



Spirituality Development in School Policy

“Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their life.” Proverbs 22:6

Our vision

Our vision drives and supports the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. We believe that spirituality is the golden thread that runs through our school. We attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community. Spiritual development is supported through collective worship, the curriculum, the school environment and how we interact with ourselves, others, the world and God/divine being through stillness, creativity, curiosity and big questions.

As Derek Holloway writes, spiritual development is intrinsic to every part of our work:

“I would strongly contend that in all schools, and certainly in Church schools, that spiritual development is not something you should hide away in a couple of curriculum boxes or treat as an afterthought. I must be something that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life.”

The 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: ‘*We are the clay, you are our potter; we all are the work of your hands.*’ (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 everyday.

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.

St. Luke's 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 offering the invitation to relate to God.

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of St. Luke's. 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.

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.

Through daily Collective Worship, pupils 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 and are introduced to different traditions.

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. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. 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. Collective Worship at St. Luke's is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

We follow the cycle of **Encounter**, **Reflection** and **Transformation** throughout the school week. On Mondays, children will encounter a new theme during whole school (or Key Stage where appropriate) Collective Worship. During Wednesdays' phase Collective Worship, children are encouraged to reflect on the theme. On Thursdays, Children have the opportunity to consider how they will be transformed by what they have encounter and reflected on during their Class Worship. These responses are recorded and added to the Worship display. The Spirituality threads of **Self**, **Others**, **World and Beauty**, and **Beyond** are regularly a focus for our collective worship themes.

This is based on the Progression in Spirituality document which has been adapted from: Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education 2012 (Authors Andrew Rickett; Derek Holloway).

Spirituality in Religious Education

The Church of England's *Statement of Entitlement* outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality. 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. They 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.

We aim for children, and adults, to grow in their ability to:

- be guided by their beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them
- be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community
- love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges
- exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder ('wows').

- be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
- be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer (nows)
- be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others (ows)
- be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success
- demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions
- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards others

(From David Smith's work on Spiritual Capacities)

Legal requirements

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which: (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

To fulfil their legal obligations under section 48 of the 2005 Education Act, SIAMS inspections make judgments on SMSC education in Church of England and Methodist schools.

The SIAMS Framework (2024) references spirituality implicitly and explicitly in two of the inspector questions:

IQ2: How does the curriculum reflect the school's theologically rooted Christian vision?

b) How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?

IQ3: How is daily collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?

b) How do partnerships with the DBE and/or MAST, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?

c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?

d) 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 enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?

e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) which requires educating the whole person.

The OFSTED framework 2024 states that provision for pupil's spiritual includes developing their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective 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

Evidence may be gathered by Ofsted inspectors from anywhere relevant to ensure that schools are promoting SMSC, mental and physical development of pupils at the schools; and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We support pupils in their spiritual development by:

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder (wows) as planned moments and as they arise
- providing 'reflection spaces' in classrooms, public spaces, outside, and by using the church building.
- Children engaging setting up a week of 'Prayer Spaces' activities each year.
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership, through planning (in conjunction with the head teacher (KS2) or Collective Worship Co-ordinator (KS1)) and leading Class Collective Worship every Thursday. KS2 Worship Council lead prayers and readings in Church during important services such as Christingle and Holy Communion. LKS2 lead an Easter Service in Church. UKS2 lead a Harvest Festival Service in Church

As a staff team:

- We have a staff understanding and shared language of spiritual development.
- We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.
- We revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings
- We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development.
- We use models, language to support our own thinking in spirituality: the *ows*, *wows* and *nows*
- We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett / Rebecca Nye).
- We have identified opportunities for spiritual development and deeper thinking across the curriculum, for all age groups.
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.
- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context and personal worldview.
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website.
- We discuss spirituality with our church and the Diocesan Education Team and others who can further support this golden thread.
- The delivery and content is accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community, supporting the development of the whole child beyond the physical and the academic.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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

- Observing collective worship and listening to pupils responses.
- Discussions with pupils (pupil voice)
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school's Christian vision and values.
- Sharing of classroom work and ideas produced during Class Worship. This can be seen on classes' Worship displays or in their Worship folders.
- Ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spiritual development means in this school by providing them with induction and development training.
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. RE Big Questions class books, individual RE books, RE floor books (KS1), creative writing, art.

This will impact on the opportunities and experiences that are available to children and adults across the school community enabling all to flourish.

We access diocesan-led training for those with a particular role in planning for and evaluating spiritual development.

Opportunities for spiritual flourishing of adults

Under the SIAMS framework, it is also the intention that the spiritual flourishing of adults should be enabled and enhanced by the work of the school. We consider ways in which our routines and practices (e.g. staff meetings, CPD, collective worship, church services, staff retreats) can contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community.

Other related policies:

Collective Worship

Teaching and Learning

Relationships and Behaviour

SMSC

All subject specific curriculum policies

Prayer used by the School which link to our 'wows', 'ows' and 'nows' vision.

Mysterious God,

Most of the time we can explain what happens in the world by science

But sometimes we may see a glimpse of something beyond:

The joy of making a new friend,

The excitement of being able to do something today which we couldn't do yesterday,

The delight of warm sun on our faces or splashing in cold puddles.

In these **wow** moments, when we're aware of something beyond,

Help us to be open to the idea of you, God.

Comforting God,

Most of the time we feel safe and secure

But sometimes life can be difficult and painful and we long for something beyond:

Someone who understands what it's like to be alone,

Or let down by friends,

Or feel like they have nowhere to call home.

In these **ow** moments, help us to be open to something beyond

And brave enough to reach out and pray.

Constant God,

Most of the time we are busy running or learning or playing,

But sometimes it's good simply to be, help us then to glimpse something beyond the everyday:

When we are still,
When we are present to ourselves,
When there is nothing to distract us.
In these **now** moments, help us to be open your possibility God
And help us to pray.

Referenced reading:

Church of England Education Office (CEEO) Spiritual Development – Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (2019)

Derek Holloway et al, *Spiritual Development : Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom* (The Church of England Education Office April 2019)