoken, the gestures to be performed, and the symbols to be used when celebrating a liturgy.

All prayer and liturgical experiences aim to deepen pupils' faith, reflect the Catholic identity of the school, and support spiritual development in an age-appropriate and engaging way.

5. Overview of Prayer and Liturgy provision

The structure we follow (PLD Section 7.2) which recurs across prayer and liturgy is one of call and response:

- **Gather** - how we come together, the setting, the environment (quiet/ reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc.);
- **Word or listen** - a reading from the Scriptures (or another suitable source), breaking the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;
- **Response** - a ritual movement that everyone can join in with that fits with the theme (gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers, etc.);
- **Send or mission** - the sending out from the celebration, giving the children something to hold onto from the experience of the liturgy that they can take into their daily lives.

Prayer

As part of our Catholic faith life, prayer are woven into daily class routines and key school events which can be led by any member of the school community. Prayers offer children the opportunity for spiritual contemplation and should be reverent, respectful and prayerful.

As the children move up the school from EYFS to Year 6, the prayers they learn develop and help to deepen their understanding of the power and spiritual enrichment attributed to daily worship.

The progression of prayers takes into account where texts are introduced in the RE Curriculum Directory.



EYFS	KS1	LKS2	UKS2
The Sign of the Cross Morning Prayer Grace Before Meals Afternoon Prayer Mission Statement (sentence)	The Lord's Prayer Hail Mary Glory Be Grace After Meals Blessed Dominic School Prayer	The Apostles' Creed An Act of Contrition Angel of God Come, Holy Spirit The Prayer of Richard of Chichester	Morning Offering The Rosary The Magnificat Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love Nicene Creed

At Blessed Dominic, we pray three times every day through our Morning Prayer, Grace before Meals and Afternoon Prayer. Children are given regular opportunities to reflect and pray quietly for the own intentions. All children are encouraged to lead using their own prayer. Each week a child will write their own prayer to share with their class supporting children to connect with God and one another. Each RE lesson begins with a prayer or reflection to encourage the children to develop a sense of reverence and relationship with God.

We also regularly pray our Blessed Dominic School Prayer which was created to mark the school's 50th anniversary:

Heavenly Father, please help all members of our school family to:
Believe in you and one another
Love and learn together
Extend and deepen our personal belief
Stay true to our faith
Study hard everyday
Enjoy and appreciate our learning using it to unlock doors contributing to future success
Delight in being part of a special and diverse community and follow in the footsteps of your servant
Blessed Dominic, whose mission was to show LOVE, promote LEARNING and BELIEF in God our Father.
Amen

The school motto, mission statement and key prayers are displayed in every classroom. The displayed prayers include the Morning Prayer, Grace before Meals, Afternoon Prayer, Hail Mary, The Lord's Prayer and the Blessed Dominic School Prayer. Other prayers may be displayed linked to the progression of prayers for each phase.

Prayer Spaces



Each classroom has a focal prayer table and RE area that reflects the liturgical season colours. They may also reflect other liturgical events such as Remembrance (red), Mary (blue) etc. Prayer tables include a candle, Bible, statues, Rosary beads and other artefacts linked to the liturgical year. A crucifix and image of Our Lady is visible in the classroom. Classes may also have a box/book for children to offer prayers. Children are encouraged to spend time in this area and take ownership of the space. Beside the prayer area there is a collection of books linked to RE, prayer or the saints that the children can access easily.

Children also have regular opportunities to visit the prayer garden dedicated to Our Lady and have opportunities during break and lunch times for visit the prayer garden for their own private reflections. Staff model the expectations of reverence and respect within prayer spaces.

Prayer Reflections and Services

During the months of October and May, the Mini Vinnies lead lunchtime prayer worship dedicated to Our Lady where children are invited to learn and recite a decade of the Rosary.

At the start of every week, the staff gather together and begin the week in prayer in order to reinforce our mission as educators to not only educate the mind, but the heart and soul in light of the Gospel. To support staff in being role models in leading prayer, all staff and Governors meetings begin with prayer.

Celebration of the Word

A Celebration of the Word is a period of calm reflection. Children are encouraged to be quiet and thoughtful, to listen, reflect and meditate upon the teachings and the signs and symbols which are used to encourage their full participation in the prayers, readings, stories songs and hymns which they will hear. The fundamental structure is one of call and response: God who speaks and we who listen and respond.

Daily Act of Worship		
	EYFS/KS1	KS2
M o n d a y	KS1 Phase Assembly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class led: Prayer linked to subject of assembly (Autumn and Summer terms) – parents invited • Teacher led: Gospel reflection, Catholic Social Teaching principles, Saints’ days, link to themes from unit of work 	Mindful Monday Christian meditation, prayer journal reflections, liturgical season prayers, opportunities for spontaneous prayer intentions (home-school prayer book)



T u e s d a y	<p>Teacher Led Celebration of the Word Prayer, Saints' days, reflection (current events), teaching of new prayers, special intentions, Mass responses, mindfulness (meditation, journaling, prayer maze), Bible readings, liturgical reflections etc.</p>	<p>Teacher Led Celebration of the Word Prayer, saints day, reflection (current events), teaching of new prayers, special intentions, Mass responses, mindfulness (meditation, journaling), Bible readings, liturgical seasons etc.</p>
W e d n e s d a y	<p>Wednesday Word</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-teaching of Wednesday Word (words, teachings etc.) • Meditation/mindfulness based on the Gospel • Big question based on the Gospel 	<p>KS2 Phase Assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class led: Prayer linked to subject of assembly (Autumn and Summer terms) – parents invited • Teacher led: Gospel reflection, Catholic Social Teaching principles, saints days, Wednesday Word reflection, link to themes from unit of work
T h u r s d a y	<p>Pupil Led Celebration of the Word</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually/small group led using toolkit supported by class teacher/teaching assistant • Pupil evaluation 	<p>Pupil Led Celebration of the Word</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually/small group led using toolkit for support • Prepared independently – in small groups or at home with families • Pupil evaluation (written or recorded)
F r i d a y	<p>Whole School Assembly Gospel and celebration focus</p>	<p>Whole School Assembly and Hymn Practice Gospel and celebration focus</p>

In addition to the above, parents are invited to attend a pupil-led Celebration of the Word once a term in classrooms.

Assemblies

Assemblies are an opportunity for the school community to come together to pray, celebrate and reflect on God's word. On Mondays (KS1) and Wednesdays (KS2), each class leads an assembly in the Autumn and Summer terms where parents are invited to attend. Assemblies will include a prayer reflection or hymn related to the theme of the assembly, which is often linked to the learning that is taking place within the class. Teacher-led assemblies will often link to Saints' days, special intentions or Catholic Social Teaching principles. This allows the school community to come together as one to experience a range of prayerful opportunities.

Gospel and Celebration assemblies are led by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or special visitors (such as the Catholic Children's Society). Each assembly carries a spiritual message for the children to reflect upon and incorporate into their own lives. Assemblies follow the liturgical year and are based on the week's Gospel reading. They may also be used to focus on current issues and initiatives involving the whole school.



Prayer and Celebration of the Word Services

To mark the beginning of Advent, the school gathers together for an Advent Service where each class presents their Advent promises. Each child makes a simple, faith-filled commitment to prepare their heart for the coming of Jesus. Throughout the season of Advent, the children will reflect on their promise during the Friday assembly as a new candle on the Advent Wreath is lit. Nursery, Reception and KS1 each perform a Nativity service where other children and parents are invited to join to celebrate and prepare for Christmas. In UKS2, children lead an evening Carol Service at St Margaret Clitherow Church to retell the birth of Jesus through Scripture readings, music, drama and prayer.

Like Advent, each child creates a Lenten promise to mark the start of the liturgical season of Lent. Each child makes a promise based on the three pillars of Lent (almsgiving, prayer and fasting) to grow closer to God through prayer, sacrifice and good works. Through Lenten services, pupils reflect on their lives, seek forgiveness and start again with a renewed heart. To mark the end of Lent, LKS2 perform a Passion Service following the Stations of the Cross through Scripture, reflections, music and prayer. UKS2 children and parents are invited to attend this reverent service.

Throughout the year, to mark important events in the Church's liturgical year, we hold special Celebrations of the Word such as Harvest and Remembrance. In May, the school gathers as a community for a May Procession to honour Our Lady which is led by the school choir. As a school we take time to recognise and remember Mary, Mother of Jesus, as a role model for how we should live our lives with humbleness and compassion.

Pupil-led Celebration of the Word Services

Each week, children have the opportunity to plan their own Celebration of the Word service to lead with their class. In KS1, pupil-led Celebration of the Word should be initially supported by the class teacher and/or teaching assistants. Children work with an adult to plan and prepare their Celebration of the Word to then be delivered the following morning with the whole class. Year 2 begin to transition to pupil-led planning in the Spring term and Year 1 in the Summer term.

In KS2, the first Celebration of the Word is planned as a whole class supported by the class teacher to create a modelled example. Each week a different child brings home the class Celebration of the Word book to plan with their families. Children are given time to prepare their resources prior to the Celebration of the Word taking place.

Class teachers oversee children's planning, whilst supporting and encouraging pupils to share and develop their role.

Hymn Practice

On Fridays, LKS2 and UKS2 gathers together to sing songs of praise to God and practise liturgically appropriate hymns and songs that we use for Celebrations of the Word and Mass. This is led by the Music Leader and supported by a Class Teacher and Teaching Assistants.



Liturgy

School Masses are held in the school hall or at the Parish Church of St Margaret Clitherow and celebrated by the Parish Priest, Father Brian. The themes of these Masses reflect the Liturgical Year, including Holy Days of Obligation, as well as other special events in the school calendar such as the Beginning of the Year Mass and Year 6 Leavers' Mass. Catholic feast days and holy days are marked with reflective and joyful celebrations, ensuring that children understand the significance of the Church's liturgical year. Services for the Sacrament of Reconciliation are led by the Parish Priest and take place at the beginning of Advent and Lent. All children participate in the service with **pupils in Years 4 to 6** receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation after the service has taken place.

Where Mass is not celebrated for Holy Days of Obligation, a Celebration of Word service takes place instead. In England and Wales, the holydays of obligation are:

- Every Sunday
- Nativity of the Lord (25 December)
- Epiphany of the Lord (6 January*)
- Ascension of the Lord (Thursday after the Sixth Sunday of Easter)
- Saints Peter and Paul (29 June*)
- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (15 August*)
- All Saints (1 November*)

**According to a decision of the Bishops' Conference, when these particular holydays fall on Saturday or Monday, they are transferred to the Sunday.*

Throughout the year, various classes have the opportunity to lead Mass to contribute to readings, bidding prayers and the offertory procession, particularly the RE Council. Children also support Father Brian as altar servers during school masses.

Each term, all KS2 children visit St Margaret Clitherow Church to participate in a year group Mass led by Father Brian where parents and parishioners are able to attend. Children read the readings of the day and write their own bidding prayers. In the Summer term, Year 2 children also attend Mass.

Each year Blessed Dominic joins as a wider Diocesan community to celebrate Westminster Cathedral's Christmas Carol Concert.

6. Resourcing

Prayer and liturgy are central to our 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 enrich the prayer and liturgical life of the school.

7. 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. All staff members will receive ongoing support and training to ensure they are equipped to lead and support prayer and liturgy in the school. Regular professional development opportunities are provided through in-house CPD and Diocesan training to ensure staff understand the centrality of prayer and liturgy in a Catholic school and are confident in leading it.

8. Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy will take place regularly to ensure that they are engaging and meeting the spiritual needs of our pupils. Feedback from pupils, parents, staff, clergy and governors is used to identify areas for development and issues raised will be actioned and evidenced as appropriate in order to continually improve our provision for prayer and liturgy.

9. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

All staff follow our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies. Sensitive issues are handled with discretion, and children are always reminded that safeguarding concerns must be shared with trusted adults.

10. Equality and Inclusion



We believe every child is uniquely created by God. Our curriculum promotes respect, tolerance, and justice for all. Lessons are adapted to ensure full access for children with SEND and EAL, and are delivered in line with Catholic principles of human dignity.

11. Review

This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout our school. It will be reviewed annually with reference to the variety of experiences offered to our children. We will assess its relevance, implementation and effectiveness in supporting the spiritual development of our pupils. The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of policy review conducted by the governors and will involve consultation with key stakeholders, including the staff, governors and the wider school community.

This prayer and liturgy policy has been approved and adopted by the governing body on **[enter date]** and will be reviewed on **[enter date]**.

Signed by the Chair of Governors

Signed by the Headteacher

Linked Policies and Documents

[DOWES Prayer and Liturgy Directory](#)

[Progression of Celebration of the Word](#)

[Progression of Prayers](#)

[The Liturgical Year and Significant Dates 2025 - 2026](#)

[Celebration of the Word Toolkit](#)

[Celebration of the Word – Good Practice](#)

[DOWES Prayer, Liturgy and Worship](#)

[DOWES Planning Prayer](#)

[DOWES Planning Celebrations of the Word](#)

[DOWES Planning the Mass](#)

[DOWES Planning the Mass FAQ](#)



[DOWES Planning Liturgical Music for Mass](#)

RE Policy