

Approach to Spiritual Development

Rationale

At All Saints we are working to provide all our children with the fertile soil in which they can grow to be the best that they can be in all areas of their lives.

At All Saints we are building our vision around the *Parable of the Sower*.

“The seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Luke 8:15

We are committed to ensuring that we provide the fertile soil in which everyone can grow to be the best that they can be. We use the statement *‘Learning and Growing together to be the best that we can be’* to summarise our Vision.

As a church school, children’s spiritual ‘growth’ is very important to us. We know the development of spirituality can have a massive influence on a child’s well-being and their mental health and we aim to create an environment that will nurture people’s minds, body and soul. However, we acknowledge it is a deeply personal journey. Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone, and is not dependent on a religious affiliation. We are guided by our Christian faith and the Christian values which we hold dear but we welcome all and we openly encourage children to reflect in the way that suits them best, enabling them to participate in an ongoing process of spiritual realisation and to flourish in their own unique way. It is not our aim to guide children to follow a particular faith, or to give children one definition or understanding of spirituality.

We recognise that, just like the weeds, rocks and birds were barriers to the growth of the seeds in the Parable of the Sower story that underpins our vision, there will be barriers to spiritual development that we will need to support children to overcome. Issues such as pride, embarrassment, conformity and ‘shallow’ cares and understanding may all at times impact on spiritual development, and our approach aims to recognise and support these barriers.

Intent

When considering the spiritual development of pupils, we focus on developing an understanding of **4 key relationships**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
- **Others**
 - Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance, inclusion, diversity
 - To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
 - Making a difference; duty; justice
- **Nature/The world:**
 - 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
- **God/Beyond:**
 - Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)

¹ Based on the work of Rebecca Nye *‘Children’s Spirituality: What it is and Why it Matters’*

- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g., about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God / the 'other'
- Making sense of the world

For each of these 4 areas we aim that the children should have opportunities to:

- **Observe** (look out): opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways. Learning about life in all its fullness. This includes both the things that amaze us and challenge us (both 'awe-full and 'awful')
- **Reflect** (look in): opportunities to reflect upon our experiences. To meditate on life's big questions and consider some possible answers. Learning from life by exploring our own insights and perspectives and those of others
- **Transform** (respond and take action): Give opportunities to respond, to do something creative in order to express, apply and further develop our thoughts and convictions. Learning to live by putting into action our beliefs and values.

Organisation and Implementation

Spiritual development is an important element of a child's education and fundamental to all other areas of learning. Without curiosity, without the inclination to question, and without the exercise of imagination, insight and intuition, children would lack the motivation to learn. In view of this teaching styles are adopted which:

- Value the children's questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Enable the children to make connections between aspects of their learning.
- Encourage the children to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference, e.g., asking 'why?', 'how?', and 'where?' as well as 'what?'.

The following opportunities will be made available, as an integral part of the school's practice, in order to facilitate the development of spirituality:

- To explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples' lives.
- Where children already have religious beliefs, to support and develop these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them as an integral part of the school's practice.
- To engage in enquiry and exploration as part of experiential, first hand learning.
- To look attentively and observe carefully.
- To be creative and imaginative, and to respond creatively to a range of stimulus and in a range of subjects
- To reflect and respond to issues in moments of quiet or inspired through music, art, text, film or artefacts.
- To explore and develop what animates themselves and others.
- To understand human feelings and emotions, the way they impact on people and how an understanding of them can be helpful.
- To value what is good and worthwhile and to make value judgements through discussion and exchange of views.
- To work collaboratively with peers, valuing the contribution made by others.
- To respect all, as modelled by staff in their relationships with others.
- To experience silent, calm and tranquil moments which afford time for reflection.
- To work and live in harmony with others in the school and wider community.
- To have confidence to express ideas, views and opinions, even if others do not agree.

Facilitating spiritual development

- Everyone involved in the life of the school is valued and seen to be valued.
- Policies and practices are clearly seen to reflect the worth of individuals.
- 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.
- 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.

Opportunities for spiritual development in Collective Worship

N.B see also ASB Collective Worship Policy

- Opportunities for reflection and response are planned into all worship sessions.
- Stillness / silence is often used as a way of supporting individual thought, reflection and response
- Common activities such as singing, listening, laughing, praying, reflecting on a theme or value are used to support spiritual engagement and reflection
- Worship sessions are planned offer a range of opportunities to develop emotional connection, sharing happiness, sorrow, hurt, excitement, anticipation, fear, etc
- Our 12 Christian values are used as a way of supporting reflection on the qualities that make us ‘good’ as human beings, and the impact our actions and the actions of others have on us and the world around us. These values are shared within many cultures and religions, and are inclusive and supportive of all personal beliefs
- Prayer is used as a way of structuring response to worship. It is always invitational and inclusive. Children are often asked to create prayers or respond in a way that is prayerful
- Celebration Worship sessions are used to celebrate achievements in line with shared values and expectations

Opportunities for spiritual development within the curriculum

Opportunities for spiritual development are presented or naturally arise, and are promoted in all aspects of the curriculum and school life. Outlined below are some examples of when spiritual development is nurtured and promoted as part of our progressive curriculum (this is not an exhaustive list but represents a range of examples across each phase):

| | Early Years | Key Stage 1 | Key Stage 2 |
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| English | <p>Texts chosen to develop understanding of themes such as empathy, understanding and inclusion and to link to school values. E.g., The Gingerbread Man, We’re Going on a Bear Hunt, Handa’s Surprise.</p> <p>Texts chosen linked to pupil’s relationship with the World around them, e.g., Harry Saves the Ocean.</p> | <p>Texts chosen to develop understanding of themes such as empathy, understanding and inclusion and to link to school values. E.g., Gorilla, The Day the Crayons Quit, Traction Man, The Dragon Machine, The Dark</p> <p>Children develop more creative responses to texts and themes through their writing</p> | <p>More complex texts chosen to develop understanding of themes such as empathy, understanding and inclusion and to link to school values. E.g., Annie, Journey to Jo’Burg, Wonderstruck, Rooftoppers, Shackleton. Children encouraged to ask and answer ‘big’ questions such as ‘are they considered a hero’ – why / why not? Developing further perspectives from characters points of view.</p> <p>Children further develop more creative responses to texts and themes through their writing</p> |
| Maths | <p>Opportunities to observe and question patterns in the world around them</p> | <p>Exploring relationships in numbers – e.g., addition, multiplication</p> <p>Developing understanding of ‘zero’</p> | <p>Continue to explore relationships in number / calculation, including positive/negative</p> <p>Explore pattern in number – e.g., square, cube numbers</p> |

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| | | Exploring different representations – why can we get the same answer in different ways? Maths in real life contexts | |
| Religious Education | Learning about ‘special places’ and ‘special people’ and how they are different and varied and mean different things to different people. Discussion and opportunities to celebrate special times in different cultures, such as birthdays, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Easter | Exploring ‘Big Questions’ linked to both Understanding Christianity and Warwickshire Syllabus units of learning Responding in different ways – prayer, reflection, letters Allow pupils to respond in increasingly creative ways Developing further understanding of and reflections on sacred texts and sacred places | Exploring ‘Big Questions’ linked to both Understanding Christianity and Warwickshire Syllabus units of learning. Greater exploration of different perspectives, and questioning of own beliefs. Focus on artwork within religion, and unpicking representations of religious events and ideas over time (e.g., ‘white-washing’ of Christ) |
| Science | Observation of seasonal changes in the environment – e.g., the blossom tree in Nursery. Patterns, questions, observations linked to the weather and feelings and responses linked to weather | Seasonal changes Exploring materials and their uses, and man-made vs natural Life cycles – exploring relationships within the natural world and things that can impact on life cycles | Life cycles – birth, death, renewal Wonders of space and the universe Properties of materials, including materials you cannot see (gases). Reflection on theory of evolution and link to R.E. |
| History | Remembrance Focus ‘Where the poppies now grow’ text. Opportunities to find out about and empathise with people from the past | Opportunities to reflect on change over time, impact of events on people and cultures Discuss and explore historical figures and their impact – e.g., Guy Fawkes, Florence Nightingale, Neil Armstrong. | Further opportunities to reflect on change over time, impact of events on people and cultures Exploration of concepts such as ‘empire’, ‘colonisation’ ‘trade’ ‘crime and punishment’ ‘holocaust’ and power dynamics within different historical periods Discuss and explore historical figures and their impact – e.g., Boudicca, Tutankhamun, Nicholas Chamberlaine, Alexander the Great |
| Geography | Making comparisons between different cultures and locations – looking beyond Bedworth. | Opportunities to reflect on the wonders of the world and contrasting environments through topics such as ‘seas and coasts’ ‘what a wonderful world’ and ‘let’s go on safari Discussion about human and physical features and the impact that humans have on environments | Opportunities to reflect on the wonders of the world and contrasting environments through topics such as ‘extreme earth’, ‘water’, ‘all around the world’, eastern Europe’ and ‘trade and economics’ Deeper and more reflective discussions about human and physical features and the impact that humans have on environments |
| Art / DT | Responding to famous painters / paintings – e.g., Van Gogh’s | Reflection on and expressive response to the work of | Reflection on and expressive response to the work of identified artists such as |

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| | Sunflowers, Monet's Water Lily's | identified artists such as Henri Rousseau and Yayoi Kusama. Exploring a range of materials and techniques to create effect. Reflecting on different structures and mechanical systems, and developing creative responses to design briefs set | William Morris, Sonia Delaunay and Frida Kahlo. Continuing to explore a range of materials and techniques to create effect, and refining more detailed and complex responses. Continuing to reflect on different structures and mechanical systems, and developing ever more creative responses to design briefs set |
| Music | Reflection and response to different genres of music | Analysing lyrics and themes in music Appreciating music from different cultures Expressing feelings through music | Continuing to analyse lyrics and themes in music Appreciating music from different cultures Expressing feelings through music, and responding to music in ever more creative ways |
| Computing | Using technology to explore and develop interests / find out 'fascinating facts' | Creating algorithms, debugging, cause and effect Appreciation of the impact of technology on our lives, including how it can support inclusivity Reflecting on staying safe online and online relationships | Exploring and creating more complex algorithm, becoming more reflective about cause and effect. Continue to develop appreciation of the impact of technology on our lives, including how it can support inclusivity Continuing to reflect on staying safe online and online relationships |
| P.E. | Being a team member, and being ever more involved in clubs and sports festivals. Developing a sense of 'competition' and pushing yourself to the limits (competitive sports opportunities) Developing an awareness of extremes of skill, endurance and achievement. Developing an understanding of emotion in sport - personal limitation and dealing with not winning / not coming first. Developing understanding of sportsmanship, and taking part in a way that allows others to succeed | | |
| PSHE | Ongoing link to school values such as friendship forgiveness, compassion, justice. Topics covered progressively including 'Celebrating difference', 'Relationships', 'Changing me' Protective Behaviours work develops pupils understanding of relationship dynamics, safe and unsafe and supports reflection on emotions and feelings | | |