

Characteristics of an Outstanding Annual Plan of Provision (APOP)

Key Features of a Strong APOP:

- **Strategic and Cyclical:** An outstanding APOP takes a strategic, long-term approach. It should outline the aims and objectives of the school's prayer and liturgy policy and translate them into practical desired outcomes for the school year. [1] The process is cyclical: evaluation of the previous year's plan informs the development of the subsequent year's plan, ensuring continuous improvement and growth. [1]
- **Comprehensive Coverage:** The APOP should encompass all aspects of prayer and liturgy provision throughout the year. This includes:
- **Liturgical Calendar Integration:** The plan should clearly outline how the school's prayer and liturgical life will align with the liturgical year, including key feasts, seasons (Advent, Christmastide, Ordinary Time, Lent, and Eastertide), and celebrations. [2, 3] It should specify the dates and nature of events like school Masses, opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and special liturgies. [4]
- **Regular Prayer:** The APOP should detail the school's provision for regular prayer, including daily or weekly prayer times, assemblies that incorporate prayer, and the use of resources like prayer focuses. [5, 6]
- **Variety and Progression:** The plan should demonstrate a commitment to variety in prayer and liturgy, catering to different ages, abilities, and spiritual needs within the school community. [7] It should also outline how the school will support the spiritual growth and development of students through age-appropriate activities and increasing engagement with the liturgical life of the Church. [8]
- **Collaborative Development:** Creating a strong APOP is a collaborative process involving various stakeholders:
 - **Collaboration with Clergy:** Schools should work closely with local clergy when developing the APOP, particularly when scheduling Masses and other liturgical events. This dialogue ensures harmony between the school's liturgical life and that of the parish. [9]
 - **Input from Staff and Students:** The Prayer and Liturgy Coordinator should actively seek input from staff and students at various stages of the planning process (long-term, medium-term, and short-term). This ensures that the plan is responsive to the needs and experiences of the school community. [5]

- **Governor Oversight:** School governors play a crucial role in overseeing the APOP, ensuring that it aligns with the legal responsibilities and requirements related to prayer and liturgy in Catholic schools. [10]
- **Detailed Planning and Resourcing:** The APOP should provide sufficient detail to guide the planning and execution of individual events and prayer times. [6] This includes:
 - **Logistics and Responsibilities:** Specifying dates, times, locations, and individuals responsible for various aspects of prayer and liturgy.
 - **Resource Allocation:** Outlining the resources allocated to support prayer and liturgy, including staff time, chaplaincy provision, appropriate spaces, and liturgical materials. [11]
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review:** An outstanding APOP incorporates mechanisms for ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and regular review:
 - **Monitoring:** Regular observation and review of prayer and liturgy activities to ensure they are taking place as planned and identify areas for improvement. [12]
 - **Evaluation:** Assessing the effectiveness of the APOP in meeting its stated aims and objectives, considering factors such as student engagement, spiritual growth, and alignment with the principles of Catholic liturgy. [12]
 - **Review:** Formal review of the APOP at least every three years (and ideally annually) to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. This should involve gathering feedback from key stakeholders. [1]
- **Accessibility and Inclusion:** A strong APOP demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that prayer and liturgy are accessible to all members of the school community:
 - **SEND Considerations:** The plan should address the needs of students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) by incorporating appropriate adaptations, resources, and support strategies to facilitate their full participation in prayer and liturgy. [13]
- **Sensitivity to Other Faiths:** While upholding the Catholic identity of the school, the plan should demonstrate sensitivity to the presence of students and staff from other faiths. While the sources primarily focus on Catholic practices, they acknowledge the importance of respectful dialogue and creating a welcoming environment for all. [14-16]

The APOP as a Living Document:

It's essential to view the APOP as a "living document," subject to ongoing adaptation and refinement based on the lived experiences of the school community. Regular monitoring, evaluation, and collaboration will ensure that the plan remains relevant, engaging, and effective in nourishing the spiritual lives of all those within the school.

APOP Tool Kit

APOP Draft Structure

Section 1)

Policy Statement

Policy Introduction

Policy Rationale

Section 2)

Seasonal Overview for each liturgical season (Advent, Christmastide, Ordinary Time, Lent, and Eastertide, Pentecost), outlining key events, resources and guidance for prayer and liturgy.

Section 3)

Description and rationale of weekly provision

Section 4)

The School Calendar / Local Context / Weekly Break Down Examples

Section 5)

Evaluation and monitoring processes and schedules

Section 6)

Inclusive practice

Section 7)

Other Faiths Provision

Section 8)

Skill Strategy

Stakeholder Discussion Points:

Seasonal overview:

Outline under each heading below the events, resources and guidance for each of the areas to be used to form your APOP:

Advent / Christmastide

Ordinary Time

Lent

Easter tide

Pentecost / Ordinary Time

Daily rhythm of Prayer & Liturgy for key stakeholders

This would possibly be presented as a table outlining a typical week structure and provision for the key stakeholders below:

Whole School

Key Stage / Year Group

Class / Form

Small Groups

Individuals

Staff

Parents / Community

The Local Context and School Calendar

This would likely be your existing school calendar

Advent 1

Advent 2

Lent 1

Lent 2

Pentecost 1

Pentecost 2

(Or Monthly)

Weekly Breakdown

These would be any week to view sheets that you use which should, moving forward contain the following detail:

Provision

Resources

People & Places

Evaluation & Monitoring

Accessibility and Adaptation

Evaluation and monitoring processes and schedules

This would be an outline of how when and where you evaluate and monitor Prayer and Liturgy. Think about:

The different types of evaluation you do

Who takes part in the evaluations

Your cycles and systems of monitoring

What you do with the evaluation that leads to impact and change

Inclusive practice

This would be a statement or examples of the things you do that are essential to some but beneficial to all? It should document how you ensure inclusion is a primary factor in planning and what adaptations do you make to ensure that all students can access prayer and liturgy. Consider:

What you do to support those with additional needs to access Prayer & Liturgy

What access is there for young people in EP to Prayer and Liturgy

What inclusive provision looks like in your context

Other Faiths

This would be a document outlining what provision for other faiths looks like across the year

Skill Strategy

This would be the outline the different outcomes for young people and staff around the following areas:

- *The outcomes and skills of the young people – what they will learn and experience*
- *The level of independence – how staff move from direction to facilitation*
- *The planning approaches used – resources and techniques*
- *The way which scripture is explored – translations and length of passages*
- *The different traditional elements – such as traditional prayers and practices*
- *The resources available to support progression – what people will use to support the process*
- *The key vocabulary used*
- *What methods and approaches to evaluation are used.*