

Celebration of the Word June 2025

Vision

To foster a respectful, responsive and living prayer life in our school, enriched by praise through music and song. To inspire the children to want to be involved actively in prayer and worship and see collective worship as an essential means by which we nurture and enhance the ethos, life and faith of the school. To invite, involve and engage parents, families and parish into the prayer life of our school through our whole-school Celebration of the Word, Masses and celebrations.

Celebration of the Word

Celebration of the Word provides an opportunity for the school community to join together in listening to, and reflecting upon, the Word of God and praising Him in prayer and song. Children are encouraged to be quiet and reverent during times of reflection and spoken prayers and to be actively involved in celebration, sung prayers and action songs in a joyful and appropriate manner. Our Celebration of the Word is as follows:

- A whole school Celebration of the Word is led by a teacher every Monday morning. This includes time for prayer, worship through hymns and the gospel reading from the previous Sunday.
- Each individual class leads an assembly on at least one occasion during the year, including nursery in the summer term, usually held on Wednesday afternoons. This will include prayers and reflections and often refer to the current Vines and Branches topic as studied by that class.
- Other special occasions and events throughout the year are often marked by an assembly. These may cover a relevant topic or theme and include prayers and time for quiet reflection.
- The whole school with join together for singing practice.

Celebration of the Word and Prayer in the classroom

Each class has a prayer focus area. A crucifix, statue, picture, Bible, crib, cross, candle or other such article is often the focus for reverence. These are added to and changed according to the liturgical colours and feasts and may include elements of the current Vines and Branches topic. Tinten resources are used to assist teachers with the planning and delivery of Celebration of the Word.

Each class has a 'collective worship' resource box, which contains a wide range of coloured cloths, artefacts, books etc to support teachers in adapting their prayer focus area for different times of the Liturgical Year. The collective worship boxes also include children's planning cards for the preparing and leading of Celebration of the Word. They are different for each Key Stage and vary throughout the year.

Prayers are said daily in each classroom at the beginning and end of the morning and afternoon sessions – or as a whole school or Key Stage if we have gathered for an assembly. These are usually occasions for communal prayer and children may be encouraged to make their own silent prayer or add to the prayers which are being said.

As part of Vines and Branches, children are often asked to contribute to class prayers or to compose their own prayers based on a theme. These may be shared and celebrated and incorporated into the daily prayers as appropriate.

All children participate in planning for and leading acts of collective worship, which may be integrated into RE lesson time. Prayer leaders and children's Celebration of the Word planning sheets are used in all classes and will also be on display.

Liturgy in school and classroom

On Holy Days of Obligation, a Mass for the whole school is celebrated in the school hall or parish church. Mass is also celebrated at the beginning and end of the school year. The children participate and contribute to these Masses with direction from the headteacher and RE Leader.

Non-sacramental liturgies are also held when appropriate, for example during Lent, children's Stations of the Cross services are led, and during Advent, services of reflection are led by the headteacher or RE Lead. We also regularly welcome visitors into school to help lead collective worship, e.g. catechists from church, Fr. Simon, Mairie Gelling (Chaplain to St Nicholas' School).

During Lent and Advent we offer children the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation through services held in the classroom and in church led by Fr Simon with the RE Lead.

We recognise that for many children their primary experience of the Mass is through school Masses and celebrations. As such, we acknowledge the importance of our role as imparters of the Catholic faith and traditions and aim to lead by example in respect to behaviour, reverence and participation in the Mass. Non-Catholic members of staff are encouraged to liaise with the headteacher or RE leader on any areas they require any guidance or support in relation to the Eucharist or the Mass as a whole.