

# Spirituality Policy

## St Andrew's C of E Primary and Nursery School



**Approved by:** St Andrew's C of E Governing Body **Date:** September 2025

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# St Andrew's C of E Primary and Nursery Spirituality Policy

## Opening Statement

As a Church of England school, our spirituality is expressed through our understanding of the Christian gospel. We fully respect that our pupils come from Christian families, from families of other faiths and from families of no faith, and that pupils will hold beliefs and values of their own. Through our spirituality policy, our aim is to enable all our pupils to reflect deeply on what it means to be human and to ascribe meaning and value to human existence.

At St Andrew's C of E Primary and Nursery, we describe spirituality as finding God in all things, enabling reflection so as to become aware of God, one another, the world around us and ourselves. Spirituality is the nurturing of the inner life of the soul of a child, enabling and embracing their questions, doubts and the wonder of existence. It is particularly expressed in our school value, "Push out into the deep."

We seek to enable spiritual development such that children reflect on their capacity for:

- being in a relationship with God and God with us;
- nurturing our awareness of God being with us; and
- being attentive to God being with us.

Christian spirituality is to point towards a life nurtured on the example of Jesus Christ and his care for others; we aim to develop within children a growing sense of empathy, concern and compassion and an ability to reflect on how our school values of trust, forgiveness, thankfulness, courage, respect and love affect our relationships with others.

Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone. Whilst these questions are not dependent on religious affiliation or on the prerogative of religions, as a church school we set this development within a Christian framework, encouraging all to, "Push out into the deep."

Spirituality is an appreciation and cherishing of what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in relationship with others, of what is generous, creative and loving. The spirit of a person is seen in acts of courage, resilience and perseverance, in dealing with both setbacks and praise, in endeavour and enquiry. Spirituality is something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and /or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death or suffering. It is a

way of coping with challenges and recognising success and happiness, enabling a child to flourish.

### Aims

We aim to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual development 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 an understanding of the distinctive ethos of St Andrew's C of E Primary and Nursery as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people's beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own;
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others);
- Develop strategies to build good mental health (see appendix);
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions;
- Develop the skills and language required to enable children to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life;
- Develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others;
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination;
- Develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of for example awe, compassion, and beauty.
- Develop a capacity to value the natural world, foster a sense of awe and wonder in it and encourage a commitment to care for creation.

### Our Curriculum

Through teaching and learning, St Andrew's C of E Primary and Nursery pursues these aims and objectives by ensuring that:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life are driven by the school's

Christian vision statement and values;

- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life;
- Unplanned and spontaneous opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children;
- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this;
- An 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, where space allows;
- Children's 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 allowing for judgements to be made through the discussion and exchange of views and ideas;
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others;
- The RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives;
- Children 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.

At St Andrew's C of E Primary and Nursery we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to children's spiritual development and to highlight opportunities for these in our planning by:

- Seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy;
- Allowing children the security and opportunity to explore and express feelings and emotions and to celebrate diversity;
- Providing opportunities for prayer including silence and stillness;
- Sharing feelings and experiences that foster hope, joy, reassurance and encouragement;
- Encouraging children to develop relationships based on the school's Christian vision and values;
- Enabling children to make the links between the Church and Biblical teachings, the

life of the school and the wider community and how these impact on their own understanding of themselves and their place within the world today;

- Providing an environment that promotes space to reflect, think and wonder.

### Monitoring and evaluation

Spiritual development cannot be measured and continues throughout our lives. However, opportunities offered to children for spiritual development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways;

- Observing and listening to children;
- 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 spirituality means in this school;
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. assembly feedback, RE books, creative writing, art;
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.

### Review

This policy has been written in consultation with the staff of the school and approved by the Governing body in January 2024. It is to be reviewed every 2 years before being presented to staff and Governors, or more regularly in the light of any significant new developments. This policy was last reviewed in Autumn 2024. The next date for review shall be in Autumn 2025.

### Appendix: Extract from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidance; Advice for Schools and SIAMS Inspectors 2018

#### 1. Spirituality and mental health

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has published some useful guidance on spirituality and mental health where they identify ways in which some aspects of spirituality can offer real benefits for mental health. They identify spirituality as being within and beyond formal religion and recognise that it 'often becomes more important to people in times of emotional stress and physical and mental illness, loss, bereavement and the approach to death.'

They recommend that a person with a religious belief may need support which acknowledges and gives space to their faith as part of their support. Schools should therefore look to

provide opportunities for inclusive spiritual development that supports good mental health as well as opportunities to learn from people of different faiths and beliefs about how their spirituality shapes them and supports their mental health and wellbeing. Religious Education which offers the opportunity for young people to engage with a diversity of people can support this. Schools would also benefit from building relationships with the religious leaders in their community.