



# ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Version:	3
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Policy Review Date:	October 2025
Post Holder Responsible for Review:	RE Lead



**Commitment to Equality:**

We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.

This Prayer and Liturgy Policy has been approved and adopted by St Joseph's Catholic Primary School on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and will be reviewed in October 2025.

Signed by the Chair of the Local Governing Body for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School:

John Coyne



Signed by the Principal for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School:

Anthony Wilkes



## **School Mission Statement**

*In following the Gospel values of Jesus, we are called to love, to learn and to respect one another.*

### **Legal Requirements**

The legal requirement is that there must be a daily act of worship for all pupils. This can take place at any time during the school day and can be either a single act of worship for all pupils, or separate acts of worship in school groups. We understand that simply holding an assembly that includes a prayer, said by either the teacher or everyone present, does not fulfil this requirement. We also acknowledge that prayer and liturgy and assembly are distinct activities. They may sometimes form part of the same gathering. At St Joseph's, responsibility for arranging prayer and liturgy rests with the governing body after consultation with the Principal.

### **The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School**

We endorse the belief that prayer and liturgy takes into account the religious and educational needs of all who share in it:

- Those who 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.

It will be an educational activity or experience to which all can contribute and from which all can gain. Prayer and liturgy in this school is an integral part of school life and central to the Catholic tradition.

### **The Aims of Prayer and liturgy**

We believe that prayer and liturgy in our school community will provide a variety of opportunities to deepen our relationships with God and develop the following:

- contemplate the mystery of God;
- unite our worshipping Eucharistic community;
- develop the necessary skills of reverence, contemplation, reflection, interpretation, empathy, meditation which will enable our relationships with God to be deepened.
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Full participation in our faith will allow us:-

- To grow in spiritual, moral, cultural and liturgical understanding;
- To grow in understanding of our living faith tradition;
- To develop a sense of awe, wonder and inspiration in the person of Christ;

- To examine and reflect upon our own individual faith journeys;
- To develop the skills of prayer and our responses to it and being inspired into action, in line with our mission statement;
- To develop the skills to plan and lead our own acts of Liturgy.

### What is Prayer and Liturgy?

#### What is Prayer?

Prayer is conversation with God, the angels and the saints. Prayer should be experienced as a living relationship with God, in and through Jesus Christ. All forms of prayer are God's gift.

#### What is Liturgy?

Liturgy is a communal act in which we praise and worship God. Liturgy is the source and summit of the Church's life and our lives.

All good liturgies involve the telling of the story of Christ and his Church.

Liturgy is action and symbol; it speaks to the person, it involves all the senses: sight, touch, sound, taste and smell-as guided by the Holy Spirit.

### 4. The Place of Prayer and Liturgy in the Life of our School and Community

#### 4.1 Organisation of Prayer and Liturgy

An Act of Collective Worship, appropriate for the liturgical season, takes place each day and can be celebrated as a whole school, key stage or class.

Collective Worship throughout the week is usually organised as follows:

Monday Staff prayer Gospel Assembly Tuesday Musical Praise Hymn Practice  
Wednesday In-class collective worship- this can include phase/key stage  
collective worship Thursday Staff prayer Mass Friday Gifts of God Celebration

### Implementation

All acts of worship should:-

- Give glory and praise to God;
- Be structured to ensure a quality experience for all participants;
- Be kept to the point (and brief wherever possible);
- Be clear in their liturgical focus and varied in their delivery;

Gospel Assemblies take place in the hall on Mondays.

Class liturgy on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (Adult-led and child-led)

Meditation is on Thursdays (KS2 in the hall and KS1 in the classrooms)

Gifts from God are on a Friday.

Content will follow the Gospel teachings and the liturgical calendar.

Prayer and liturgy in our school may follow the pattern or variation of the pattern detailed below:-

**Gather** – bringing everyone together into the Holy Space; the setting, the environment (quiet/ reflective music, lighted candles, statues, sat in a different format, sign of the cross, focus and examination of conscience etc);

**Listen** – Sharing scripture to proclaim God's word (For example, by listening to a Scripture reading, breaking the word, time to reflect on this and prayers to fit into the theme;

**Respond** – Responding to God's word through prayer, action or song (gestures such as shaking hands, holding hands, lighting a candle, prayers, responses to prayers. For other examples, see Birmingham Diocesan Education Service's (Practical Prayer Ideas for the Classroom')

**Go forth** – sharing the message of the scripture for people to think about and act upon; 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.

There should be a sacred space (prayer table) in every learning room. This should be placed in a prominent position and reflect the current liturgical season. Sacred spaces should be clutter-free and be set up in a manner which inspires prayer.

During liturgy a prayer focal point should be created. For example, use of the Altar Table in the hall, appropriately dressed; or using the additional wooden tables in the classroom.

Pupils should develop the skills necessary to plan and lead collective worship with growing independence across the phases. This journey of progression is explicitly mapped out for our staff and pupils below.

Staff are expected to model high-quality prayerful acts of Collective Worship and then support and facilitate opportunities for pupils to plan and lead their own. See appendices for BDES planning templates and resource bank.

### **School progression of class liturgy**

#### **Reception**

Teacher to explicitly model high-quality in-class collective worship during Autumn 1. Using the child-led planning sheet (see Appendix 3), adults give children (whole class, group and/or individual) activities from each of the four elements (G, L, R, GF) to choose from, when they are ready. This increases throughout the year until children are choosing from all options and they begin to suggest their own activity ideas. Throughout the academic year, children become more confident/independent in creating the prayer focal point. This develops into being able to self-choose appropriate religious objects, including consideration of the liturgical season (with adult guidance) The teacher plans

and coordinates all Masses and class assemblies, distributing scripture, prayers etc. to children.

### **Year 1**

Using the child-led planning sheet (see Appendix 3), children (whole class, group and/or individual) choose activities from 2 or 3 elements (G, L, R, GF). Children are encouraged to suggest their own activities (adults could use the Practical Prayer Ideas for The Classroom booklet to inspire) so that by the Summer Term, they are confident in doing this mostly independently. The teacher plans and coordinates all Masses and class assemblies, distributing scripture, prayers etc. to children.

**Year 2** – Using the child-led planning sheet (see Appendix 3), children (whole class, group and/or individual) choose activities for each element (G, L, R, GF). Children are encouraged to suggest their own activities (adults could use the Practical Prayer Ideas for The Classroom booklet to inspire). Children lead all elements of the Collective Worship session as co-ordinated by an adult. Children should be given sufficient time to practise. The teacher plans and coordinates all Masses and class assemblies, distributing scripture, prayers etc. to children.

### **Year 3**

Teacher to explicitly model high-quality in-class collective worship during Autumn 1.

Using the child-led planning sheet (see Appendix 3) and adult guidance for the focus, children (whole class, group and/or individual), with support (e.g.: if the child plans to play music for the 'Gather' section, the adult helps to identify the specific hymn/song), plan the Collective Worship session for each of the four elements (G, L, R, GF). Children use a combination of the child-led planning template-suggested activities and their own (adults share the Practical Prayer Ideas for The Classroom booklet to inspire). Adults model making planning choices that are linked to the chosen scripture and justifying these choices. Children lead all elements of the Collective Worship session, supported by an adult. Children should be given sufficient time to practise.

### **Year 4 –**

Child-Led Worship (with adult support in planning) Teacher to explicitly model high-quality in-class collective worship during Autumn 1. Adults decide the theme of worship opportunities and support children in deciding upon relevant scripture. Children work independently at the planning stage, but prior to delivering their worship opportunities (or during planning), their planning is checked/directed to ensure its relevance to the chosen scripture and theme. Where possible, children will share worship opportunities with other classes in

different locations around school and beyond. Pupils will record worship opportunities by completing planning pro forma (starting with child-led planning template and moving onto main planning pro forma)

Year 5 and Year 6 – Children plan and lead all aspects of the liturgy independently making informed decisions to provide an enriching experience for all

### **Celebration of the Eucharist**

This takes place at the beginning and end of terms, on holy or celebratory days. Every class from Year 2 upwards also celebrates Mass in their classroom at least twice a year. Reception Class and Year 1 share in prayer services with Father Philip at least twice a year in their classrooms. Every House Saint feast day is celebrated with Mass.

### **Links with the Parish and School Communities**

All parents, parishioners and governors have an open invitation to our Masses and celebration assemblies. Throughout the year, classes hold their own class assemblies and we celebrate Our Lord's Nativity in our Christmas play and carol service. Our Reception children are welcomed into the Parish at the start of the year during a Saturday evening welcome Mass, and there is at least one other school led Mass in Our lady and All Saints Church during the year – this is normally to celebrate the Feast Day of St Joseph.

### **Expectations for our school community**

#### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Participate enthusiastically in all acts of Prayer and Liturgy.
- Be active listeners and action the messages to the best of their ability
- Take part in the evaluation of liturgy and prayer

#### **Liturgy Leaders**

Liturgy Leaders are expected to:

- Be role models for the school's Catholic Ethos.
- Be role models for planning, leading and participating in acts of prayer and liturgy
- Be responsible for maintaining and evaluating sacred spaces across the school, including prayer tables in classes, feeding back to the Principal or Vice Principal when needed.
- Take notice of and act upon areas for improvement, in conjunction with the Principal and Vice Principal.
- Take an active part in all other areas of prayer and liturgy across the school, when required.

#### **Parents and carers**



We ask that parents and carers support the importance of Prayer and Liturgy by:

- Attended and participating in Masses, assemblies and services where possible Support children in practising their readings, when applicable
- Where applicable, attend sacramental Masses of commitment
- Help the school evaluate the effectiveness of prayer and liturgy by completing surveys when available
- At home, where appropriate, support children to access and understand prayer, by, for example, using school prayer bags together

### **Staff**

We ask that Staff teach the importance of Prayer and Liturgy by:

- Being role-models in attending and actively participating in acts of Prayer and Liturgy
- Lead high-quality prayer and liturgy, which act as excellent exemplars from which pupils are able to plan their own
- Support pupils in planning and leading acts of prayer and liturgy
- Provide pupils with meaningful prayer and liturgy experiences, including appropriately supporting those with SEND
- Assist pupils to develop the language of prayer and liturgy
- Teach pupils the traditional prayers of The Church (as identified by Birmingham Diocese)

### **Subject leader**

The R.E. subject leader, in liaison with The Principal will be responsible for:

Formulating and reviewing a written Prayer and Liturgy policy

Coordinating rotas, timetables etc. for acts of prayer and liturgy, including collective worship

Monitoring the appropriateness and effectiveness of prayer and liturgy, including collective worship

Providing training to new staff and/or where training needs are identified

Ensuring that prayer and liturgy takes account of the religious and educational needs of all who share in it and is rooted in the Catholic teachings

Liaise with the Parish Priest and the Parish Secretary with regard to the preparation and celebration of liturgy, prayer and Mass

Ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place for religious visits, including visiting church

Assisting Governors, including the R.E. link governor in carrying out their legal responsibilities with regard to prayer and liturgy

### **Governors**

The governing board will:

Review this policy and ensure it is appropriate for our school's context

Place the highest priority on the evaluation of the quality and impact of prayer and liturgy



Ensure prayer and liturgy is embedded in the school's cycle of self-evaluation and planned improvements.

Ensure provision for prayer and liturgy is prioritised when setting budgets and allocating resources

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

The Governance Committee are aware of their legal responsibilities in regard to prayer and liturgy, taking account of the requirements of the Education Reform Act 1988, Education Act 1996 and the school standard framework 1998. It is the overall responsibility of the Governance Committee, in consultation with the Principal, to ensure that the legal requirements are met and opportunities for quality prayer and liturgy are being delivered. Those responsible will ensure that acts of worship are in accordance and consistent with the rites and practices of the Catholic Church. This policy is monitored by the RE Leader and is evaluated and reviewed by the whole school staff every two years. The Local Governing Body (LGB) should review reports on the prayer life of the school.

The following will be monitored:

- Time set aside for prayer and liturgy;
- Whether the observed practice is consistent with agreed policy;
- Whether prayer and liturgy is resourced in terms of materials, visual aids etc;
- Staff development on prayer and liturgy and its impact;
- Prayer focus and its effectiveness in drawing pupils into prayer;
- Impact on pupils and members of the school community;
- Opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills to access worship and prayer;
- Records of themes and teachings of the Catholic Church covered in prayer and liturgy.

Observation and monitoring records should be kept and should form part of the self-review process. Outcomes of monitoring will be communicated to staff and the LGB with recommendations for future action.

### **Communication**

This policy will be communicated to:

- All members of the school community;
- Parish priests or members of pastoral areas as appropriate;
- New members of staff and will form part of their induction;
- New parents, to promote positive attitudes towards prayer and liturgy.

### **Keeping Children safe in Education 2023**

At St Joseph's, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, we take a child centred and coordinated approach to safeguarding.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they consider at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **KCSIE 2023**

**RE Coordinator:** Mrs R Mitchell

Principal: Mr A Wilkes

RE Link Local Governing Body Representative: Fr Philip Griffin

Chair of the Local Governing Body Committee: Mr John Coyne



## Appendix 1

### Daily Prayers

**Morning Prayer** *(to be said during morning registration)* Father in heaven, you love me,

you are with me night and day. I want to love you always

in all I do and say.

I'll try to please you, Father, bless me through the day. Amen.

**Grace Before Meals** *(to be said before children are dismissed for lunch)*

Bless us, O God, as we sit together.

Bless the food we eat today.

Bless the hands that made the food. Bless us, O God.

Amen.

**Grace after meals** *(to be said during afternoon registration)*

Thank you, God, for the food we have eaten.

Thank you, God, for all our friends. Thank you, God, for everything,

Thank you God.

Amen.

**Prayer at the end of the day** *(to be said before children are dismissed at the end of the day)*

God our Father, I come to say thank you for your love today.

Thank you for my family

and all the friends you give to me. Guard me in the dark of night

and in the morning send your light.



Amen.

## Appendix 2

**BDES Guidance for Prayer Areas-** *n.b. each classroom has a box of religious objects for prayer tables. Battery candles only to be used.*

### Prayer Areas



Position the prayer areas as a focal point of the room.

**EYFS & Key stage 1** children should be able to gather around the prayer area.

**Key Stage 2** children should be able to easily face towards the prayer area.

Permanent items in a prayer area should include a crucifix, a Bible and a candle. You may also include a religious statue.

Ensure that an age appropriate Bible/Bible story is enthroned upon the table.

Prayer areas can display prayers of the Church at different times of the liturgical year.  
(The specific prayers the children are learning)

You could include opportunities for children to share their own prayer intentions in a box, basket or book etc.

The area should reflect other key events, commemorations and celebrations of the Liturgical Year Church at appropriate times e.g. during the month of October a statue of Mary or Rosary Beads can be placed.

Additional items may include images, quotes, poems, hymns, Catholic religious symbols and other objects reflecting seasonal prayer intentions of the Church e.g. Creation and harvest

✓	✗
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Involve children to help create the area.</li> <li>- Ask a colleague to come and view your prayer area to offer guidance and support.</li> <li>- Ensure you know when the Liturgical times of the year change and you know where the appropriate cloth is.</li> <li>- Change the items on the table to match the liturgical seasons.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Place the prayer area in a place where it is likely to be brushed against/damaged.</li> <li>- Place religious symbols and iconography pertinent to other faiths - This is a Catholic prayer area.</li> <li>- Have all the prayers for the whole year up.</li> </ul>

	- Clutter your prayer area – Sometimes less is more.
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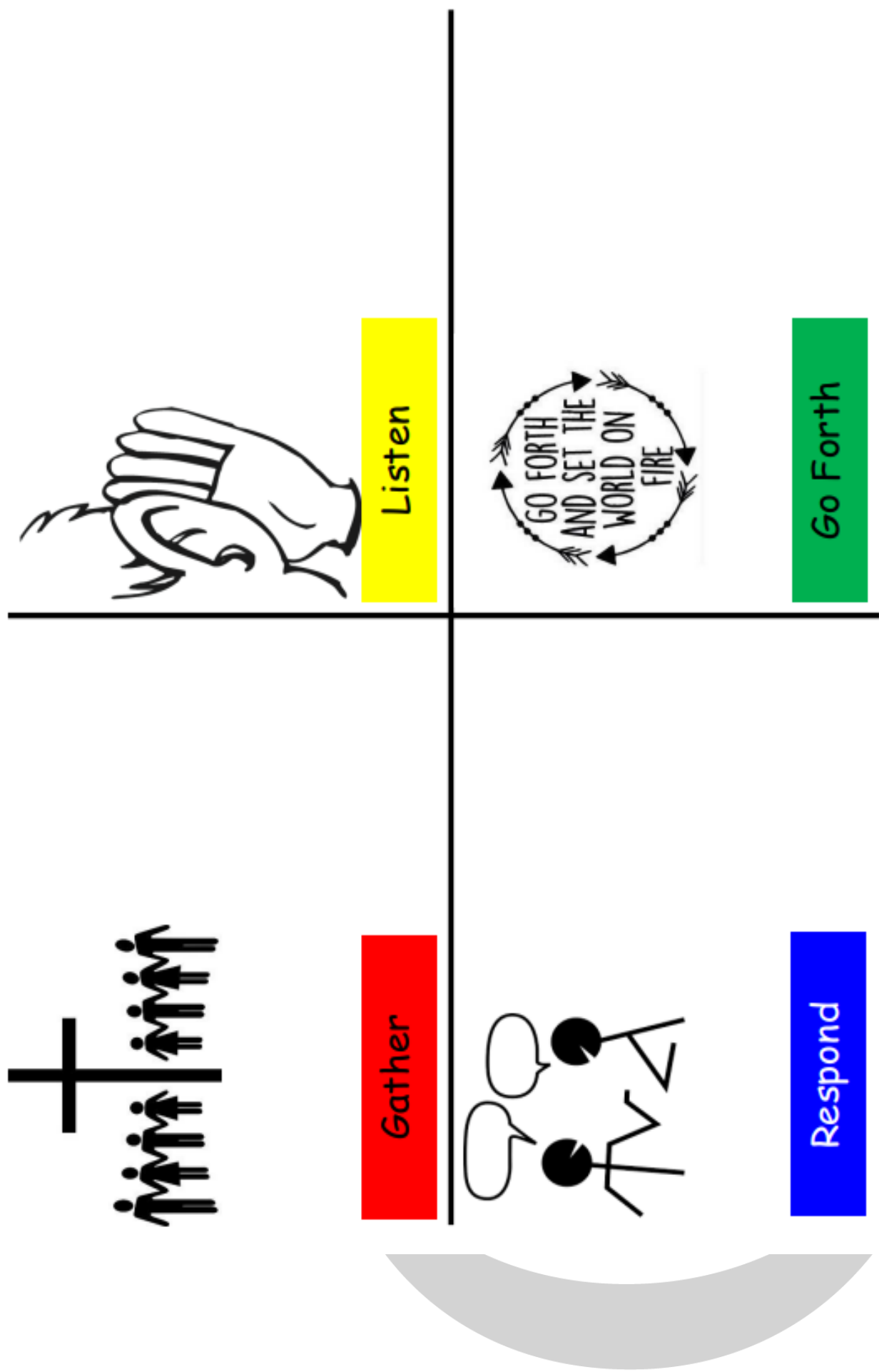
### Liturgical Colours for Prayer Areas

Advent -Purple	<b>4 weeks of Advent (Four Sundays before Christmas)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prayer areas during this season will be covered with a purple cloth and should include an Advent Wreath (to be lit at prayer time), an Advent Calendar (counting the days from the first day of Advent to Christmas), figures of Mary &amp; Joseph waiting in the stable, journeying Wise Men and a Jesse Tree (Y4).</li> </ul> <p>An image of Mary on the Diocesan Feast of the Immaculate Conception may also be displayed on 8 December.</p>
Christmas - White and Gold	<b>Christmas Season from the Vigil Christmas Eve Mass until the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the season of Christmas, prayer areas should be adorned in white and gold cloths to celebrate the birth of Christ. Flowers may also be placed in the prayer space (a Poinsettia has significant symbolism) . The crib would include a star, the figures of the nativity and then finally the Wise Men on Epiphany (6<sup>th</sup> January).</li> </ul>
Ordinary Time 1 Green	<b>Ordinary time after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord until Shrove Tuesday (Pancake day!)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During this period of Ordinary Time, prayer areas will be covered in a green cloth. The figures of Mary, Joseph and Jesus in the crib can remain until February 2<sup>nd</sup> (The Presentation of Our Lord) and new candles which may have been blessed at Mass on this date may also be added.</li> </ul>
Lent – Purple	<b>Lent - beginning on Ash Wednesday until the Vigil Mass on Easter Saturday Evening.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the season of Lent, the prayer area will be covered in a purple cloth. A 40 Days calendar to represent the time Jesus spent in the desert may also be added. Sand and stones could be used to recreate the emptiness of the desert. A bowl of ashes on the prayer space would serve as reminder of the ashes placed on the forehead on Ash Wednesday, the start of this season.</li> </ul> <p>The Diocesan Feast of St. Chad is March 2<sup>nd</sup>, a St. Chad's Cross could be added to the prayer area to celebrate this Feast Day.</p>
Holy Week- Purple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During Holy Week the prayer area will continue to be covered in purple cloth and palm crosses may be added on Palm Sunday. Images of the Stations of the Cross could be added as a reminder of the events of Jesus' arrest to his death. A crucifix should also be included as a reminder of Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday. Symbols of Holy Week could also be added to the prayer space.</li> </ul>
Easter Season - White and Gold	<b>Easter Season from Easter Sunday until Pentecost (The birthday of the Church)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the season of Easter, the prayer area should be adorned in white and gold cloth as a celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Day. An Easter</li> </ul>

Pentecost-Re	<p>Garden could be added as a joyful reminder of the empty tomb which was discovered signifying Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday. The word 'Alleluia' should feature prominently as a reminder that Christ is risen. Images of the risen Christ as well as a Risen Jesus crucifix would be appropriate. Flowers and symbols of new life including eggs would also celebrate this joyful time. Year 1 in particular should include a Paschal Candle/Easter Candle and lit to signify the light of Christ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An image of the Ascension could be displayed on the Feast of the Ascension.</li> <li>• A statue or image of Our Lady for May, the month of Mary could be added.</li> <li>• On the Feast of Pentecost, the priest's vestments and cloths in church will be red. Symbols of the Holy Spirit (dove, wind, fire) could be displayed. This is the church's birthday and therefore sharing birthday cake would be a joyful sign of this. Images of Pentecost could be used on prayer areas</li> </ul>
Ordinary Time 2 - Green	<p>Ordinary Time following Pentecost Sunday until the Solemnity of Christ the King (the Sunday before Advent begins).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During this second period of Ordinary Time, the prayer area would be covered in a green cloth.</li> <li>• Images of Our Lady for her birthday (9th September) could be displayed.</li> <li>• During the Harvest festival celebrations, objects of creation and offerings for the harvest festival could be displayed on the prayer area.</li> <li>• In the month of October, images of the Mysteries of the Rosary and Rosary beads can be displayed and used in prayer time.</li> <li>• Images of the saints on November 1 (the saint of the school or class saint names if relevant) could be displayed.</li> <li>• During the month of November (the Month of the Holy Souls), a book of prayer intentions could be included for those who have died.</li> <li>• Images of Christ the King could be displayed on this Feast Day, the week before Advent begins which is also National Youth Sunday.</li> </ul>



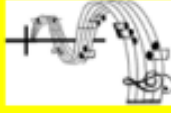
Appendix 3  
Child-Led Planning Template








Listening to a Psalm



Listening to a Hymn



Special Challenge



Bible Reading



Listening to a story



Take something home



Listen to some World News



Listening to a Prayer




Open Prayer



Remember a sentence



Light a candle



Write a Post-it



Listening to Prayer



Sit differently



Watch a PowerPoint



Activity E.G. Art



Play Music



Show a picture / resource / artefact



Act out the Gospel



Write a class Tweet