**Dean Gibson Catholic Primary School**

**Prayer and Liturgy Policy**

****

**School Mission Statement**

*At Dean Gibson Primary School we believe that every child is an unique creation of God. We promise to provide educational opportunities and experiences to enrich the learning and wellbeing of the children together with the whole school community, by following the teachings of Jesus Christ. It is the school’s aim that the children become well rounded, confident individuals, with an understanding of Gospel values as preparation for the world of work and life.*

**Our Mission Statement written by the children.**

*Guided by the Holy Spirit, we listen, learn and care*

Prayer and liturgy at Dean Gibson School comply with the legal requirements as set out in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The law states that “Collective worship must be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian Character which means that it reflects the broad traditions of Christian belief”.

At Dean Gibson prayer and liturgy are implicit in our mission statement as a Catholic school. Prayer and the opportunity to encounter God through listening and responding to His Word is fundamental to the life of the school and as such will take place daily in class at an age appropriate level.

In praying and listening to the Liturgy, children and adults will be responding in different ways and at different levels; some will be “at the threshold”, interested in the process and participating in it but not full believers; for others the act of praying may be a time of real communion with God. In our daily listening to the Word of God and response in prayer we aim to provide a setting in which the integrity of those present is not compromised but in which everyone finds something positive for themselves.

Aims of prayer and liturgy

* To provide an opportunity for the children to reflect upon God and to give Him honour
* To help children discover their place in the world
* To highlight and nurture the spiritual dimension through experiencing worship
* To provide children with a vocabulary of worship and an experience of a wide variety of worship forms, including symbols and imagery – such as pictures, statues, crosses, rosary beads, etc
* To provide an opportunity to celebrate dates in the liturgical calendar
* To heighten awareness of the ultimate questions/realities of life and to provide the opportunity to reflect upon these
* To support the search of meaning
* To enable children to appreciate their worth and value to God, and to the community, and to respect the integrity of all individuals as a child of God
* To enable pupils to make effective use of silence in opportunities for reflection, contemplation, meditation and prayer
* To establish, explore and reinforce the common Christian values of the school community such as love, peace, kindness, tolerance and compassion
* To foster a feeling of community and belonging in the school, through a sharing of experiences and feelings
* To provide an opportunity to empathise with the needs of others
* To foster feelings such as awe, wonder, thankfulness, mystery and joy
* To provide an opportunity to bring before God in prayer personal needs and those of others
* To share with participants some of the central teachings of the Christian faith at an appropriate level and thereby give them the encouragement to explore their own beliefs and understanding of God within a Catholic framework
* To promote and celebrate the partnership between home, school and parish

We recognise the role of prayer and liturgy within school and faith assemblies. Our prayerful gatherings can:

* be a time to celebrate gifts, talents and achievements
* develop personal relationships and encourage social development
* provide an opportunity for children to become acquainted with people from the local and wider community, particularly Holy Trinity & St George
* include graces (morning, lunchtime and home time)
* sometimes take the form of assemblies and focus on themes, drama, information, etc
* take place in different places, eg, hall, class, Church, outside

Implementation

Whole school prayer and school masses which happen on specific feast celebrations and to which parents, parishioners and other members of the school community are invited

Children are also invited to Family Masses which take place at Church at different liturgical times during the year, eg, Mothering Sunday, Harvest time

Prayer and liturgy in the classrooms is encouraged by use of a reflective corner/holy table

Invitation to prayer groups, rosary groups and spontaneous acts of prayer and worship

Praying as a staff, eg, at weekly gathering, at staff and governors’ meetings

At Key Stage 1 prayer and worship includes:

* occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word
* the occasional celebration of sacramental liturgies
* a range of types of prayer
* opportunities for pupils to take an active part in prayer and liturgy

At Key Stage 2 prayer and liturgy includes:

* short, simple liturgies and prayer times
* occasional liturgies reflecting the Introductory Rites of the Mass and/or the Liturgy of the Word; and/or the Penitential Rite; and/or the Eucharistic Prayer; and/or the Communion Rite
* the celebration of sacramental liturgies
* a range of types of prayer
* opportunities for pupils to take an active part in prayer and liturgy
* opportunities for pupils to take leadership roles in prayer and liturgy

Prayer and liturgy should be inclusive and available to all pupils and members of the school community. It should have catechetical focus and nurture children and staff in their spiritual growth.

Persons available in collective worship are: children, teachers, staff, carers/parents/grandparents/visitors and governors.

Withdrawal from prayer and liturgy

The school recognises the right of parents to withdraw their child/children from prayer and liturgy. The Head Teacher will ensure that such withdrawal is safe. However, as a Catholic School, the importance of prayer and liturgy is made clear in the school brochure issued to all parents.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Once a year the school’s provision of prayer and worship will be evaluated to consider whether it meets the needs of pupils and whether it truly reflects the aims and mission of the school.

We will also:

* observe the children’s attentiveness, behaviour and attitude
* observe whether prominence is given to the Word of God
* ask for class feedback – enthusiasm to take part and question to assess their liturgical understanding
* observe opportunities for individual reflection and response
* assess the liturgical appropriateness of Holy areas
* assess the extent to which children are experienced as leaders of class prayer and liturgy
* explore whether the main emphasis is on worshipping God

To be reviewed annually

Reviewed by Community and Welfare Committee in May 2022

Date: 6th May 2022 Chair of Committee: T.Burden

Accepted by full Governing Body:

Date: 17th May 2022 Chair of Governors: