

# ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

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*'I have come that they many have life and have it abundantly-John 10:10'*

## Spirituality Development Policy

**Area:** Curriculum Pupil and Community Committee  
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**Head Teacher**  
**Chair of Governors**

Kieran Gorman  
Geoff Green



## Contents

|                                                            |   |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Introduction .....                                      | 2 |
| 2. Aims.....                                               | 2 |
| 3. Legal requirements .....                                | 3 |
| 4. Shared understanding of spiritual development .....     | 3 |
| 5. Provision.....                                          | 5 |
| 6. CPD and training.....                                   | 7 |
| 7. Monitoring and evaluation .....                         | 7 |
| 8. Opportunities for spiritual flourishing of adults ..... | 7 |
| 9. Evaluation and review.....                              | 7 |

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Our school motto '**Life in its Fullest**' encourages us all to embrace all opportunities given to us by God and to make the most of the gifts we have been given. It is closely interwoven with our school vision-**John 10:10 'I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly.'** We want children reach their potential and be the best versions of themselves and go out into society, making a positive impact and contribution.

As a Church of England school, Christianity provides the framework for beginning the spiritual discovery and experience of faith. The children learn to discern the teachings of Christ as the way of developing positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships needed to develop and sustain a community. The Christian Values-**Creation, Compassion and Community** are at the heart of our curriculum and learning, and how we all aspire to live our school life. Spirituality is taught differently to other curriculum subjects. We teach children to understand what spirituality is, what it could be and to recognise their own spiritual experiences and "wow moments" (moments of awe and wonder). We recognise that spirituality is a quality we can nurture in children, empowering them in their spiritual development and enabling them to flourish. Promoting spirituality should not be confused with developing faith. Faith is a set of beliefs by which you live your life by and could be a response to a belief in God. Faith is something you choose whereas spirituality is an aspect of human development - it is not separate but integral to who we are and what makes us whole. Spirituality is for everybody regardless of faith. It is like the wind - it makes a difference but is unique to each person. It might change someone's understanding and beliefs but ultimately is an innate sense of awe and wonder. It is about understanding that there is something more than just 'me'.

## 1. Introduction

The Church of England Vision for Education is rooted in Jesus' desire that we should have 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). As our spiritual nature is such a fundamental part of our humanity, spiritual development is a key part of this holistic view of education:

*"Our vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework."*<sup>1</sup>

As Derek Holloway writes, spiritual development is intrinsic to every part of our work:

*"I would strongly contend that in all schools, and certainly in Church schools, that spiritual development is not something you should hide away in a couple of curriculum boxes or treat as*

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<sup>1</sup> The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office 2016)

*an afterthought. I must be something that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life.*<sup>2</sup>

We believe that spiritual development is a core thread that runs through our school, and we see it as vital for the flourishing of all within our school community. In Acts 17:28, the Apostle Paul says that in God “we live and move and have our being”; becoming more aware of our innate spirituality is a life-long journey and it is our desire that all at All Saints CE Primary School move forward on that journey during their time here.

## **2. Aims**

Our aim is to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual flourishing of all pupils through the following objectives:

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school’s Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them, as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith.
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people’s beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own.
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions.
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts in the service of others), understanding the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life, and upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc.
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life, including an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination.

These objectives will enable the pupils to have a quality of life that encompasses respect, awareness, compassion, curiosity, and understanding, and relationships that reflect order, reason, balance, and integrity within the context of Christian faith.

As over-arching aims, our approach to spiritual development will:

- Reflect the school’s Church of England status.

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<sup>2</sup> Derek Holloway et al, *Spiritual Development : Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom* (The Church of England Education Office April 2019)

- Reflect and strengthen the school's Christian vision and ethos.
- Take place within a school environment which enables pupils and adults to flourish.

### 3. Legal requirements

The importance of spiritual development in schools is recognised in legislation.

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

*The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which: (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*

Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

*Spiritual development is a particular focus of Church school inspections under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) which asks:*

- *How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?*
- *How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?*
- *How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?*
- *In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?*
- *How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?*

In The Ofsted School Inspection Toolkit (2025), the evaluation area of personal development and well-being considers:

*'pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, which can be seen across the school's activities'.*

To meet the 'Expected standard' in this area:

*'A coherent and appropriate programme of personal development extends across the taught curriculum and wider opportunities and experiences. It makes a positive difference to pupils and enables them to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.'*

### 4. Shared understanding of spiritual development

Philip Sheldrake writes:

*"In Christian terms, spirituality refers to the way our fundamental values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices reflect particular understandings of God, human identity, and the material world as the context for human transformation...We shall see that all Christian*

*spiritual traditions are rooted in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, particularly in the gospels and in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Christian spirituality is fundamentally concerned with following the way of Jesus Christ.”<sup>3</sup>*

As a church school, it is this Christian framework that shapes our shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development. We recognise the importance of engaging with our linked church/es in determining this shared understanding in the context of our school’s Christian vision and values.

To make conversations about spiritual flourishing more accessible to every member of our school community, All Saints CE Primary School has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development

Spirituality is a unique experience for every person involving stillness, appreciation, reflection and/or prayer. It is a feeling, sense or belief that there is something greater than our physical existence, something more to being human than the things they can see, hear, smell, taste or touch, helping them to consider how it affects the way they live. In our Christian context it means that the divine nature of God affects their lives beyond our daily sensory experiences. We look outwards to appreciate and cherish the wonder and awe of the world. We learn to look inwards to reflect on our experiences, to build resilience and courage, and explore life’s big questions. We look onwards to discover the meaning and creative impact of our lives on those around us.

## **5. Provision**

The school pursues the aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by the school’s Christian vision statement and associated values.
- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life.
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and pupils.
- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this.
- A solid understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of prayer and of the Bible is nurtured and developed.
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness, and prayer.
- Pupils’ spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies making use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits.
- The provision of opportunities 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.
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others.

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<sup>3</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality, A Brief History*. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) p.7

- Moral development is linked to spiritual development.
- Pupils are given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished, and protected.
- The delivery and content will be made accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Consideration of Early Years curriculum and how the curriculum for younger children can support spiritual development.
- The religious background of all pupils will be taken into consideration when planning teaching.

At All Saints, we provide space for spirituality within the daily life of the school through:

- Collective worship (all provide an opportunity to share and reflect);
- Awe and wonder displays to document and celebrate instances of awe and wonder;
- Planned and spontaneous prayer within the class timetabled day;
- Class assemblies;
- Reflective logs;
- A focus on inclusion for example through movement and dance e.g. sensory circuit;
- Teachers skilfully question and enable deeper learning to take place;
- Encouraging learners to develop the skill of asking their own questions;
- Outdoor Classroom (physical space);
- Spirituality through the senses (Loving God outdoors, use of natural objects in prayer spaces e.g. flowers, stones, water);
- Making sure pupils have an opportunity to enjoy being outside, especially in different types of weather and e.g. snow, rain, a storm, sunny days;
- YR (Reception) Forest School sessions;
- Sing or listen to songs
- Lighting candles during Collective Worship.

Activities and opportunities which create space for spiritual development at All Saints will include:

- exposure and appreciation of nature & science;
- following rituals and traditions;
- use of prayer and reflection time;
- time for silence and stillness;
- acts of service that benefit others;
- stories that promote thought and imagination.

Evidence of spirituality may come through art, play, attitudes, movement and using the senses. These opportunities are recognised, acknowledged and celebrated by staff and children;

## **6. CPD and training**

This is a complex area and staff should be trained and equipped to provide for the spiritual development of pupils within the context of a Church of England school. We access diocesan-led training for those with a particular role in planning for and evaluating spiritual development.

## **7. 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:

- Observing and listening to pupils.
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school's Christian vision and values.
- Sharing of classroom work and practice.
- Ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spiritual development means in this school by providing them with induction and development training.
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. reflective diary, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art.
- Regular inclusion in the SEF.
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.
- Seeking to evaluate, formally and informally, with pupils and adults, activities with a particular focus on spirituality and spiritual development (e.g. collective worship)

Provision for spiritual development is monitored by Kieran Gorman-Headteacher, through:

Monitoring arrangements will include; planning, awe and wonder images shared during Collective Worship, reflective logs, scrutiny of work, surveys, learning walks, class displays.

## **8. Opportunities for spiritual flourishing of adults**

Under the SIAMS framework, it is also the intention that the spiritual flourishing of adults should be enabled and enhanced by the work of the school. We consider ways in which our routines and practices (e.g. staff meetings, CPD, collective worship, church services, staff retreats) can contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community.

## **10 . Evaluation/Review**

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Headteacher and/or designated senior teacher and ratified every three years by the Governing Body.