



De La Salle School

Prayer & Liturgy Policy

De La Salle School is a Christian community, inspired by the vision and example of Saint John Baptist De La Salle, where each person is invited to become the person God intended him or her to be and to live a life of faith and love, following the example of Christ.

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“To touch the hearts of your students is the greatest miracle you can perform.”

“God expects you to touch hearts.”

St. John Baptist de La Salle Meditation 139.3 – on the Feast of St Peter

(This prayer and Liturgy Policy replaces our Collective Worship last written June 2023 and ratified by the Governing Body 6th July 2023)

Introduction

De La Salle School is a Catholic Community of staff, governors, students, and families enriched by our Lasallian heritage, traditions and values.

It is inspired by the vision and charism of St. John Baptist De La Salle.

Each person is invited to become the person God intends him or her to be. They are expected to live a life of faith and love, following the example of Jesus Christ.

Our mission is to work with all in our family community to:

- See each person in our community as an individual with their own talents, needs, hopes, dreams and aspirations.
- Provide a holistic education that challenges each of us to achieve our potential and become the person God intended us to be: spiritually, morally, academically, physically and socially.
- Walk side by side with our students to help them grow into confident, independent, kind, respectful and tolerant adults, with a strong sense of social responsibility, ready to make a valuable contribution to the world of tomorrow.
- Create a safe and supportive environment where those of all faiths, and none, can explore, share, discuss and celebrate their spirituality.

This policy is part of the foundation that enables everyone to aspire to become all that God has created us to be.

‘Every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth. ’

– Pope Francis.

Context

The celebration of Catholic Liturgies and prayers as an integral part of the learning and teaching should enable the school community to become reflective and experience the presence of God and develop a mature spiritual life.

Christ at the Centre, Mgr Marcus Stock (2012)

What do we mean by Prayer, Liturgy and Liturgical Prayer?

“Full conscious and active participation” in Liturgy is what the Church desires for all the faithful.

(Sacrosanctum Concilium 2 .14)

What is Liturgy?

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“Liturgy is always in the first place communion or fellowship with Jesus Christ. Every liturgy, not just the celebration of the Eucharist, is an Easter in miniature. Jesus reveals his passage from death to life and celebrates it with us.”

[1085 – YouCat - Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church]

Liturgy is a formal and prescribed act of the Church where people adore and express deepest respect for God. The word Liturgy means the work of people; therefore, Liturgy recognises the work of Christ done for his people and proclaims the Word of God in which people participate. God himself is the Word, His nature is to speak and dialogue with his people, a two-way conversation.

Liturgy is a ritual, symbolic and public action, it involves singing and drama, in which people hear the story of salvation. Furthermore, Liturgy is a living pattern given once for all in its essentials by Christ and his apostles. This tradition must be lived out through all the ages, not individually, but by a living community.

The Church desires that participation in the Liturgy should be full, meaning people engaged in body, mind and spirit; conscious, where people understand the meaning of what is happening; and active, so that people’s lives may be transformed as a result of the encounter with God in Liturgy.

Through Liturgy, what we are trying to do is to be more aware of God’s blessing in our lives, God’s work in our lives, and celebrate it.

In Liturgy, we who have been baptised are called to share in the priesthood of Christ, who has given us the example that we must copy.

What is Prayer?

Prayer is a conversation with God. This can be formal, such as the Lord’s prayer and/or the Hail Mary or less formal, giving room for creativity, such as hymn singing, praying with images and intercessions.

Prayer takes place every day in school, at the start of the day, at lunchtime people say quietly Grace before meals. At the end of lessons we invoke the blessing of our patron saint

The focus and format of prayer varies according to the liturgical calendar and theme of the week, providing opportunities for the students to engage in prayer.

What is Liturgical Prayer?

Liturgical Prayer follows structural patterns found in the liturgy and are created for the school community with the purpose of proclaiming the Word of God, as we celebrate it in the Liturgy of the Word at Mass.

The story of “The Road to Emmaus” found in Luke 24:13-35, gives the platform in which Liturgical Prayer is structured, -a four-pillar model called ‘Emmaus’: **GATHER** (Luke 24:15) – **LISTEN** (Luke 24:27) – **RESPOND** (Luke 24:30) – **MISSION** (Luke 24:33).

The most common examples of Liturgical Prayer are the weekly assemblies in year groups based on the theme of the week linked to the Liturgical calendar, the “Good News” at form time, staff prayer on inset days and specific reflection days such as National Day of Remembrance; Holocaust Memorial Day; Season of Creation; a school bereavement, a current circumstance happening in the community or anywhere in the world.

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Legal Requirements

The legal requirements for Collective Worship/Liturgy and Prayer are laid down in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

It states that collective worship/Liturgy and Prayer: *'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"*.

Roles & Responsibilities

What this policy means for everyone;

The Governing body:

- Ensures the Catholic ethos of the school is maintained to a high level
- Maintains an overview of the various forms of collective worship in the school by attending events from time to time and by meeting on a regular basis with the leadership team, and chaplain.
- Reviews the performance of the school against the Catholic Schools Inspection and the areas identified for development.
- Governors monitor and visit the school regularly to triangulate (via direct observation) what they hear from leaders and what they read in reports and survey results.

The Leadership team:

- Maintains the Catholic ethos so that it permeates across all aspects of the curriculum
- Ensures staff have access to appropriate support, guidance & training through Inset days and staff training.
- Oversees the planning and organisation of the activities required to fulfil Catholic Schools Inspection.
- Liaises with relevant staff to support the further development of Liturgy and Prayer where appropriate.
- Monitors and set targets each year for further development as required of the Catholic Schools Inspection.
- Updates the governing body on progress towards requirements of the Catholic Schools Inspection.

The Chaplain:

- Works with staff and students to plan and provide appropriate resources for all forms of liturgy and prayer as well as the general Catholic life of the school
- Liaises with local clergy to arrange for the sacraments to be celebrated in school and for any other relevant involvement.
- Maintains the upkeep of the school chapel
- Provides support to students to enable them to develop leadership skills in the various aspects of Liturgy and Prayer.

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- Liaises with outside agencies and the Diocese for updates and opportunities which will support the Gospel values of the school.
- Arranges other opportunities both inside and outside of school, for staff and students to gain experiences that help to develop their faith and put faith into action such as Flame.
- Support students in writing and leading prayers.

Progress leaders/Heads of Year:

- Ensure that tutor time prayers are being said regularly by their tutor teams as directed by the Chaplain and the Leadership team.
- Lead prayers in assembly as guided by the Chaplain.
- Encourage students to engage with the Catholic life of the school
- Monitor tutor prayers, and collective worship in assembly to make sure they take place in line with our prayer and liturgy policy.

Teaching and support staff:

- Help deliver, along with the Chaplaincy rep for the form, daily morning prayers in tutor times
- Accompany and supervise tutor groups throughout Liturgy and Prayer.
- Encourage students to join in prayer and liturgy

All staff:

- Engage in and support the Catholic ethos of the school.
- Conduct themselves in a Christian manner.
- Lead by example by participating in Liturgy and Prayer within the school.

Our objectives:

At De La Salle, we aim to create an environment in which students can develop as they mature in understanding their faith and their relationship with Jesus Christ, in such a way as to help them find purpose and meaning in their lives.

Prayer is a gift from God and is central to the life of the Christian. We seek to facilitate the growth of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by ensuring that prayer remains central to the life of the school and forms an integral part of each day for every student.

“The wonder of prayer is revealed beside the well where we come seeking water: there, Christ comes to meet every human being. It is he who first seeks us and asks us for a drink. Jesus thirsts; his asking arises from the depths of God's desire for us. Whether we realize it or not, prayer is the encounter of God's thirst with ours. God thirsts that we may thirst for him”.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2560)

To provide engaging and meaningful forms of prayer and worship, giving students positive liturgical experiences, appropriate to their age. With the aim of students and staff leading prayer.

To ensure that all forms of collective worship support the spiritual and religious aspect of students' development, informing and interrelating with their understanding of Catholic Social Teaching which is embedded across our academic curriculum.

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To involve and encourage all staff and students to become active participants in our prayer and liturgy, in ways which use their skills, talents, experiences and interests.

To provide regular opportunities to enable students and staff to engage in the sacramental life of the church.

How do we achieve our objectives?

Regular Prayer times	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Daily prayer and spiritual reflection takes place during morning registration, led either by the teacher and/or student(s)• The Chaplain will provide tutors with a daily prayer or reflection which is based around the liturgical calendar.• The Morning Prayer and staff handbook will contain common prayers such the Our Father, the Hail Mary and the Lasallian blessing.• During May and October; students are exposed to other Marian prayers such as Hail Holy Queen (Salve Regina) and the Memorare (Remember Most Loving Virgin)• From Easter 2024 and during the Easter Season The Regina Coeli is recited in each classroom at 12:15pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at De La Salle as a regular reminder during our work, for us to call to mind God's love for us and to respond to his call. At all other times The Angelus is recited.• Various forms of prayer and meditations take place in the Chapel in conjunction with the liturgical year, for example in May and October the Rosary will take place on Thursday lunch time in the Chapel.• KS3 Meditation happen once a half term again based around the Curriculum and/or liturgical season.• Staff briefings and other whole school staff gatherings will always begin in prayer.• All prayers in school and at the end of the lesson will end asking for the intercession of the patron, St John Baptiste de La Salle.• Students and staff, although welcome at any time, are invited to attend the chapel to pray together in times of bereavement or other occasions of particular need.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the Chapel • Senior leaders, lead prayer with students before exams.
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Year Group Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students will have a weekly year group Assembly in the school hall; One led by the Chaplain and the other led by their own Head of Year. These assemblies have spiritual/moral content, supplementing and including the daily prayer.
Celebration of Masses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We endeavour to have a weekly Mass. Where this is not possible, with the permission of the Dean we celebrate the Service of the Word with Eucharistic Distribution • All Holy Day Solemnities are celebrated with the celebration of Mass if during term time i.e. Solemnity Feast of All Saints/Epiphany of our Lord/The Ascension of our Lord/Ss Peter and Paul. • Although not a Holy Day we observe Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Holy Season of Lent with Mass and the distribution of Ashes. • Chaplaincy arranges a Welcome Mass at the start of Year 7. At that Mass we also commission our Student Leaders. Chaplaincy also arranges a Leavers Mass at the end of year 11. These are important occasions organised between pupils, heads of year, the school Chaplain and RE staff to ensure a memorable experience for those who are both joining and leaving us. • Although some staff and young people are from other Christian denominations and other faiths who cannot receive Holy Communion at the Masses, the school has always wished to involve them as fully as possible in all our liturgical services. All staff and young people are therefore encouraged to come forward during Communion to receive a blessing from the priest or Eucharistic Minister.

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<p>Other Liturgies and services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In November, we hold an annual memorial Mass for deceased members of the community (staff, support staff, students, former students) who have died. • A Carol Service is held during December, highlighting the importance of Advent as a time of preparation, to help members of our immediate and extended community prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ. • Stations of the Cross during Lent and the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent but also at other times of the year. • In May we celebrate our Founders Day with a regional Prayer Service which we contribute to and where available a priest to say Mass.
<p>Retreats</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retreat opportunities are offered for students whether in School or at other retreat centres such as Walsingham House and or Kintbury. • The chaplain works with local primary schools, delivering Year 6 retreat work. • A retreat/away day for staff takes place bi -annually.
<p>School Chaplaincy Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school Chaplain supports the Senior Leadership Team, the R.E. Department, Year Heads and Form Tutors in the school of the many areas of the liturgical life of the school. • The School Chaplain in turn is supported by team of Priests from the Deanery of South Essex and Diocesan and retired priests of the Diocese who assist in acts of worship when required, for example the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
<p>Student Chaplaincy Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every form is represented on the Chaplaincy Team.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students meet every two weeks and are trained up by the Chaplaincy team in different areas and ministries, such as Altar Serving, preparing prayers or as Readers, depending on their gifts and experience of service. • The school chapel is open before and after school, at break and lunch times. • Students are able to drop in as they wish. • The Chaplain is available in school at specific times to give advice, information and support as needed to both students and staff and the school lay Chaplain is available throughout the week • The Chaplain is available in the chaplaincy hut during break and Lunch Times.
Participation of Students and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At De La Salle, we fully respect the beliefs and traditions of students and staff of other denominations and faiths and will endeavour to facilitate any specific practices required of their faith during the school day in a way which respects their custom, where this is important to them. • As we live out Catholic social teaching and the teachings of Jesus, we believe every person has dignity and we make them feel welcome in our school.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a Catholic School we share some common values with other denominations and faiths, such as dignity of the human person, stewardship of creation, helping the poor and vulnerable, peace and justice and we actively encourage all students and staff to participate in any such activities which unite us as a community. • As a Catholic School we expect all staff to uphold the values and beliefs of Catholic teachings in their engagements and discussions with students, and where there is difficulty, to use the direction of the School Chaplain.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff and students to attend all forms of Liturgy and Prayer and actively participate, unless their own faith background prevents this. In such instances we expect staff/students to be present, but without taking part, and to be respectful to the faith of the school which they have chosen to join, or parents/guardians have chosen for them
Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prayer and Liturgy is essential to the school's understanding of itself as a Catholic School and this is reflected in the allocation of funds in the annual budget.
Training and Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new staff are supported during induction and beyond. There is also opportunity for whole staff professional development at least once a year so that all staff understand the importance of prayer and liturgy and staff are and feel well supported.
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 as issues raised actioned and evidenced as appropriate.

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