



St James C of E Junior School

# Spirituality Policy

Our vision is to enable all to flourish

Status and review cycle: Bi-annually  
Responsible group: The Trust with LGB amendments to setting.  
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## **1.0 The Legal Framework**

- 1.1 The Education Act 2005 provides the legal framework for Ofsted’s routine inspections. The Education Inspection Framework (EIF) from 2019 sets out that Ofsted will routinely, as part of its inspections, evaluate the effectiveness of the school’s provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- 1.2 EIF asks inspectors to evaluate the extent to which the provision leaders have put in place enables pupils to have the:
- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspectives on life
  - knowledge of, and respect for, different people’s faiths, feelings and values
  - sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
  - use of imagination and creativity in their learning
  - willingness to reflect on their experiences
- 1.3 The Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) operates under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The current framework in 2023 evaluates the impact of the school's distinctive Christian vision in developing pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in Church schools.
- 1.4 The inspection questions ask the inspector to consider how the school’s distinctive vision drives the leader's decisions across the school and in particular:
- How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?
  - How is daily collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?
  - In the context of the school as a church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enrich collective worship and individuals’ spiritual development?
  - How does the Trust contribute to and enhance the school’s worship and spiritual life?

## **2.0 What is Spirituality?**

“Spirituality is the act of being fully human by discovering and revealing ourselves through love. We realise this through the personal stories that hold meaning for us and help us to become who we are.” *Andrew Ricketts, Spiritual Development Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom May 2019.*

- 2.1 Our Trust vision “to enable all to flourish” is rooted throughout all of the decisions leaders at all levels make. We see each child and adult as unique, precious and created in God’s image.
- 2.2 We recognise that developing the spirituality of our pupils and adults is a fundamental aspect of enabling them to flourish. It is expected that provision for developing spirituality is well planned and of high quality so that the whole community is engaged on a journey of discovery.

2.3 We believe that, in order to support and develop children's spirituality, we have three lenses that we view this through:

- Self
- Focusing on self will allow each individual to understand themselves as the unique human they were created to be.
- Others
- Becoming increasing aware of others with a growing empathy, concern and compassion for how we treat others.
- Beyond
- A growing relationship with the transcendental and the ability to explore experiences beyond every day.

2.4 As a Trust we serve a wide and diverse community, those of faith and none. Our provision for spiritual development therefore must take account of the unique communities we serve.

### **3.0 Spirituality in our Trust?**

3.1 We will ensure that all our family:

- are constantly learning about self through activities that help us to understand ourselves and the wider impact we have on others, the world and beyond.
- are able to be reflective about our own beliefs and how these inform our perspective on life and our interest in and respect for those who believe something different
- are respectful of and understand other people's faiths, their feelings, values and world views.
- have a sense of enjoyment and curiosity in learning about ourselves, others and the world and beyond us for some this will mean God.
- use imagination and creativity in our learning.
- have a willingness to reflect on our experiences.

### **4.0 Aims**

4.1 We believe in creating a culture where children and adults can explore their own selves and the world beyond. We aim to:

- support all within the family to grow and flourish
- support mental health and well-being, enabling a sense of calm and peace.
- support the appreciation the beautiful world we live in and to be alive to experiences of awe and wonder.
- develop that toddler-like curiosity and questioning (why, what, where, how etc).
- encourage all to stop, reflect and be grateful, heightening senses and paying attention to detail.
- support the understanding that when times are tough there is hope
- foster a culture where when we make mistakes we can move forward positively to grow and learn.

- develop perseverance and self-efficacy, building confidence and supporting our children and adults to achieve goals.
- encourage all to marvel at the simple and beautiful. To enjoy sound, colour, structure and form.
- enable instinctive thought about other people, places and encourage a big picture view.
- enable all to understand and value our place in this world.

These aims will enable pupils and adults to have a quality of life that encompasses respect, awareness, compassion, curiosity and understanding enabling the development of relationships that reflect order, reason, balance and integrity within a distinctively Christian context

#### Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.2 Every member of our staff team is committed to support this spiritual growth wherever appropriate, recognising there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners in every aspect of our school life.
- 4.3 In this school Katharine McFarland and Emma Gardiner are responsible for supporting and leading spiritual development. This includes monitoring opportunities for spiritual growth in collective worship, the whole curriculum (including RE) and the general ethos of the school within daily life.
- 4.4 This role also includes:
- ensuring personal knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by participating in CPD and shared good practice.
  - providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary.
  - ensuring all staff are familiar with the shared language of spirituality.
  - monitoring the opportunities for spiritual growth through regular observations and learning walks in both formal and informal contexts, discussions with colleagues and pupil voice.
  - contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation and inspection process.

### **5.0 Culture**

- 5.1 We recognise that, in order to support spiritual flourishing for our children, we need to ensure that we have created a culture that enables opportunities for spiritual development to be present. In order to achieve this we will:
- create the right culture by ensuring that our Trust and school visions and values are lived out in all our interactions.
  - ensuring we take time to stop and reflect or to ask the deeper questions ensuing there is space and time to think and respond.
  - allowing and encouraging individuals to choose to respond to these types of questions and respecting the difference between this and our normal lesson expectations.

- providing opportunities to use of non-verbal ways to elicit and draw out response from children, especially important for pupils who are non-verbal or who have SEND.
- use a range of sensory strategies like music, video and sounds to allow deeper reflection.
- allow children to respond and express themselves in a range of ways - with words, images, music and sounds.
- create the space and climate to allow pupils to be mindful of how this makes others feel.
- teach the curriculum with consideration to the Trust curriculum and spirituality documents.

## **6.0 Language of Spirituality**

6.1 To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something which is beyond words. To make conversations about spirituality more accessible to every member of our school community, this school has chosen to follow ideas developed by the Education Department at the Diocese of Gloucester.

6.2 This language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that everyone is a valued creation, individually and uniquely made by God, like pots made by a potter (Isaiah 64:8). Yet, in life, things happen that impact on the physical 'pot' of life and create cracks that provide a glimpse of something 'beyond' the tangible. Christians would view this as an opportunity to relate to the Divine Creator God.

Cracks may be caused when something so good and breath-taking happens that the pot expands and cracks – the wows of life.

Cracks may happen when something challenging happens and threatens the comfort of everyday – the ows of life.

Cracks can also happen in the stillness and ordinariness of everyday – the nows of life, when a moment of stillness, a pause or prayer creates a crack in the normal, physical every day.

In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the wows, ows and nows of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with gold and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality.

This school uses this language and the concepts of wows, ows and nows. These are used to explore relationships with:

- ourselves
- others
- the wider natural world and beyond
- an invitation to relate to God.

## **7.0 Organisation**

- 7.1 The spiritual growth of pupils must not be deemed to be related simply to the academic subject of RE, opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners will be developed in every aspect of our school life.

We support the whole school community to share this responsibility and to develop the shared language of spirituality outlined in section 7. Opportunities are available for all to develop spiritually in our supportive and nurturing school inspired by our vision and lived out through our Christian values.

Within our school daily activities, there are some specific opportunities that will contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils: collective worship, the curriculum we offer as well as the general ethos and interactions within the school.

Every classroom has a reflective area so that our pupils have a space for quiet, contemplative thoughts. Our outside spaces also offer calm spaces which allow pupils further opportunities for spiritual reflection.

## **8.0 Spirituality in Collective Worship**

- 8.1 The daily act of collective worship is at the heart of our school life. It provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared.
- 8.2 Collective Worship is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.
- 8.3 Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present (*now* moments) which are often linked to invitations to pray.
- 8.4 Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place for hearing the Christian story and other worldviews. They are offered an understanding of worship by being invited to participate in, or observe, Christian spiritual practices such as prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible and liturgy.
- 8.5 Opportunities to reflect on the *wows* of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise with the *ow* moments of disappointment or pain.
- 8.6 Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service.
- 8.7 Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark seasonal Christian festivals and celebrations in the calendars of other faiths. In this way pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

## **9.0 Spirituality in Religious Education**

- 9.1 The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education (RE) in Church of England Schools and guides our school's approach to RE and spirituality. The RE curriculum should enable pupils to have a rich and deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice and the ways in which it is unique and diverse. It should also allow pupils to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of other religions and world views in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus.
- 9.2 Learning activities in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. Lessons should provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality and the language of *wows*, *ows* and *nows* where appropriate. For further details, please refer to the school's Religious Education Policy and The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

### **10.0 Spirituality in the Curriculum**

Spiritual capacities are relevant to all pupils, of any religious tradition or none, and to all areas of the curriculum. They are an important area to explore when considering spiritual growth. However, these capacities can be exercised in various ways in the service of various purposes. We do not encounter them in the abstract. The ways in which we exercise them are bound up with our beliefs, values and commitments. *David Smith - Making Sense of Spiritual Development*

- 10.1 Our distinctive Christian vision and associated values are a key driver in our whole school's curriculum design and these values inspire pupils' spiritual growth.
- 10.2 Drawing on the language of *wows*, *ows* and *nows*, conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching from EYFS to Year 6. In order to support staff in delivering opportunities to deepen pupils' spiritual journeys, the Trust has produced a curriculum document which sets out opportunities to develop pupils understanding of self, others and beyond.

### **11.0 Staff Development and Training**

- 11.1 We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.
- 11.2 ECTs and staff who are new to our schools will receive training and support from leaders to ensure that they understand the Trust's approach.

### **12.0 Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 12.1 This policy is shared on the Trust and school's website and is part of the induction pack for new staff and new governors. This policy is reviewed every 2 years, or more frequently, as required.

- I2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Spirituality and the Spirituality across the Curriculum documents. It should also be read in conjunction with the school's Collective Worship and Religious Education policy.
- I2.3 The Local Governing Board ensure that this policy is fully implemented, and that practice is consistent with the school's Christian vision, in line with the school's monitoring policy and schedule for governors.
- I2.4 Leaders will regularly review the impact of their work in support of pupils' spiritual flourishing and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff in order to further develop their work. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing board and are then actioned as appropriate.