



# St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

*An Academy within The Catholic Academy Trust in South Hampshire*

'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre'  
'We love, we learn and we live'



<b>Name of Policy</b>	Celebration of the Word
<b>Reference Number</b>	
<b>Date of e-signoff</b>	November 2025
<b>Headteacher</b>	Katrina Straker
<b>RE Lead Governor</b>	Fr Ansel D'Mello
<b>Date for review</b>	November 2027

# Celebration of the Word

---



## St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

*An Academy within The Catholic Academy Trust in South Hampshire*



**'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre'  
'We love, we learn and we live'**

The St Anthony's mission statement is 'Children in our heart, Christ at the centre. We love, we learn and we live.' To live out this mission, we are guided and led by our Catholic ethos that places the Catholic Social Teaching principles of Human Dignity and the Common Good at the heart of our school. We recognise that each of us is unique and loved by God and we are called to lead by example, as Christ did, to show respect and love to every person because each of us is made in the image of God.

### **Intent:**

**'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts upon them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock.' - Matthew 7:24**

Together with parents and our priests, our school plays a key role in building the foundations of our faith for the pupils in our care. By celebrating the Word and Eucharist effectively, vitally and joyfully, we can increase the power of the Word, the value and authenticity of sign and symbol, and the sense of Church.

St Anthony's aims to:

- enable our pupils to participate fully in different forms of worship, especially the Eucharist;
- enable our pupils to grow in communion with God, each other and the wider community;
- familiarise pupils with the different forms of worship within our faith;
- enable our pupils to gain a deeper understanding of Jesus and His teachings.

We do this by:

- giving our pupils opportunities to participate in the rites and prayers of the Mass, with members of our parish;
- providing opportunities that offer a variety of experiences of personal and collective prayer and worship, sometimes with visitors;
- introducing pupils to the purpose of prayer and the different types of prayer such as praise, thanksgiving, intercession and reconciliation to name a few;
- providing pupils with the experience of praying prayers used by the Catholic Church;
- exploring and reflecting upon the values which underpin our beliefs and actions;
- enabling our pupils to reflect on scripture within liturgy and worship;

- reflecting the Church's liturgical year within the school's different forms of worship;
- through experience, deepening children's understanding of signs and symbols that express our beliefs.

## **Implementation:**

### **Principles**

To worship God is to raise our hearts and minds to Him, in reverence and praise, as individuals and as a community. It plays an important part in the development and growth of our faith and our relationship with God. It can instil in us a sense of belonging, dignity, grace, self-discipline, order, respect, thanksgiving, repentance, community spirit, creed, tradition and sacrifice – all of which influence our way of life.

Acts of Worship in our school will:

- take place every day;
- be an integral part of the life and character of the school;
- be appropriate to the pupils' age and ability;
- take account of different faith/family backgrounds;
- provide a variety of prayer and liturgical experiences;
- require the pupils' participation;
- include scripture;
- regularly be planned and led by the children in age-appropriate ways.

Planning, content and delivery of liturgical prayer:

- liturgical prayer is planned carefully;
- it is structured, with reference to the Church's liturgical year or *God Matters* (RE Scheme of work) or the scripture of the day;
- it is flexible, in order to respond to school, local, or world community situations/issues;
- it is presented in ways in which every child may express their own feelings or opinions (including those with special educational needs);
- it provides opportunities for pupils to plan and lead worship.

Celebration of the Word/liturgical prayer takes place every day:

- Mondays at 09:00 and Fridays at 14:30 for the whole school, in the Hall;
- Tuesdays – Thursdays for class groups, in classrooms (or other chosen venues e.g. our prayer garden, outside shelters, forest and farm schools).

Liturgies follow the layout of:

- Gathering
- Sharing the Word of God
- Reflecting
- Responding to God's word (Action)
- Going Forth (Mission)

### **Daily Prayer**

In addition to planned whole school or class liturgical prayer, children will gather as a class to pray at the following times:

- in the morning to pray the school's morning prayer (this may be incorporated with liturgical prayer);
- before lunch to pray the school's Grace prayer;
- before the end of the school day to pray the school's close of day prayer;

In Years 5 and 6, children will pray the Angelus instead of the school's Grace prayer.

### **Masses**

Mass is led by the school priest at the beginning and end of school year, Holy days of Obligation, St. Anthony's feast day and Penitential Services during Advent and Lent. If the school priest is unavailable, a deacon will lead a liturgy. Masses will be prepared and led by a class so that children are fully involved and have opportunities to take on ministries.

### **Observing the liturgical year**

St Anthony's leads children and families in following the rhythms of the Church's year; this is a normal part of school life and each pupil's life. Examples of this include:

- an annual Pet blessing to celebrate Creation on the feast day of St Francis;
- praying the rosary during October and May, the months of Mary;
- performing nativity plays in December (from Preschool to Year 4);
- performing a carol service at St Margaret Mary Church in December (Years 5 & 6);
- supporting charities through alms-giving during Advent and Lent;
- an annual Palm Burning service just before Lent;
- praying the Stations of the Cross during Lent;
- performing a Passion Play during Holy Week (Years 3 to 6);
- an annual Marian Procession to celebrate Mary during May (Year 2).

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Religious Education Leader will observe, evaluate and review provision, progression, and pupils' participation. This information will be used to identify areas for development that can be addressed through coaching, an INSET or through staff meetings.

The Diocesan Self-Review process provides opportunities annually to focus on specific areas of RE within our schools:

Catholic Life and Mission  
Religious Education  
Celebration of the Word

There are sub-sections within each area and at the end of the review a target or targets for development are produced for these sub-sections. Some of these targets will be part of the School Improvement Plan.

### **The right of withdrawal from Celebration of the Word:**

Parents of pupils are permitted, by law, to request that their child is withdrawn from receiving all or part of religious education and/or Celebration of the Word given at the school and any such request shall stand until such time that a parent's request is withdrawn.

If pupils are withdrawn from Celebration of the Word, the school has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra costs. Due to the resources available in our school, the pupil may remain supervised in the classroom but will not participate in the Celebration of the Word. It is the parents' responsibility to provide learning or worship materials for their child which are connected to the faith/philosophy/world view of the parents. The school will supervise the pupil and ensure the work/worship is completed but the assessment of the pupil's work (if applicable) will be the responsibility of the parents.

If parents wish for their child to be moved to another area within the school during the Celebration of the Word, the parents (or a person designated by them) must attend the school site during Celebration of the Word to supervise their child in the school.

The school is able to refuse a request that the pupil study other aspects of the curriculum during times they have been withdrawn from Celebration of the Word as time is already given over to these subjects within the school's basic curriculum. It is important to bear in mind that the parental right to withdraw a child from RE and/or Celebration of the Word was intended by Parliament to be a 'conscience clause' and not to be used as a general opt-out clause.

Care should be taken not to confuse a request to withdraw a child from Celebration of the Word with a request for absence due to religious observance. The Education Act 1996 provides that a child shall not be taken to have failed to attend regularly at the school, by reason of their absence on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which their parent belongs. In this scenario, the absence will be marked as authorised. Further information can be found in the school's Attendance Policy on the school website.

**Impact:**

Pupils at St Anthony's benefit from a naturally embedded daily pattern of prayer that faithfully reflects the rhythm of the prayer life of the church. Pupils have the confidence, understanding and skill to undertake liturgical ministries and participate fully in a variety of forms of worship. They are confident at articulating the ways in which prayer and liturgy have shaped the way they think about themselves and the world and how this has inspired them to action.

During the course of their time at St Anthony's, our pupils will have grown and deepened their relationship with God. They have a deeper understanding of Jesus and His teachings and this is evident in the way they live out the Gospel values in their daily life choices.