



"Where young minds grow and young hearts learn to care"

ST. ANDREW'S C. E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spirituality POLICY

'Love your neighbour as yourself'

Live **O**ur **V**alues **E**veryday



Rationale

As a Church of England school, our spirituality is expressed through our understanding of the Christian gospel, rooted in the person of Jesus Christ. We fully respect that our pupils come from Christian families, from families of other faiths and from families of no faith, and that pupils will hold beliefs and values of their own. Through our spirituality policy, our aim is to enable all our pupils to reflect deeply on what it means to be human and to ascribe meaning and value to human existence.

At St. Andrew's CE Primary, we describe spirituality as the way in which we combine our thoughts and emotions to reflect, respond to, and seek to give meaning and purpose to the experiences that we encounter in life.

The **windows, mirrors, doors** analogy clarifies this meaning. We gaze out through windows onto the world, responding with our emotions and trying to make sense of what we see. We use mirrors to reflect on our thoughts and feelings, and how what we see through the window connects with our inner selves, and how we connect with what we see and understand. This becomes a spiritual experience when it transforms us and so we walk out through the door into life differently from before. For some, this spiritual experience leads to a sense of transcendence: in other words a feeling or belief that something exists beyond what can be directly seen. Christians would describe this state as God.

We seek to enable spiritual development such that children reflect on their capacity for: - being in a relationship with God and God with us, - nurturing our awareness of God being with us, - being attentive to God being with us. Christian spirituality is to point towards a life nurtured on the example of Jesus Christ and his care for others; we aim to develop within children a growing sense of empathy, concern and compassion and an ability to reflect on how our school values affect our relationships with others: love, resilience, unity, thankfulness, aspiration, compassion, forgiveness, excellence, friendship, respect and courage.

Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone. Whilst these questions are not dependent on religious affiliation or on the prerogative of religions, as a church school we set this development within a Christian framework, encouraging all to 'embrace the future with hope and confidence'.

Spirituality is an appreciation and cherishing of what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in relationship with others, of what is generous, creative and loving. The spirit of a person is seen in acts of courage and perseverance, in dealing with both setbacks and praise, in endeavour and enquiry. Spirituality is something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and /or expressed through everyday language.

It has to do with the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death or suffering. It is a way of coping with challenges and recognising success and happiness, enabling a child to flourish, and is encapsulated in our vision.



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Aims

We aim to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual development of all pupils through the following objectives:

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God; St. Andrew's nurtures the infinite worth of every person through love, resilience, unity, thankfulness, aspiration, compassion, forgiveness, excellence, friendship, respect and courage.
- Develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of St. Andrew's as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people's beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own;
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community and how we can all play a part in improving our community and our responsibilities to do the right thing (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others);
- Develop strategies to build good mental health
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make good choices;
- Develop the skills and language required to enable children to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life (e.g: through RE, Philosophy, Science, Reflection Time, prayer and worship);
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life;
- Develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others;
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination;
- Develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc
- Develop a capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation.



Through our curriculum, the school pursues the aims and objectives by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by the school's Christian vision statement and associated values;
- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life. This includes Worship, RE, Philosophy, Reflection time, 'stunning starts' to topics and other 'awe and wonder' curriculum events;
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children;
- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this;
- An understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of prayer and of the Bible is nurtured and developed;
- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies making use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits;
- The provision of opportunities to listen attentively and observe carefully, listening with discernment, valuing what is good and worthwhile and making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas;
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others. Children at St. Andrew's are encouraged to show a 'growth mindset', knowing that failure is a part of learning and a path to future success;
- That the RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faiths and world view perspectives
- That children are given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected. Every class has regular 'Forest School' curriculum time, as well as the opportunity to use our local forest school to support learning in other subjects where relevant.

In our school we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to children's spiritual development and to highlight opportunities for these in our planning by:

- Highlighting on curriculum medium term plans planned opportunities to develop children's spirituality
- Seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy;
- Allowing children the security and opportunity to explore and express feelings and emotions and to celebrate diversity;
- Providing opportunities for prayer including silence and stillness;
- Sharing feelings and experiences that foster hope, joy, reassurance and encouragement;
- Encouraging children to develop relationships based on the school's Christian vision and associated values;



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- Enabling children to make the links between the Church and Biblical teachings, the life of the school and the wider community and how these impact on their own understanding of themselves and their place within the world today;
- Providing an environment that promotes space to reflect, think and wonder.

Monitoring and evaluation

Spiritual development cannot be measured and continues throughout our lives. However, opportunities offered to children for spiritual development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways;

- Observing and listening to children;
- Sharing of classroom work and practice;
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. worship feedback, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art;