



# Developing Spirituality

*Becoming the person God made me to be:  
living, learning, loving.*

*"I praise you because I am fearfully and  
wonderfully made" Psalm 139:14*

Date Policy Ratified by the LAB and Chair	November 2024
Headteacher	Mrs S Eley
Chair of Governors	Mrs L Nield
Review Date	Autumn 2027

## Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- RE Policy
- Collective Worship Policy

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, November 2019 No. 190017, page 59 & 60, states:

## Legal Framework: Links to OFSTED and SIAMS expectations

Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural education. This is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities but draws together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils includes developing their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings, and values.
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others, and the world around them.
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning and willingness to reflect on their experiences.

The SIAMS Evaluation Schedule for Schools and Inspectors, September 2023, includes the following questions:

- How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum? (IQ2)
- How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school? (IQ3)
- In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality and spiritual development? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development? (IQ3)

## Our Values

TRUST



JUSTICE



FORGIVENESS



HOPE



DIGNITY



COMMUNITY



## Our Vision

Austrey and Newton Regis Church of England Schools are small schools at the heart of their rural communities. They have a living Christian foundation that follows the teaching and example of Jesus who reached out **in love** and drew in everyone, whatever their status or struggles, beliefs or views. The biblical and theological ideas that have shaped our vision are as follows: *Created to be like God, we are all individual, different, and precious.*

*As school families, we treat everyone with **dignity**, seeing each person as a vital stroke in the creation of the masterpiece which is our school **community**. We **love** and welcome everyone, supporting them in the ups and downs of life and giving them **hope** for a bright future in their **lives and learning**. We seek **justice** for all, embracing those who face challenges in their **lives and learning**. We act responsibly, treating everyone fairly but not necessarily the same. We work to ensure that everyone has what they need, and we act and speak up for those who don't. **Equity** underpins our commitment to enabling everyone to flourish as the person God made them to be. Therefore, living like Jesus, we think and act with generous and **forgiving** hearts in the strategic and day to day life of the school. **Trusting** in God and the teaching of the bible, we are building a culture of **trust** in which everyone can feel safe; confident that their spiritual, emotional, and academic needs will be met and that their **uniqueness** will contribute to the **unity and wholeness** of Austrey and Newton Regis Church of England Primary Schools.*

## What is Spirituality?

At Austrey and Newton Regis, we believe in the spiritual development of all pupils. We considered how our children are already incredibly spiritual and that it is our role is to support this rather than direct it. We recognise that spirituality is NOT something to be taught explicitly in the curriculum or about developmental milestones. Nevertheless, we also recognise the importance role we, as a school, play to ensure spirituality is able to flourish rather than being squashed or impeded.

Our definition of spirituality ...

***“Spirituality is the opening of hearts and minds through reflection and questioning of the world which lifts the soul and makes the heart sing. For some, it will be experienced through faith and worship.”***

Spiritual development may come through the curriculum e.g. through explicit reflection of SELF in PSHE lessons or consideration of OTHERS in our teamwork during PE. We have considered ways in which we can give children opportunities to develop their spirituality in our curriculum, but this is in no way a 'tick list'.

**In school, we promote spiritual development in a myriad of ways and try to think of this linked to...**

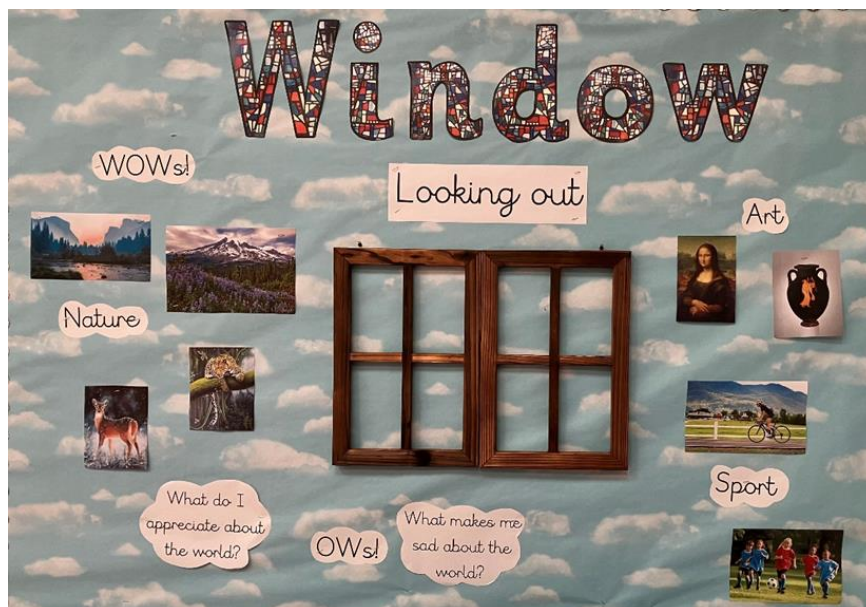
***MIRROR, WINDOW, SKYLIGHT and DOOR***

## MIRROR – Looking in



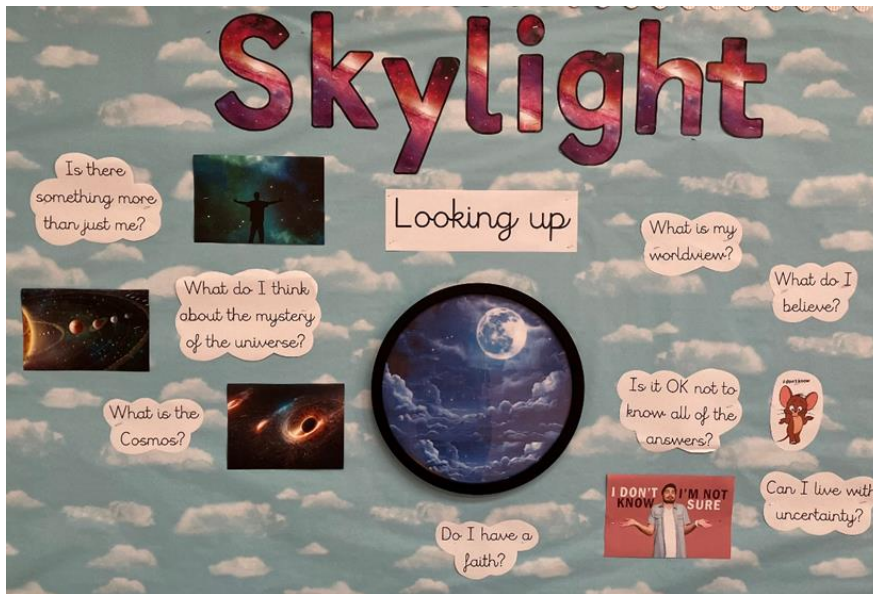
- Knowing myself
- Reflecting alone and together
- Noticing and appreciating similarity and difference
- Growing through our interactions, relationships, questions, and experiences
- Flourishing as my unique self/becoming the person God made me to be

## WINDOW – Looking out



- Appreciating the wonders of the world – its wows
- Acknowledging pain and suffering in the world – its ows
- Wondering – wow!
- Wondering – why?

## SKYLIGHT – Looking up



- Asking big questions of mystery, faith and the universe, cosmos, world views
- Connecting with something bigger than me
- Living and learning with uncertainty

## DOOR – Opening Doors



- Stepping through open doors to make the world a better place
- Looking ahead into the world of others and opening doors for them



## **Organisation**

The spiritual growth of pupils is not *only* dependent on learning in Religious Education or encounters in Collective Worship, opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners are developed in every aspect of our school life. We support the whole school community to share this responsibility and to develop the shared language of spirituality. Opportunities are available for all to develop spiritually in our supportive and nurturing school inspired by our vision and lived out through our Christian values. There are spaces in our school for reflection and stillness. We have identified specific areas which contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils: collective worship, the whole curriculum, including RE and the general ethos of the school within daily life – in our culture, community, conversations, connections, and consciousness.

## **Spirituality in Collective Worship**

Collective Worship is the beating heart of our schools. It provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared. Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present (now moments) which are often linked to invitations to pray or reflect. Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place for hearing the Christian story. They are offered an understanding of worship by being invited to participate in, or observe, Christian spiritual practices such as: prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible and liturgy, and are introduced to different musical traditions. Opportunities to reflect on the wows of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise with the ow moments of disappointment or pain. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark seasonal Christian festivals and celebrations in the calendars of other faiths. In this way, pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. Collective Worship in our school is invitational, inspirational, and inclusive.

## **Spirituality in Religious Education**

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality. Learning activities in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own beliefs, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living, and thinking, believing, and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality and the language of MIRROR, WINDOW, SKYLIGHT and DOOR including wows and ows where appropriate.

## Spirituality within the Curriculum

Our vision for everyone to **become the person God made them to be** has driven the design of our curriculum. It is aspirational. It celebrates diversity and difference. It opens the eyes of pupils to a world beyond our villages and offers the opportunity for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility and justice. Conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from Nursery to Year 6. We are committed to making space in the crowded curriculum for making and taking opportunities to nurture spiritual growth. (See separate document "Opportunities for Spiritual Development within our Curriculum")

## Spirituality within the Daily Life of the School

In our schools, we view spiritual growth as becoming increasingly aware of one's natural, innate spirituality – *loving and welcoming everyone, supporting them in the ups and downs of life and giving them hope for a bright future in their lives and learning.*

These opportunities occur throughout each and every day as children deal with delight, disappointment, and the chance to be present with themselves. For this reason, every member of the school community, are familiar with the school's shared language of spirituality and will respond to pupils appropriately.

## Our Theologically Rooted Christian vision

### *Theologically and biblically rooted*

*There are fundamental theological reasons, rooted in the Bible, for our Christian vision that are summarised here.*

### *Creation and Love*

*At the heart of our Christian vision is the belief that we were **created** by God as unique individuals, made to be like God and God is **love**, as most strikingly shown in the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus.*

*So, God created human beings, making them to be like himself. Genesis 1:27*

*Let us love one another; for love comes from God. 1 John 4:8*

*Jesus said, 'Love one another as I have loved you.' John 13:34*

*Our vision sets out how, as a Christian community, we will be recognised by the way we love because God intended us to be loving, like him. We therefore aim to act and speak in ways which make love recognisable in every aspect of*

school life: our culture, consciousness, courage, conversations, and curriculum. This love will be publicly expressed as justice - speaking and acting up courageously for those without a voice or facing challenge in our community and beyond.

## The Trinity

In the theology of the Trinity - God in three persons, we see diversity and difference. Father, Son and Holy Spirit with distinct roles and identity, each being their authentic selves. Yet they are profoundly connected, in relationship with common purpose. Made in God's image, means we were made for living in community and that relationships are key to flourishing. The diversity of the Trinity reminds us that difference is to be promoted, celebrated, treasured. Our Christian vision is for the flourishing of all, in community, and to open eyes to difference and diversity through recognition, representation celebration and inclusion.

*So, in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. Romans 12:5*

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6*

Our vision reflects that of the Church of England Vision for Education; Deeply Christian, serving the Common Good, that of the Church of England Birmingham Diocesan Board of Education and that of the Trust. At the heart of each of these is Jesus' promise: 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.' John 10:10:

We embrace this as a promise for everyone whatever their status, circumstances, or challenges. We strive for flourishing as unique, gifted individuals for every child and adult.



## **Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The LAB reviews the policy every three years in partnership with Senior Leaders and consider any views expressed by parents, children, and staff to make any changes or recommendations. Governors ensure that this policy is implemented, and that practice is consistent with the school's Christian vision, in line with the school's monitoring policy and schedule for evaluation. This will be covered also by the Trust's annual monitoring and support programme for the Christian Distinctiveness of its schools.

## **Spiritual capacities showing the impact of spiritual development**

The ability of children and adults to:

- be guided by our vision and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them, be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school, wider community and the wider world.
- love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges.
- exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder.
- be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life.
- be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer.
- be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others.
- be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success.
- demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions.
- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family and show generosity towards others.

## **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. Sara Eley (Headteacher) 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, especially in induction.
- Monitoring the opportunities for spiritual growth through regular observations and learning walks in both formal and informal contexts, discussions with colleagues and pupil voice.

## **Staff Development and Training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. ECTs and staff who are new to our schools will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality, the Diocesan Education Team or Christian Distinctiveness adviser appointed by the Trust. This policy is shared on the school's website and is part of the induction pack for new staff and new governors. This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently, as required.