



Church of the Ascension C.E Spirituality Policy

At Church of the Ascension, we believe that 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. We also believe that it is 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 of spirituality consist of:

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
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

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

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

Aims

Spiritually developed children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them; they are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.

To develop a strong sense of spirituality in all of our children, we aim to:

- Have 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
- Provide many opportunities for creativity and using the imagination
- Value play opportunities for all children
- Sing often, especially with others.
- Ensuring regular time for prayer, both collectively and individually. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful and saying sorry.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share their feelings.
- Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.
- Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world.
- Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process.
- Encourage children to show kindness, care and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (eg: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after our environment)
- Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme
- Read often to children, and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible.

Structures to support and develop spirituality

At Church of the Ascension, opportunities for spiritual development are both planned for and exploited spontaneously and children are encouraged to reflect upon their spiritual development using the 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors' framework. Namely:

Windows - Encounter: The learning about life- "*We found out about...*" Opportunities to look out on the world to gaze and wonder; the Wow and Ows moments; the things we find amazing and bring us up short.

Mirrors - Reflection: The learning from- "*It made us think about...*" Giving opportunities for children to reflect, to look inward to consider some of the big questions of life: To explore their own insights and those of others.

Doors - Transformation: The learning to live by putting into action what they believe- "*And so we decided to...*" Giving opportunities to children to respond, to do something to go through the door of a creative expression of their own thoughts and convictions.

- Our floorbooks are used regularly as a focal point for reflection, and include RE and PSHE. Spiritual diaries are also used in UKS2 to further encourage opportunities for the development of personal spirituality.
- We have a planned programme for Collective Worship across the school, also incorporating 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors'. This maps out themes across the year, based on our core Christian values.
- There is a daily act of collective worship taking different forms, and involving children.
- Displays and pictures around the school continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality.
- Our RE curriculum is inspiring, motivating and challenging.
- Visits and visitors support all our work.

Review and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed every three years by all teaching staff and quality assured by the Head teacher and SLT. Appendices will be added and updated, as appropriate, to reflect statutory changes and best current practice.

Review date: Autumn 2019