



Whitesheet
CE Primary Academy

SPIRITUALITY POLICY

Review Date: January 2025

Spirituality Policy

Our vision and values underpin everything we do and informs every decision we make.

Our Vision Statement

'Climbing to new heights together'

Our vision and values are at the core of all we do. They underpin our teaching, learning and daily relationships, creating a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for all. Our aim is to provide a happy and caring community where every child is known and feels special. We are rightly proud of our pupils, their understanding of the world around them, their achievements, and the way they live out our values.

Theology

Our biblical underpinning is taken from the book of Matthew. It is where we see Jesus go up a mountain to reflect, pray and be with God. Here we see him begin to teach people the 'Beatitudes' where he impresses on us the importance of peace making, righteousness and forgiveness. The image of the mountain is represented by our hillock, where we identify as a learners, understanding from Jesus how to live life in all its fullness and together going forth to spread his word.

'When Jesus saw the crowds of people there, he went up on a hill and sat down. His followers came and sat next to him. Then Jesus began teaching the people.'

Matthew 5.1-2

Values

We uphold our chosen Christian values which provide the focus for our worships and times of reflection whilst being interweaved within our daily actions. They enable our pupils to leave our school with a rich tapestry of core skills and knowledge resulting in a passion of lifelong learning and the belief that they can achieve anything.

Community - *I have a sense of belonging.*

Hope – *I am optimistic.*

Friendship – *I am a good friend to everyone.*

Respect – *I treat others how I wish to be treated.*

Resilience – *I don't give up; I learn from my mistakes.*

Wisdom – *I seek knowledge to empower my choices.*

We aim to take deliberate and effective action to create a loving learning community by promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. We aspire for this development to be thoughtful and wide ranging, covering all areas of life in and out of school.

We choose to pursue this loving learning community with confidence and courage, for we know "perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment," (1 John 4:18) and "the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).

A values-based education succeeds not when pupils have learnt about the values, but when those values start to influence their normal behaviour and become the identity of the school.

It is through this approach that we can grow children's spiritual capital and increase their Spiritual capacity through the opportunities to experience something and have the time to respond and reflect on their experience.

Self

- ❖ Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- ❖ Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- ❖ Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- ❖ Exploration of personal faith
- ❖ Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- ❖ Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance
- ❖ To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- ❖ Making a difference; responsibility

Beauty

- ❖ Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- ❖ Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- ❖ Taking time for what really matters
- ❖ Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature

Beyond

- ❖ Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- ❖ Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (eg about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- ❖ Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- ❖ Making sense of the world

Organisation and Implementation

We choose to promote curiosity; the inclination to question. The exercise of imagination, insight and intuition motivates children to learn. In view of this teaching styles are adopted which:

- Value the children's questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Enable the children to make connections between aspects of their learning.
- Encourage the children to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference, e.g. asking 'why?', 'how?', and 'where?' as well as 'what?'.

Spirituality is an inherent interwoven part of all aspects of school life and is nurtured and promoted as a natural element of the curriculum. The following opportunities will be made available, as an integral part of the school's practice, in order to facilitate the development of spirituality:

- To explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples' lives.
- Where children already have religious beliefs, to support and develop these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them, as an integral part of the school's practice.
- To engage in enquiry and exploration as part of experiential, first hand learning.
- To look attentively and observe carefully.
- To be creative and imaginative.
- To listen with discernment.
- To reflect and respond to issues in moments of quiet or inspired through music, art, text, film or artefacts.
- To explore and develop what animates themselves and others.
- To understand human feelings and emotions, the way they impact on people and how an understanding of them can be helpful.
- To value what is good and worthwhile and to make value judgements through discussion and exchange of views.
- To work collaboratively with peers, valuing the contribution made by others.
- To respect all, as modelled by staff in their relationships with others.
- To experience silent, calm, and tranquil moments which afford time for reflection.
- To work and live in harmony with others in the school and wider community.
- To have confidence to express ideas, views, and opinions, even if others do not agree.

Opportunities for spiritual development are presented or naturally arise and are promoted in all aspects of the curriculum and school life. The children become actively engaged in an enquiry-based curriculum, which provides a wide range of experiential learning opportunities that enables them to question, reflect and respond, and consider their own values, beliefs and feelings and those of others. Outlined below are some of the keyways in which spiritual development is nurtured and promoted as part of the curriculum:

In English (reading and writing):

- ❖ Empathy with authors and the characters in stories and plays
- ❖ The appreciation of beauty in language
- ❖ Emotions and sentiments in writing and speech
- ❖ The values of great works
- ❖ Heroes and heroines in literature
- ❖ Imagining oneself as someone else
- ❖ Escaping into other worlds through literature
- ❖ The element of wonder in literature

In Maths:

- ❖ Infinity and nothing
- ❖ Pattern and order including natural patterns e.g. snowflakes
- ❖ Shape and regularity
- ❖ Truth, certainty and likelihood
- ❖ The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations

In Religious Education:

- ❖ People, places, things, books, actions and ideas held by religious believers to be holy
- ❖ Ultimate questions of meaning and purpose
- ❖ Ideas of the divine/questions of God
- ❖ Forms of worship
- ❖ Use of music, art and drama to express beliefs
- ❖ Varieties of beliefs, celebrations and rituals
- ❖ Ideas of commitment
- ❖ The idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers
- ❖ Right, wrong and ethics including justice

In Science:

- ❖ Wonder as the basis of science
- ❖ Questions of beginning, creation and evolution
- ❖ Discovering the limits of experimentation
- ❖ Birth, life, death and renewal
- ❖ The universe and beyond
- ❖ Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists
- ❖ The impact of scientific achievements

In Physical Education:

- ❖ Being a team member
- ❖ Aspiring to achieve personal best
- ❖ Development of skills, endurance and achievement
- ❖ Celebrating achievements and participation in sport
- ❖ Learning from mistakes
- ❖ Displaying good sportsmanship

In Design and Technology:

- ❖ Discovering how something works
- ❖ Appreciating inventiveness
- ❖ Beauty in design
- ❖ Perseverance to solve problems
- ❖ Personal achievement
- ❖ Learning from others and nature

In Computing:

- ❖ The wonder of worldwide instant communication
- ❖ The speed of the growth of knowledge
- ❖ The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide

In the Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama and Dance):

- ❖ The work of creative artists from a variety of times and places
- ❖ Beauty, truth and goodness
- ❖ Expressing, interpreting and exploring deep feelings and profound beliefs
- ❖ Artistic creativity
- ❖ The effects of the arts on emotions and senses
- ❖ The arts as means of expressing mood
- ❖ Skill in creation and performance, and particularly in personal reflection upon their own creativity using various art forms.
- ❖ Effects on the emotions and senses

In Geography:

- ❖ Wonder at the diversity of environments and people
- ❖ Questions about the care of the environment
- ❖ The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns
- ❖ World (economic) development
- ❖ Land formation
- ❖ Empathy with people from other parts of the world

In History:

- ❖ Being in touch with past people, things and ideas
- ❖ Being part of history
- ❖ Handling artefacts
- ❖ Influential events and people
- ❖ The commitment of significant people in history
- ❖ War and peace
- ❖ The nature and importance of invention and exploration
- ❖ Empathy with people from other times in history

In Collective Worship:

- ❖ Opportunities for reflection and response planned into worship
- ❖ Stillness
- ❖ Personal and collective beliefs are respected
- ❖ Sharing and celebrating common beliefs
- ❖ Celebrating success
- ❖ Sharing happiness, sorrow, hurt, excitement, anticipation, fear, etc.
- ❖ Common activities such as singing, listening, laughing, praying, reflecting on a theme
- ❖ Remembering and celebrating the lives of people of spiritual significance
- ❖ Emphasising common purpose and values
- ❖ Experiencing emotions

In addition, as part of the curriculum, the children have opportunities:

- ❖ To visit places of beauty, interest and challenge
- ❖ To admire and wonder at the natural environment and human creative efforts
- ❖ To work out personal relationships in challenging situations
- ❖ To experience community cohesion links at a local, national and global level
- ❖ To engage in charity based activities
- ❖ To participate in a wide range of events and activities, involving a range of outside agencies, coaches, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Spirituality will monitor as part of our on-going and planned monitoring and evaluation schedule. Spiritual opportunities and development will be reported on through curriculum and ethos monitoring in conjunction with members of our Academy Standards and Ethos Committee and other external professionals within the Trust.