



“Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.” Proverbs 22:6

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Adopted	J. Hackney
Committee	Standards
Date approved	
Review date	September 2027

This policy takes effect on approval. References to the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education (January 2026) and to the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus apply from 1 September 2026, when the 2026 Statement becomes the reference point for SIAMS inspection. Until that date the 2019 Statement of Entitlement remains in force.

We are a Christian school where quality and opportunities make a difference. We value all children as unique ‘Children of God’ and nurture each other to show **LOVE** in our relationships and **RESPECT** for all. We foster **HOPE** within our community and encourage children to find **PEACE** by creating times and places for stillness and reflection. We build **FRIENDSHIP** that is resilient and faithful, and we show **COMPASSION** for our community, our country and the wider world. We celebrate **COURAGE**, and we share **JOY** — the value at whose heart, as our mission statement sets out, sits collective worship contributing to the spiritual development of both children and adults. We strive for excellence, inspiring dreams both now and in the future, through...

‘Learning, loving, laughing in the light of Jesus’.

What is spirituality?

Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002, the curriculum of a maintained school must be balanced and broadly based, and must promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society. As a voluntary controlled Church of England school in the Diocese of Lichfield, maintained by Staffordshire County Council, we understand that duty through our Christian vision. This policy sets out how we meet it.

Spirituality is the way in which we combine our thoughts and emotions to reflect, respond to, and seek to give meaning and purpose to the experiences that we encounter in life. The windows, mirrors, doors analogy clarifies this meaning. We gaze out through windows onto the world, responding with our emotions and trying to make sense of what we see. We use mirrors to reflect on our thoughts and feelings, and how what we see through the window connects with our inner selves, and how we connect with what we see and understand. This becomes a spiritual experience when it transforms us and so we walk out through the door into life differently from before. For some, this spiritual experience leads to a sense of transcendence: in other words a feeling or belief that something exists beyond what can be directly seen. Christians would describe this state as God.

Pupils' spiritual development is shown through their:

- being reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, and their perspective on life, including developing their knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values
- gaining a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible
- using imagination and creativity in their learning
- being willing to reflect on their experiences

There are many aspects to spiritual development, such as:

Beliefs – The development of personal beliefs, including religious beliefs; an appreciation that people have individual and shared beliefs on which they base their lives; a developing understanding of how beliefs contribute to personal identity

A sense of Awe and Wonder – being inspired by the natural world, mystery, or human achievement.

Experiencing Feelings of Transcendence – Feelings which may give rise to belief in the existence of a divine being, or the belief that one's inner resources provide the ability to rise above everyday experience.

Search for Meaning and Purpose – Asking 'why me?' at times of hardship or suffering; reflecting on the origins and purpose of life; responding to challenging experiences of life such as beauty, suffering and death.

Self-Knowledge – An awareness of oneself in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences; a growing understanding and acceptance of individual identity; the development of self-respect.

Relationships – Recognising and valuing the worth of each individual; developing a sense of community; the ability to build up relationships with others.

Creativity – Expressing innermost thoughts and feelings; exercising the imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight.

Feelings and Emotions – The sense of being moved by beauty or kindness; hurt by injustice or aggression; a growing awareness of when it is important to control emotions and feelings and how to learn to use feelings as a source of growth.

Steps to Spiritual Development



- Applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life
- Developing personal views and insights
- Understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations
- Questioning and exploring the meaning of experience
- Becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- Recognising the existence of others as independent from oneself

Effective learning in itself is a spiritual experience. This is because learning involves engagement with and exploration of a new concept [windows], thinking deeply about it, trying to connect it to what we already know [mirrors]. If we can successfully fit this new concept to our pre-existing web of understanding, this evokes a positive emotional response [we often describe this as: the penny drops!] With each new concept acquired, we transform ourselves [doors], moving forward in life a little altered, intrinsically motivated, fulfilled and inspired by the experience.

Why is spiritual development important?

As a church school we believe that our role is to educate the whole child and that the spiritual growth of our children is as important as, and indeed is a vital contributor to, their academic development. The themes developed each week through our assemblies, our school vision, as well as opportunities woven throughout our curriculum underpin all we seek to achieve in the lives of our children. Getting people to consider the world around them, reflecting and thinking for themselves, evoking positive emotional responses and pondering ultimate questions is the integral ingredient in our recipe for spiritual development.

A shared understanding of spirituality

We work to arrive at a shared understanding of what spirituality means in this school, so that pupils, staff and governors can talk about it in the same language. That understanding is built through the windows, mirrors and doors model described above, revisited in collective worship, in religious education and across the curriculum. Pupils are able to explain what spirituality means to them, and adults in school are able to describe how they create the conditions for it. We keep this understanding under review with the support of the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education.

How is provision made for spiritual development?

Because spiritual development is a key, standout feature of what makes us distinctive as a church school, the provision of opportunities for spiritual development is thoughtful, deliberate and intentional.

Ethos

An important contributor to effective spiritual development is the underlying values and principles upon which the school operates.

The school vision, 'Learning, loving, laughing in the light of Jesus', describes these principles that in turn determine how adults and children relate to one another. This creates the right climate for effective spiritual development. For example:

- Everyone involved in the life of the school is valued and seen to be valued.
- Policies and ensuing practices are clearly seen to reflect the worth of individuals.
- Behaviour and people management policies and practices are collectively arrived at and discussed regularly.
- 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.
- School seeks to provide a broad curriculum supported by a wide range of events, experiences and activities, including visits to places of beauty, interest and challenge that enable pupils to admire and wonder at the natural environment and human creative endeavour.

Collective worship and RE are two key areas of school life that provide ideal vehicles for effective spiritual development. Our collective worship is inclusive, invitational and inspiring: everyone is welcome, no one is compelled to participate, and worship is planned to move and to challenge. Full details are set out in the school's Collective Worship Policy. Collective worship provides opportunities for:

- Reflection and response
- Thinking deeply and drawing links between ideas
- Stillness and prayer
- The respect of personal and collective beliefs
- Sharing and celebrating common beliefs

- Celebrating success and talent
- Sharing happiness, sorrow, hurt, excitement, anticipation, fear, etc.
- Shared activities such as singing, listening, laughing, reflecting on a theme
- Remembering and celebrating the lives of people of spiritual significance
- Emphasising common purpose and values
- Experiencing emotions
- Taking part with sincerity and a sense of higher purpose
- Through pupil-led worship, children have opportunity to support the spiritual development of others, that in turn leads to a sense of fulfilment and is therefore a spiritual experience for the young leaders
- Creative responses to experience such as music, drama, poetry, story
- The use of visual stimulus such as religious symbols, candles, art, icons, photos and video

Religious Education is a subject that looks at the spiritual experiences of others and how these change and shape their lives.

RE allows children to use what they find out about other people and their beliefs to reflect on their own experiences. Through this process, children can engage with ultimate questions of meaning and purpose and begin to shape their own beliefs. RE allows children to engage with the idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers. As a voluntary controlled school we follow the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2023). The school's Religious Education Policy sets out the legal position, the curriculum and the right of withdrawal in full. The wider curriculum also provides opportunities for spiritual development. The school's planning format indicates where the children's learning will provide opportunities for spiritual reflection (Appendix 1).

Spiritual development in the Early Years and Nursery

The governing body runs an on-site nursery for children from birth to five, so the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage applies to our youngest children as well as to Reception. Spiritual development begins here. It is not a separate activity but is woven through the educational programmes, particularly personal, social and emotional development and understanding the world.

For children under five this looks like wondering aloud, noticing and naming feelings, caring for living things, marking birthdays and festivals, stilling and listening, and asking the big questions that young children ask without prompting. Religious education and the statutory duty to provide collective worship do not apply below compulsory school age, but our Christian vision shapes the nursery day in the same way it shapes the rest of the school, and children in nursery take part in worship where this is appropriate to their age and stage.

In Physical Education:

- Being a team member
- Pushing yourself to the limits

- Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement
- Emotion in sport such as those evoked through success and failure
- Personal limitation and acceptance that others may perform better
- Appreciation of perfection
- Sportsmanship

In Design and Technology:

- Discovering how something works
- Appreciating ingenuity
- Beauty in design
- Perseverance to solve problems
- Personal achievement
- Learning from others and nature

In English:

- Empathy with authors and the characters in stories and plays
- The appreciation of beauty in language
- Emotions and sentiments in writing and speech
- The values of great works
- Heroes and heroines in literature
- The reading and writing of poetry
- Imagining oneself as someone else
- Escaping into other worlds through literature
- The element of wonder in literature
- Pleasure derived from the creative process

In Mathematics:

- Infinity and nothing
- Pattern and order
- Shape and regularity
- Truth, certainty and likelihood
- The universality of mathematics over time and space
- The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations

In Science:

- Wonder as the basis of science
- Questions of beginning, creation and evolution
- Discovering the limits of experimentation
- Birth, life, death and renewal
- The universe and beyond
- Regularity and order in science
- Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists

- The impact of scientific achievements

In Computing:

- The wonder of worldwide instant communication
- The speed of the growth of knowledge
- The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide

In the Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama and Dance):

- The work of creative artists from a variety of times and places
- Beauty, truth and goodness
- Expressing, interpreting and exploring deep feelings and profound beliefs
- Artistic creativity
- The effects of the arts on emotions and senses
- The arts as means of expressing mood
- Skill in creation and performance, and particularly in personal reflection upon their own creativity using various art forms
- Effects on the emotions and senses
- Personal response and preference
- Mood
- Skill
- Pattern
- Formulae
- The sense of fulfilment and transcendence through performance

In Geography:

- Wonder at the diversity of environments and people
- Questions about the care of the environment
- The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns
- World (economic) development
- Land formation
- Empathy with people from other parts of the world

In History:

- Being in touch with past people, things and ideas
- Being part of history
- Handling artefacts
- Influential events and people
- The commitment of significant people in history
- War and peace
- Interpretation in history
- The nature and importance of invention and exploration

- Empathy with people from other times in history

Policy review

This policy is led by the headteacher and monitored by the Standards Committee of the governing body. We evaluate its impact through pupil and staff conversations, monitoring of collective worship and curriculum planning, and the school's ongoing self-evaluation as a Church school, rather than through a separate reporting exercise.

The policy is reviewed annually, and sooner if national or diocesan guidance changes. It will be revisited when the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus is next revised by SACRE, and when SIAMS documents for the following academic year are published.

Linked policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's Collective Worship Policy, Religious Education Policy, Curriculum Policy and Relationships and Health Education Policy.

Appendix 1

An example of the Spiritual Pathways in the Year 1 curriculum overview.

The full curriculum overview can be found on the school website.

Spiritual Pathways Support for identifying these across the curriculum

Spiritual Pathway	Footprints to add to SoW	Suggestions/ideas
Naturalists: Loving God outdoors		Opportunities to be outside Forestry, birdwatching, caring for creation, looking at habitats, minibeast hunts
Sensates: Loving God with the senses		Activities that involve any of the senses Visual imagery Art, story, oracy Opportunities to discuss what it feels like to touch or use a particular material
Traditionalists: Loving God through ritual and symbol		Festivals and ceremonies Events and people in Christian history (Influential Christians) Using the church's seasonal colours Pattern and structure
Ascetics: Loving God in solitude and simplicity		Use of silence – no distractions Time alone to pray, contemplate or reflect 'Pause for thought'
Activists: Loving God through confrontation		Bringing about change in the community/taking up a cause (courageous advocacy) Eg. writing letters/emails to local MPs or organisations
Caregivers: Loving God by loving others		Serving others, particularly those who are poor or needy Blessing others beyond the community eg. helping refugees, visiting the elderly, learning sign language
Enthusiasts: Loving God with mystery and celebration		Celebrations – dancing, singing Range of music Re-enacting biblical stories
Intellectuals: Loving God with the mind		Philosophical debate and discussion News – making connections between biblical teachings and the world around them
Contemplatives: Loving God through adoration		Writing poetry, music, prayers or narratives about their spirituality Stilling or mindfulness activities

Curriculum Overview – Year 1								
		Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	
Key Stage 1	Year 1	English	Meesha Makes Friends by Tom Percival Outcome: Recount - Write a diary entry in the first person	Katie in London by James Mayhew Outcome: Non-fiction - write a non-chronological report	Grandpa's Gift by Fiona Lumbers Outcome: Fiction – Write a story about a character	Becky by Alexis Deacon Outcome: Fiction – write own version of the story	Somebody Swallowed Stanley by Sarah Roberts Outcome: Non-fiction – write information texts about sea animals	A Midsummer's Night's Dream Adapted by Brook Jordan Outcome: Fiction – write a character description
		History		How am I making history?		How have toys changed?		Holidays
		Geography	 The United Kingdom		Local area		Weather and Seasons	
		Science	 Seasonal Changes	 Animals, including Humans	 Animals, including Humans (extn)	 Plants	 Materials	 Materials (extn)
		RE	 GOD What do Christians believe God is like?	 What are festivals and why do we have them? Hindu – Diwali	 Who is a Muslim and how do they live?	 SALVATION Why does Easter matter to Christians?	   How do Christians talk to God?	 Who is a Muslim and how do they live?
		Art/DT	 Drawing and Sketchbook: Spirals	 Sliders/leavers moving Santa picture	 Surface and Colour: Exploring Watercolours	 Design and make playground equipment	 Working is 3D: Making Birds	 Cooking and Nutrition – Bring on Breakfast
		Music	 Introducing Beat	 Adding Rhythm and Pitch	 Introducing Tempo and Dynamics	 Combining Pulse, Rhythm and Pitch	 Having Fun with Improvisation	 Explore Sound and Create a Story
		PE	Team building Fundamentals	Dance Ball Skills	Gymnastics Net and Wall	Gymnastics Fitness	Swimming Athletics	Swimming Sending and Receiving
		Sustainability				 The Giants Garden – recycling through composting (locally)		
		Computing/STEM	Technology all around us CS, AL Recognising technology in school and using it responsibly.	Digital painting ET, CM Choosing appropriate tools in a program to create <u>art and</u> making comparisons with working non-digitally.	Moving a robot AL, PG Writing short algorithms and programs for floor robots, and predicting program outcomes	Grouping data DI, AL Exploring object labels, then using them to sort and group objects by properties.	Programming animations PG, DD  Programming animations Designing and programming the movement of a character on screen to tell stories.	Online Safety (Project Evolve)
		Educational Visits	St Peters church visit	Peak Wildlife		Sudbury	Entrust camp <u>fire</u> fieldwork	