

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School



Spirituality Policy

Introduction

Understanding spirituality can be quite complex as it often means something different to each person but at St Matthew's, we understand spirituality to be our relationships with ourselves, our family, friends, those around us, to God and to all of creation. It is the sense of awe and wonder that comes from nature, experiences or encounters and can transform how we view ourselves and the world.

Just like a tree, we believe spirituality can grow and develop over time and so we nurture spiritual development so that our pupils benefit from the fruits of this in the future. The image of a tree is used to both understand and teach spirituality and we have pictures of trees interwoven through our values and mission statement in both buildings and as a feature for our older pupils.



The KS2 building has been designed so that each of the hall doors has a stencil of a tree which creates a shadow on the floor. It is a reminder of our approach to spirituality and a beautiful addition to our new building.

Our approach to spirituality

T: Transform (door)

R: Reflect (mirror)

E: Experience (window)

E: Expression (candle)

Transformation - The door (learning in action)

Spirituality is about Transformation. The image of the door enables us to think about the things that change in life when we go from one place to another. Which people might be beyond the door, what do we have in common, what are our differences, how can we help, what can change?

Reflection - The mirror (learning from)

Spirituality is about Reflection. This encourages our school community to spend time reflecting on themselves; their thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings. Reflection provides space to ask questions about themselves.

Experience - The window (learning about)

Spirituality is about Experience. This encourages an appreciation of our world. Imagine looking out of a window at the world around us. Think about its beauty and any questions or curiosities you have. Giving space to ask questions about the world around us.

Expression - The candle (a personal response)

Spirituality is about Expression. Our response to an experience, a feeling or a thought. It is an awareness of the things we cannot see in life, but we can feel. For many in our community this is expressed as an awareness of God and personal faith. It is also about using a spiritual moment to nurture creativity and develop imagination.

We believe these four areas of Spirituality are accessible and relevant to all members of school community and can be expressed, grown and further defined in a variety of ways relevant to personal circumstances, views and beliefs. They align with our vision, 'Let Not Your Light Be Hidden... Let Your Light Shine' and our approach allows opportunities for the light to grow not only in ourselves but alongside each other and across our wider community.

Opportunities for Spiritual development:

Driven by our vision for pupils to have the foundations in all aspects of their 'self' (physical, social, moral, spiritual, cultural and emotions) to have successful lives, our broad, ambitious curriculum, alongside the additional activities, resources and experiences we provide, give our pupils lots of opportunities to grow and develop their Spirituality in a way that is meaningful to them. This list is a starting point and not exhaustive of what we do.

Transformation

- Opportunities are provided 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
- The use of Picture News supports pupil awareness of current events and challenges them to consider the realities of other people in the local and global community
- An empowered school council decides the focus of our charitable work and they run events for the issues that are important to them and affect others

Reflection

- Support for pupils with their learning so they are able to enjoy success and learn from their mistakes; developing Building Learning Power (BLP)
- The RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives which pupils are then encouraged to compare to their own ideas and beliefs
- Share and promote strategies for positive mental health and well-being for individual circumstances
- Questions for pupils to respond to and space to ask their own questions. Prompts for each area of Spiritual development and questions to ponder and explore

Experience

- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life such as visits, practical activities and creative expression
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual experiences are also recognised, acknowledged and celebrated by staff and pupils;
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to explore the wonder of the natural world. We share the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected while supporting pupils to find reasons to cherish the world for their own beliefs and views.
- Pupils hold us to account for our impact on the environment and support new ways to protect our natural world

Expression



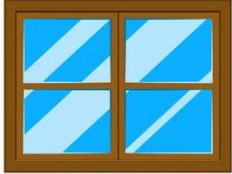

- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for pupils to respond and reflect on this;

- For those of the Christian faith, an understanding of worship, prayer and the Bible is further nurtured and developed while those of other world faiths are able to develop theirs and share with others
- The outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, reflection and stillness (the outdoor classroom Windmill Lane and the quiet area in Croxall Way)
- The school, church and other sacred places are used across the curriculum, giving pupils the opportunity to explore their own spirituality
- Pupil's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and we make use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits;
- Questions for pupils to respond to and also space to ask their own questions. Prompts for each area of Spiritual development and questions to ponder and explore

We hope these opportunities will provide and develop in our pupils:

- Compassion for others and the ability to form meaningful relationships with others
- Feel brave enough to ask their own questions in life and express any doubts and wonders
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others;
- An appreciation of their uniqueness and value, as a child made in the image of God;
- An understanding of our distinctive ethos and vision as Church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- Knowledge and understanding of our core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them while also developing their own core values
- Feelings of curiosity and wonder and themselves and the world around them;
- An awareness of and respect for other peoples' beliefs and faiths and the ability to develop and articulate their own
- An appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others);
- Strategies to build good mental health and promote healthy well-being now and into their futures;
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions;
- The skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions to certain encounters, events and changes that might occur in life.
- An awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth; learning how to move forwards
- Encourage creativity and imagination;
- The ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc.
- A capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation.
- Self-respect and confidence in their identity
- Connect with themselves and God (if they have a personal faith) and the world around them

How we develop spirituality at St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

T	<p>Transformation</p> <p>(learning in action)</p>	<p>The Door</p>		<p>Think about things that change in life when we go from one place to somewhere else. Think about other people who might be beyond the door. What do we have in common? What is different? How can we help?</p>
R	<p>Reflection</p> <p>(learning from)</p>	<p>The Mirror</p>		<p>Think about yourself. What do you think, believe or feel? Think about your values and how they are shared.</p>
E	<p>Experience</p> <p>(learning about)</p>	<p>The Window</p>		<p>Imagine looking out of a window at the world around us. Think about its beauty and any questions or curiosities you might have</p>
E	<p>Expression</p> <p>(A personal response)</p>	<p>The Candle</p>		<p>Think about the things you cannot see in life but can feel; your faith in God, love for others or your imagination. How do you respond to an experience, a feeling or a thought.</p>

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship at St Matthew's, provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, express ideas and demonstrate understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality is regularly used and explicitly shared and where pupils are able to respond in a safe environment. Collective Worship also provides the opportunity for pupils to reflect and a chance to listen to the expressions of others and provides an affirming sense of being present in the moment.

Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are able to reflect on the wonders of life along with moments of disappointment or pain. They are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and time to consider how to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school 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.

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 our approach to RE and spirituality. Learning in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of seeing, living, 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.

Spirituality in the wider curriculum.

<p>The Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 art forms. • Effects on the emotions and senses. • Personal response and various preference. 	<p>History:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Design and Technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovering how something works • Appreciating genius. • Beauty in design. • Perseverance to solve problems. • Personal achievement. • Learning from others and nature. 	<p>Maths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infinity and nothing. • Pattern and order. • Shape and regularity. • Truth, certainty and likelihood. • The universality of mathematics over time and space. • The wonder of numbers, formulae, patterns and equations.
<p>Science:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

<p>Physical Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Computing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wonder of worldwide instant communication. • The speed of the growth of knowledge. • The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide. • Creativity in different fields 	<p>Modern Foreign Languages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for another's ability • A second language is a superpower • Celebration of diversity • Ability to communicate • Differences in culture

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;

- Questions for pupils to consider, discuss and debate.
- Questions linked to our vision and values and issues affecting the local and global community.
- Reflections in each RE lesson linking personal experience to lesson content
- Observing and listening to pupils;
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings
- Sharing learning and practice;
- Ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spirituality means at St Matthew's and providing induction and development training;
- Evidence from pupils' learning
- CPD opportunities

Roles and Responsibilities

At St Matthew's, we view spiritual growth as becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality. These opportunities happen throughout each and every day as pupils deal with delight, disappointment and the chance to be present with themselves. Recognising there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners in every aspect of our school life, every member of our staff team is committed to support this spiritual growth wherever appropriate.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

The Ethos and Values committee will next review this policy in July 2026.