

Policy: Spiritual Development Policy

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Authorised by: Governing Body

Updated by: Headteacher & RE Lead

Building foundations for a love of life, a love of learning and a love of one another.

Introduction

This policy relates to the whole life of the school. Spiritual development is promoted through all the subjects of the curriculum and also through the ethos of the school and through collective worship.

Definition

Spiritual development relates to the quest for individual identity and the search for meaning and purpose in our existence. It is associated with a dimension of life which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses, but has much to do with feelings and emotions, and attitudes and beliefs.

The term 'spiritual' need not be synonymous with 'religious'. Understand of self and others is at the heart of spiritual development and is not linked solely to a particular doctrine or faith. Spiritual development is, therefore, accessible to everyone.

All areas of the curriculum should contribute to pupils' spiritual development. As a church school, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Christian faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum.

Aims

We aim to help each child to develop:

- the ability to listen and be still
- the ability to sense the sacred, the holy, the divine
- the ability to sense wonder and mystery in the world
- the ability to sense the special nature of human relationships
- a sense of self-worth and the understanding that Christians believe that everyone is created in the image of God
- a sense of being in relationship with others and a growing understanding of what it means to belong to a community
- an involvement with others in the wider world and an appreciation of difference and diversity
- a response to the distinctive ethos of a Church school and the content, language and symbolism of the Christian faith as a way of understanding our meaning and purpose in life

- a willingness to explore the Christian beliefs and values of the school community as a foundation for life and through them be able to counter negative forces in human experience
- the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc
- the ability to realise that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth and development
- the ability to explore the ultimate questions and mysteries of life

Objectives

- to develop the skill of being physically still, yet alert
- to develop the skill of being mentally still, concentrating on the present moment
- to develop the ability to use all ones senses
- to promote an awareness of and enjoyment in using one's imaginative potential
- to encourage quiet reflection during a lesson or assembly
- to develop individual self-confidence in expressing inner thoughts in a variety of ways
- to consider the mystery of God and the wonder of His world
- to find inner confidence and peace

Approaches

In our school we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to children's spiritual development:

- we seek to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imaginations, insight and empathy
- children are encouraged to explore and express feelings and emotions (see our Relationships Policy for further information)
- we provide opportunities for silence, stillness and prayer
- we encourage children to develop relationships based on the Christian values of love, respect, perseverance and truthfulness.
- we seek to challenge children to reflect upon the significance of their learning

Our school will:

- encourage pupils to express their creativity and imagination. *See our Curriculum and Play Policy for further information.*
- foster a sense of respect for the integrity of each person. *See our Relationships, Thrive and Inclusion and SEN Policies for further information.*
- create an atmosphere which enables pupils and staff to speak freely about their beliefs

Within RE, Worship, SRE and PSHCE, our school will:

- allow pupils to investigate and reflect upon their own beliefs and values
- provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the 'darker' side of life
- provide opportunities for prayer/reflection/silence, the exploration of inner space
- encourage a balance of music, speech, silence and the creative arts when exploring spiritual development
- explore what commitment and responsibility means
- always invite a response and never coerce

Beyond the formal Curriculum, the school will:

- encourage pupils in personal conversations and during discussions in lessons, to express their wonder and their feelings whilst listening carefully to others' questions and responses
- treat pupils, staff and governors with respect, regardless of personal feelings

Inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity regardless of race, gender, cultural background, ability or any physical or sensory disability. *See our Inclusion and SEN Policy for further information.*

Assessment

- becoming aware of God in one's own life and in the life of others
- becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- questioning and exploring the meaning of experience
- understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations
- developing personal views and insights and a grasp of the tangible
- applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life
- acquiring a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion
- development is best seen through pupil's relationships and conversations with us

We should aim to encourage pupils to experience all the above within the context and practice of the Christian faith.

Role of staff**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Opportunities offered to children for Spiritual Development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- Monitoring of lesson plans and teaching and learning by the Head Teacher/RE/ Subject Leads
- Audit of policies and schemes of work
- Sharing of classroom work and practice
- Evidence from pupils' work
- Thrive screening and other diagnostic SEMH data collected