

# St Oswald's C of E Academy



## Our Vision

We look towards the parable of the Good Samaritan as our guide. We aspire for our school to be a place where all children are valued, where they feel safe, are happy and learn well. We want our school to have a warm, friendly atmosphere, which supports families, builds relationships and sets children up for a life of learning. We want our Christian values to guide our pupils along the right path and help them to achieve fulfilling and happy lives.

**'Love your neighbour as yourself' - Parable of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37**

## Spirituality Policy

Type of Policy: Good Practice  
Date of Policy: November 2023  
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# **INTENT**

## **Rationale**

'For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have a full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed' (John Bradford).

A key part of our vision and belief is to nurture children's spiritual awareness and develop each child's spiritual character.

## **What is spirituality?**

Spirituality concerns a person's relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or the transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements: self; others; transcendence and beauty form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

It is also vital that all of the adults in school also see the need to develop their own spirituality for their own wellbeing, and so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

The four elements - what these consist of:

### **1. 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

### **2. Others**

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

### **3. Transcendence (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

#### **4. 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

# **IMPLEMENTATION**

## **How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality. We ensure:**

- Regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in assembly, going for a walk etc.
- Many opportunities for creativity, using the imagination and for play
- Singing together
- Regular time for prayer. (Including being thankful, saying sorry and allowing children the opportunity to open themselves to God.
- Frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings. We use the Sheffield PSHE scheme to support this across the school.
- Constant reaffirmation of the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with others
- Opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
- That we encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry.
- We encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways.
- Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme and weekly 'Time to Talk' opportunities.
- We read often to children, and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. (scripture and non-scripture)

## **How we develop Spirituality at St Oswald's C of E Academy**

- Our Class RE Books are used to record reflections, thoughts and moments of awe and wonder
- Our structured programme for Collective Worship across the school incorporates opportunities for spiritual development. Themes are planned based on the liturgical year and values.
- A daily act of Collective worship is in place and allows opportunities for children and adults to be involved within the school and wider community
- Displays and pictures around the school continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality
- The RE curriculum is inspiring and motivating
- All visits and visitors support our Vision and values

## **IMPACT**

### **Assessment**

Spirituality will be assessed as an integral part of curriculum practice and the children's involvement in the life of the school community.

These are areas in which children are expected to grow as part of their spiritual development:

- Reflect on their experiences with increasing sensitivity.
- Question and explore the meaning of experience.
- Understand and evaluate a range of possible reasons and interpretations.
- Develop personal views and insights.
- Apply insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to their own lives in line with the school's Anglican status and history.
- Know that belief is valuable and that the Christian belief is endorsed by the whole school community.

### **Evidence of spirituality**

- We look to ensure that children learn to love themselves and enjoy good relationships with others through PSHE.
- We foster a love of learning, imagination and curiosity and delight in the world around them.
- Our Core Values encourage children to move away from materialistic choices and to express themselves and their feelings with empathy. Children use the language of our core values to express themselves
- We aim to help develop a Growth mindset and a real joy discovering new skills through our real and practical curriculum.
- We look to develop a strong sense of moral purpose and a love of what is good.
- We encourage time for stillness and for quiet reflection through the use of the Reflection Garden.

Opportunities for spiritual development are presented or naturally arise, and are promoted in all aspects of the curriculum and school life as the children become actively engaged in an enquiry-based curriculum, which provides a wide range of experiential learning opportunities that enables them to question, consider, reflect and respond, and consider their own values, beliefs and feelings and those of others, with whom they are working alongside or with.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Provision for spiritual development is monitored and reviewed by:

- Monitoring of teaching and learning and work scrutiny by RE/Collective Worship Leader, senior management, Head Teacher and Local School Board members.
- Worship Council.
- Discussions at staff and Local School Board meetings.
- Audits of policies and schemes of work.
- RE and Collective Worship Development Plans.

## **Appendix A**

**Outlined below are some of the key ways in which spiritual development is nurtured and promoted as part of the curriculum:**

### **In Physical Education:**

- Being a team member.
- Pushing yourself to the limits.
- Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement.
- Emotion in sport.
- Personal limitation and failure.
- Appreciation of perfection.
- Sportsmanship.

### **In Design and Technology:**

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

### **In English:**

- 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.
- Shape and regularity.
- Truth, certainty and likelihood.
- The universality of mathematics over time and space.

### **In Humanities (History and 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.
- 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.
- Interpretation in history.
- The nature and importance of invention and exploration.
- Empathy with people from other times in history.

### **In Creative Arts (Art and Music)**

- 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.
- Personal response and preference.
- Mood, skill, pattern, formulae

### **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.
- The interconnectivity with the digital world
- Learning about empathy and behaviour online

### **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.
- Regularity and order in science.
- Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists.
- The impact of scientific achievements.

### **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 and belonging to groups and institutions.
- The idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers.

#### **In PSHE**

- Questions about self
- Ideas of personal growth and BRIGHT learning attitudes
- Developing empathy with others
- Exploring points of view
- Maintaining positive relationship

#### **Other areas of the school include:**

##### **In Collective Worship:**

- Opportunities for reflection and response are 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.

##### **Sports Clubs:**

- Being a team member.
- Pushing yourself to the limits.
- Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement.
- Emotion in sport.
- Personal limitation and failure.
- Appreciation of perfection.
- Sportsmanship.

##### **Outdoor learning:**

- Learning about the natural world
- Appreciating creation
- Learning how to look after our natural world
- Finding awe and wonder in growing plants

##### **Reflection Garden:**

- Time for stillness to observe the world around them
- Time for encouraging children to be reflective about their day
- Reading prayers
- Saying prayers

- Writing prayers and prayerful activities

### **Playground Leaders**

- Developing self as a leader
- Working together
- Showing a loving attitude towards other members of school
- Treating others with empathy

### **Pupil Parliament, Worship Council an Eco-Committee**

- Taking on responsibility
- Looking after the welfare of others
- Treating others with empathy
- Looking beyond our immediate environment and thinking what can we do
- Courageous Advocacy

### **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 unusual and challenging situations.
- To experience community cohesion links at a local, national and global level.
- To engage in courageous advocacy.
- To participate in a wide range of events and activities, involving a range of outside agencies, coaches, etc.

### **In order to facilitate spiritual development the organisation of the school and the environment for learning are such that:**

- Everyone involved in the life of the school is valued and seen to be valued.
- Policies and ensuing practices are clearly seen to reflect the worth of individuals.
- Behaviour and people management policies and practices are collectively arrived at and discussed regularly.
- All adults recognise the need to set good examples of mutual respect and considerate behaviour.
- The quality and nature of the learning environment and displays reflect the value placed on pupils and staff.
- Aesthetic awareness is encouraged.
- The atmosphere of the school welcomes differences in beliefs and values, and invites everyone to belong.
- The achievements, successes and efforts of everyone are recognised and celebrated.