

Westhead Lathom St James' CE Primary School



Spirituality Policy

Last Reviewed Date: Autumn 2023

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Version	Date	Author/Editor	Revision Notes
V 1.0	Autumn 2020	Helen Clark	New policy created.
V2.0	Autumn 2021	Helen Clark	Spiritual Development Across the Curriculum added
V3.0	Autumn 22	Michelle Smyth	How Spirituality is lived out in our school values

V4.0	Autumn 23	Michelle Smyth	Addition of Roles and responsibilities
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Vision Statement: Our Vision for the Future

'A curriculum that is challenging, inspiring and engaging; in which all pupils flourish spiritually, creatively and academically to become confident young people.'

'With God's power working in us, God can do much, much more than anything we can ask or imagine.' Ephesians 3:20 New Century Version (NCV)

Spirituality is...

“Living fully with nothing excluded from our hearts.” Gerald May

Rationale

All Spiritual development, at Westhead Lathom St James’ CE Primary School, takes place within the context of the Christian faith. As a church school, we offer opportunities for all our school community to develop a relationship with God.

Spiritual development is about ‘relational consciousness’ whereby individuals relate to self, others, the world around them and a divine other. (Rebecca Nye)

Spiritual development is only possible when the environment allows everyone to feel accepted, to question and to explore. In order to nurture the spiritual development of children space, time, emotional security, and a sense of safety and trust is needed.

Spirituality does not fit neatly into RE lessons or Collective Worship nor should it be limited to “the odd special moment” Rebecca Nye.

All staff are expected to, and are capable of, planning for developing children’s spirituality and ensuring that as opportunities do arrive, they are used to help children develop.

What is Spirituality?

The Church of England’s Vision for Education states a core desire that children will experience life in all its fullness (John 10:10)

At WLSJ, we believe that exploring Spirituality by educating the whole child and providing full life experiences meets this desire.

We define Spirituality as an ongoing, reflective journey. It is something that teaches us about questioning, understanding and relationships: relationships with ourselves, others, the world and beyond.

Spirituality enables our children to be happy; flourish and succeed and live life in all its fullness.

Christian Value	How this is lived out in our Spirituality Policy
Wisdom	Developing spirituality is a journey. Spiritual development is not about becoming, more spiritual .It is about realising or becoming more and more aware of one’s natural, innate spirituality. This is sometimes a slow and gradual process, at other times there might be significant stages of realisation, which are part of the ongoing ‘developing’ process. During this process, there may also be times where big questions make us question our own ideas or beliefs. Throughout this whole process, wisdom is required for all to see that growth in spirituality is a journey.

Dignity	The journey of spirituality is something that involves many people. Establishing mutual trust amongst staff, children, families and the whole community will ensure that there is a trusting environment for all to develop their own spirituality journeys and for everyone to be treated with dignity.
Hope	As the children journey through spirituality with hope in their hearts, this will enable the pupils to have a quality of life that is about appreciating and cherishing what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful. It is about looking to the future with hope after disappointments and loss.
Community	At WLSJ, developing spirituality is regarded as an integral aspect of developing the whole child. Developing spirituality aims to promote mutual respect between all members of the school community and beyond. This involves respecting and valuing the views of all stakeholders equally. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none.

What does Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development look like?

Spiritual: the growth of the spirit, understanding strengths and weaknesses, self-respect, creativity, the will to achieve one's own potential and the ability to ask and try to find out answers to life's major questions, including questions about the existence and nature of God in order to foster non-material well-being throughout life.

Moral: the development of understanding of the difference between right and wrong, understanding of moral dilemmas, the will to do that which is right, a willingness to consider others with concern and the ability to cope with moral conflict.

Social: the development of understanding of the responsibilities and rights of being members of families and various communities (local, national and international) and the ability to relate to, and work with, others for the common good and to live to these responsibilities and exercise these rights.

Cultural: the development of understanding of how people of different cultures think, feel, create, behave and live. Its aim is to develop pupils' sense of belonging within, value for and engagement with local, regional and national cultures. At the heart of cultural development lies the engagement of pupils to question, analyse, evaluate and reflect on their previous responses and the responses of others within a range of different cultural contexts and aesthetic experiences.

Provision for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Spiritual

Children are given opportunities to reflect upon the meaning of spiritual experiences. Examples of experiences commonly regarded as spiritual include:

- Curiosity and questions
- Awe and wonder
- Connection and belonging
- Heightened self-awareness
- Prayer and worship
- Deep feelings of what it is felt to be ultimately important
- A sense of security, well-being, worth and purposefulness

Our school supports children's spiritual development by:

- Giving children the opportunity to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect peoples' lives.
- Encouraging children to explore and develop what animates themselves and others.
- Giving children the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful.
- Developing a climate or ethos within which all children can grow and flourish, enjoying individual liberty and mutual respect.
- Accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals, including tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Planning for and promoting learning opportunities, which value children's questions, encourage deeper questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Planning for opportunities to develop children's spirituality in every subject (see knowledge lists).

Moral

Children are encouraged to understand the need for a common code based on treating others as they would wish to be treated and the school's Core Christian values of Wisdom, Dignity, Hope and Community.

Our school supports children's moral development by:

- Providing a clear moral code as a basis for behaviour which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school.
- Promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality.
- Giving pupils opportunities across the curriculum to explore and develop moral concepts and values –for example, personal rights and responsibilities, truth, justice, equality of opportunity, right and wrong.
- Developing an open and safe learning environment in which pupils can express their views and practise moral decision making.
- Rewarding expressions of moral insights and good behaviour.
- Recognising and respecting the codes and morals of the different cultures represented in the school and wider community.

- Encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their actions, for example, respect for property, care of the environment, and developing codes of behaviour.
- Providing models of moral virtue through literature, humanities, sciences, arts and assemblies; reinforcing the school's values through images, posters, classroom displays, etc. and monitoring in simple ways, the success of what is provided.

Social

This enables pupils to become conscientious participants in their family, class, and school, the local and wider community and make a positive contribution to the lives of others in society. Within this there should be a balance of the positive, satisfying elements of belonging to a group or society along with the demands, obligations and cooperation such membership requires.

Our school develops pupil social development by:

- Identifying key values and principles on which school and community life is based.
- Fostering a sense of community, with common, inclusive values.
- Promoting racial, religious and other forms of equality.
- Encouraging pupils to work co-operatively.
- Encouraging pupils to recognise and respect social differences and similarities.
- Providing positive experiences to reinforce our values as a school community –for example, through Collective Worship, team-building activities, residential experiences, school productions.
- Helping pupils develop personal qualities, which are valued in a civilised society, for example, thoughtfulness, honesty, and respect for difference, moral principles, independence, interdependence, self-respect and awareness of others' needs.
- Providing opportunities for engaging in the democratic process and participating in community life.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to exercise leadership and responsibility.
- Providing positive and effective links with the world of work and the wider community.
- Providing opportunities for children to engage in social action projects.

Cultural

At the heart of cultural development lies the necessity to develop a sense of personal identity, whilst at the same time acquiring awareness, understanding and tolerance regarding the cultural traditions and beliefs of others.

- Our school develops cultural development by:
- Extending pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language.
- Encouraging them to think about special events in life and how they are celebrated.
- Recognising and nurturing particular gifts and talents; providing opportunities for pupils to participate in literature, drama, music, art, crafts and other cultural events and encouraging pupils to reflect on their significance.
- Reinforcing the school's cultural links through displays, posters, exhibitions, etc.
- Developing partnerships with outside agencies and individuals to extend pupils' cultural awareness, for example, theatre, museum and gallery visits.

Promoting Spiritual Development Across the Curriculum

During review of our whole school curriculum, we looked at developing children's spirituality as a key element that needed to be woven throughout. As such, all curriculum documentation has planned in questions that can be used for developing children's spirituality. Teachers make use of these across the curriculum. An example of what this looks like can be seen below.

Year 3 and 4 Art

Questions to Develop Children's Spirituality in Art:	Does everyone like the same art? Can art influence the way we feel? Can we communicate through art, sculptures, pictures etc? Do pictures have hidden meanings? Does each piece of artwork mean the same thing to each person who looks at it? Can God's creation be celebrated through artwork? When we create/are creative how does this reflect us being made in God's image? Do you think God made us as we are so that we can be creative and make wonderful, varied pieces of art?
Development of the child:	Questioning, emotion, wonder, self-awareness, appreciation and expression.

Appendix 1

Ways of promoting SMSC within and across subjects

The teaching of subjects can support SMSC development in two ways that is either through what is taught or how it is taught. This document considers each area separately, in order to highlight specific examples.

We aim to develop:

- A set of Christian personal beliefs and values by which we live
- A sense of transcendence – there is more to life than ‘meets the eye’ – more than a physical existence
- An awareness of order, pattern, meaning and purpose in the world leading to an understanding that, for Christians, creation is a revelation of God’s loving purposes
- A capacity for awe and wonder – an awareness of uncertainty and paradox
- A sense of personal worth
- An ability to value others as created in God’s image
- Self-knowledge and an awareness of and growth of feelings, emotions and imagination
- An understanding of Christian teaching on life and death, on suffering, grief and loss
- An awareness that life involves choices between good and bad
- An awareness of God’s love and care for us personally
- An understanding of the Christian belief of Jesus Christ as Saviour

We provide opportunities in worship and throughout the curriculum for our children (and staff) to:

- Be quiet and reflect on life and the world and ‘wait on God’
- Become familiar with traditional forms of Christian prayer and worship
- Give thanks to God for creation, preservation, salvation and the promise of eternal life
- Use a variety of prayer forms
- Question, explore, discuss and give an account of their own beliefs
- Use their gifts of imagination and creativity
- Explore and express feelings and emotions
- Develop respect for others
- Face difficult or distressing matters in the context of a loving Christian environment

Appendix 2

Promoting SMSC through specific subjects

EXAMPLES – this list is not exhaustive

<p>English poetry drama discussion of plot questions of right and wrong fact versus opinion stories from other cultures</p>	<p>Maths infinite numbers problem solving maths from other cultures recognising 'Eureka' moments surveys on bullying, smoking, hunger</p>
<p>Science creation space conservation scientists from other cultures gender issues</p>	<p>Computing Can computers create? limitations on what computers can do PC versus Humans!</p>
<p>RE awe & wonder right and wrong festivals suffering life & death new life family life – different models of 'family'</p>	<p>PSHCE self-respect respect towards others ethical issues codes of behaviour rights and responsibilities</p>
<p>History motivation of individuals who made sacrifices (Martin Luther King etc.) consequences of actions conflict resolution social structure (Victorians/Tudors)</p>	<p>Geography appreciation of the world landscapes conservation our community ... contrasting locality natural disasters</p>
<p>D & T creativity – fulfilment in making something teamwork & cooperation</p>	<p>Art & Design appreciating and responding to talent explore feelings from looking at artwork explore artwork that helps understanding of beliefs</p>
<p>Music appreciation care of instruments other cultures' music awareness of the power of music to the listener lose yourself in a piece of music – where did you go to?</p>	<p>PE self-fulfilment teamwork abiding by rules positive attitudes honesty respect commitment / loyalty ritual</p>

Roles and Responsibilities

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. Miss Clark is responsible for supporting and leading spiritual development in our school, including monitoring opportunities for spiritual growth in collective worship, the whole curriculum (including RE) and the general ethos of the school within daily life.

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
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- 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 process

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. NQTs and staff who are new to WLSJ will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality