

St Alban's Catholic High School



School mission statement

Domine Ut Serviam

Lord, that I may serve.

Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Approved by Full Governing Body on: 6th October 2025

Recommission Date: September 2026

Reviewed annually

St Alban's Catholic High School Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Introduction

Mission statement

Lord, That I may serve

- At the heart of our school is a commitment to Gospel values - love, respect, service, and excellence
- We are dedicated to nurturing the academic, spiritual, and personal growth of every student, ensuring they develop into compassionate, confident, and resilient young people
- We believe that every child is created in the image and likeness of God, with unique gifts and talents to share
- St Alban's Catholic High School is a school where respect permeates all we do, and honesty and compassion makes us who we are
- Our students embody the spirit of community

Our school mission statement and the teaching of the Catholic Church is central to all that is undertaken within the school community, both in terms of teaching and learning and extracurricular activities. Our mission statement commits us to forming students using the four pillars of formation- human, pastoral, academic and spiritual and we believe that prayer and liturgy is a fundamental aspect of formation for the whole person.

Our mission statement promotes inclusivity, respect, a sense of community and working together to make a difference to each other. Our school mission statement allows our students to become the best versions of themselves in living out the vocation in which God has called them.

As school community, we live out our statement by helping those in need, both within school and in the local community by living the Gospel to the best of our abilities each day, by showing care, compassion, and kindness in our words and deeds so that that the face of Christ can become truly known.

Our values, and outlooks are rooted in the person of Christ, as illustrated in the Gospels. With the Gospel at the centre of what we do, we emulate the actions of Christ to all. St Alban, our patron saint, showed kindness and compassion to a priest, we too are called to follow in his footsteps to serve with compassion, respect and dignity. We aim for the highest standards in all our endeavours as we are the hands and feet of the body of Christ.

Statement of requirement required by law

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 by the rites, practices, disciplines, and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, schedule 20; Instrument of Government, clause 2). (Prayer and Liturgy Directory, page 69)

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 sixteen from prayer and liturgy (School Standards and Framework Act 1998, s.71(1A)). Sixth-form pupils can withdraw 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 concepts 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 Catholic schools, this means that times of prayer and liturgy are not considered to be part of the allocation of curriculum time for religious education.

Dissemination

Copies of the policy will be given to all Governing Body members and relevant teaching and non-teaching staff members. This document will also be available to all parents via the school's website, and paper copies can be provided upon request. Details of the RSHE curriculum content are also published in the curriculum section of the school's website.

The context of this Prayer and Liturgy Policy

Aims:

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)

- 1)** To experience the living presence of God each day
- 2)** To be formed in the image of Christ
- 3)** To develop a sense of community and belonging
- 4)** To grow in formation both academically, spiritually, pastorally and morally
- 5)** To contemplate our own calling and vocation to serve God in the best way
- 6)** To value the wholeness of everyone
- 7)** to nurture all aspects of faith formation

- 8)** To develop common values and outlooks
- 9)** To explore own faith and beliefs
- 10)** To experience communal aspects of worship

“For God shows no partiality.” (Romans 2:11)

St Alban's Catholic High School welcomes staff and students of every faith and background, in this way we are universal to all as we are all children of God. Our community is culturally diverse, with staff and students coming from different parts of the world that have different cultural traditions. We take pride that we mirror the cultural diversity of the Universal Church. We believe that there is more that unites us than divides us.

All our staff are committed to supporting the Catholic values and ethos and the spiritual journey of our students even if they have different religious beliefs. We are medium size high school located in the south of the Diocese of East Anglia in the deanery of Ipswich. We have over 40 primary schools that have students come from across East Suffolk. We are part of the Our Lady of Walsingham Multi-academy Trust.

We also believe in the personal integrity of individuals and staff or students who are of different religious beliefs would not be asked to lead or perform a Christian liturgical ministry. A member of staff can facilitate prayer even they cannot with their personal integrity lead. All staff are supported by the school chaplain on aspects of prayer and liturgy.

During celebration of Word and Liturgy, staff and students from other faiths are invited to attend. Though they are unable to join in with prayers, songs and responses rooted in the Christian faith and doctrine, they can support the prayers of others through their respectful presence. The school respects their own religious integrity by not asking them to make the sign of the Cross or to respond to prayers using the formulas of the Church.

Responsibility and Governance

The Catholic Life link governor is Jessica McCall

The Governors, as guardians of the Catholic school's life and mission have a responsibility to ensure that:

- A) Prayer and liturgy are a fundamental aspect of Catholic Life in St Albans and are in line with guidance set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory.
- B) There is name person(s) who will be responsible for prayer and liturgy with the school, and will be known as the prayer and liturgy coordinator
- C) The prayer and liturgy policy will be reviewed and updated regularly and shared with all stakeholders
- D) There is to be a budget for prayer and liturgy that reflects the importance of prayer and liturgy within a catholic school

Headteacher

The headteacher, as spiritual leader of the school as a Catholic community ensures that:

- Prayer and liturgy are central to the Catholic life of the school in accordance with the prayer and liturgy directory
- They work in partnership with the prayer and liturgy coordinator and other members of staff who have prayer and liturgy responsibility - Head of RE, Deputy Headteacher, Senior Leadership
- Responsible for providing training and formation to ensure all guidance is followed and adhered to
- Suitable resources for prayer and liturgy in the school

Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator

- Ensures that prayer and liturgy is implemented in accordance with the prayer and liturgy directory
- The school chaplain will take on the responsibility of prayer and liturgy coordinator
- The school chaplain is **Paul Gilbert**
- Annual plan of provision for prayer and liturgy across the academic year which will identify liturgical seasons and key celebrations and offer opportunities for the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confessions to take place
- Prayer routine to be established in form times with prayers set out by the Prayer and Liturgy Directory
- Students to be supported in their liturgical formation and to take active roles in liturgy events
- Provides resources to staff to enable prayer and liturgy to take place
- Provides new staff with an overview of prayer and liturgy as required and as directed by headteacher
- Evaluate and monitor prayer and liturgy and feedback to headteacher and governing body on aspects on catholic life within the school
- Work closely with priests and deacons of the deanery of Ipswich to enable Mass and other liturgical events to occur throughout the school year
- Liaise with Diocese on developments on liturgical developments and changes
- The lay chaplain is also the secondary school link for the diocesan commission for liturgy

Overview of prayer and liturgy within St Albans

‘Through prayer, Christ is present each day’ (CCC 2560)

- The Gospel with is central to the life and community of St Alban’s
- As a community of faith- prayer will take place each day
- Prayer helps to focus on the Word of God so that his face can be made known
- Prayer and liturgy should take place in assemblies, staff briefings, weekly gospel reflections, liturgies and Mass
- The school chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved should only be used for Catholic Prayer and Liturgy - it cannot be permitted to be used for other faiths.
- Assemblies to always start with a prayer and be gospel focused

- Every room will have a crucifix and prayer cards with the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, and Glory Be prayers, which should be recited throughout the week
- Each week there is a short gospel reflection in the weekly bulletin and the Head of RE gives a wider reflection to all staff on a Monday morning
- On a Monday, Tuesday- the staff briefing always begins with a prayer on a Friday morning- staff to use chapel for prayer and a communal hymn
- Mass to occur in the school chapel each Wednesday by local priest
- The sacrament of confession and reconciliation to occur during Advent and Lent
- Houses and year groups to come together for a Mass
- Worship Wednesday- each week the school chaplain sends a PowerPoint to all forms highlighting a saint of the week, church events and gospel reflection from the previous Sunday
- Holy Days of Obligation to acknowledged with a Mass
- Special services to take place such as Ash Wednesday
- Key events of students to be marked liturgically- Year 7 welcome Mass, Leavers' Service for Years 11 and 13, Mass for Exams for Year 11 and 13
- Attend events in parishes- confirmations for students at St Alban's, inter-school Mass at St John the Baptist Cathedral, Norwich
- School to facilitate when the need arises of different liturgical rites within the Catholic Church other than the Latin Rite - for example Syro-Malabar, Chaldean
- There should be images of saints around the school to ensure a Catholic presence and a place of prayer focus
- The liturgical colours used should correspond with the diocesan policy of liturgical colours set out in the diocesan year book published annually by the Diocese of East Anglia
- Greater connections between local parishes and school
- School community to come together at the end of each term to have Liturgy Service
- All students to be given a copy of the school prayer at the start of the year
- The lay chaplain will receive continual formation by attending termly inter-school meetings with other diocesan chaplains and through the diocese

St Alban's School Prayer

Dear Lord,

Thank you for this wonderful day, filled with opportunities.

We pray that you may guard and help us get through all the obstacles ahead.

Lord, protect and look after us and please be there when we seek your advice.

Lord, fill us with your Holy Spirit. Amen

St Alban, pray for us.

Liturgies

The Mass should reflect the General Roman Calendar of Saints, the National Calendar and the Calendar for the Diocese of East Anglia.

All are to be warmly welcomed to the liturgy and all faiths to be respected.

- When Mass, students and staff who are Catholic can proclaim the Word of God
- In Service of the Word Liturgies- those of any Christian Faith to proclaim the Word of God
- Those of other faiths, may not proclaim Sacred Scripture for personal integrity
- All readings use the English Standard Version- Catholic Edition of the Roman Lectionary, Roman Missal set out by the Bishops' Conference of England, Wales, and Scotland from Advent 2024
- For all who are present for a liturgy- they are to engage both in action, word and gesture
- Readings in a liturgical celebration cannot be replaced by non-scriptural or secular material
- If the priest cancels the celebration, the school chaplain will lead, reverting to Service of the Word containing a reflection/homily.

Music Ministry

“When we sing, we experience God’s presence in a new way,” Pope St John Paul II

- Music can be part of any prayer and liturgy - all are encouraged to participate through singing (Prayer and Liturgy directory, Page 29)
 - In mass, there should be a priority to singing the liturgical texts and involve hymns and songs
 - Music to match the context of the celebration- Advent hymns during Advent rather than Easter
 - Non-Christian music and Secular songs should not appear in sacramental celebrations
 - Students should be able to sing unaccompanied with confidence

Catechumens

The Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator to spiritually support and accompany those wishing to come into Full Communion with the Catholic Church and those being confirmed into the Church.

Members of Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Churches

- Staff and students who are members of the Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Churches, while not in full communion with the Catholic Church, are recognised by these churches for their sacraments
- Eastern Christians may be invited to proclaim the readings during Mass
- staff and students who follow the Eastern Rite may receive Holy Communion at a Catholic Mass as set out by provision in the Prayer and Liturgy directory (page 21-22)

How does prayer and liturgy happen at St Alban's

- i) We will always consider and the religious and educational needs of those who engage with prayer and liturgy
- ii) Those from other faith backgrounds
- iii) Those who have English as their second language
- iv) Those with special and additional educational needs
- v) Those who only experience faith within the school setting
- vi) Those from no faith background
- vii) Those who are baptised but do not practise
- viii) Those of other Christian denominations who actively practise their faith

St Albans engages with parental and student voice feedback on aspects of the chaplaincy that helps to review prayer and liturgy

Respect for other faiths

Space is to be made available for staff and students who practise a different faith

Fridays: space set aside for those who practice the Islamic faith to pray their Jumu'ah

Each month parents receive an overview of what takes place in chaplaincy over the course of the month

Provision of Important Special Events

- Provision is to be made by the school for the community to come together in the event of a sudden death of a staff member or student, Diocesan Bishop, Monarch or Pope or an event of national importance, such as the Act of Remembrance in November
- Planning the prayer and liturgy such events will be planned and reviewed throughout the school year by the headteacher, Head of RE, School Chaplain and Governors
- The liturgy will be based on the model of the Liturgy of the Word Celebrations set out by the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales
- Resources to made available

Chaplaincy team

St Alban's has a staff chaplaincy team that consists of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, School Chaplain, Head of RE, teachers from the Maths department, two teachers from RE department, a teacher from music. This group meets every half term to discuss chaplaincy events

Student chaplains

Under the direction of the school chaplain- students will form a student chaplaincy team which will be formed of different Christian denominations forming ecumenical dialogue between the different churches within the school community.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- School governors, directors and senior leadership team and prayer and liturgy coordinator all work to monitor the implementation of the prayer and liturgy directive
- All to work closely with the diocesan Religious Education Advisors and diocesan liturgy commission on how best to maintain prayer and liturgy within the school setting
- This policy is a requirement from the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales.
- there is to be long term, medium planning, and short-term planning, linking with the school development plan
- There needs to be an annual, termly, and weekly provision, highlighting aims and objectives of the school's prayer and liturgy policy and how this can be enacted in practical ways
- Any individual training is identified and implemented especially for staff who may not have worked in a catholic school beforehand
- Whole school training on prayer and liturgy is to take place annually lead by the headteacher, head of RE, school chaplain or diocese
- How is the policy evaluated- staff and student feedback, letters to parents, regular updates, the prayer, and liturgy coordinator and headteacher to meet regularly to discuss Catholic life in the school
- Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator to collaborate with local clergy and working across different departments within the school
- The prayer and liturgy coordinator to have a contingency plan if priests are not available
- St Alban's engages with staff, student and parental feedback to review prayer and liturgy regularly
- Headteacher, Head of RE and school chaplain to conduct prayer walks regularly to maintain the importance of prayer during form times