

Spirituality Policy 2025-2026

St Matthias Church of England Primary School



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In collaboration with



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School Vision

ASPIRE, BELIEVE, ACHIEVE

‘Our school family, values us all as unique individuals and children of God.

We **aspire** to be the best version of ourselves; **believing** that through the gifts God has given us, we can make a positive contribution, flourish and **achieve** together to make a difference in our ever-changing world.’

School Statement on Spirituality and Spiritual Development

In St Matthias CE Primary School, we recognise that developing the spirituality of our pupils and adults is a fundamental aspect of enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Our school’s distinctively Christian vision; *Our school family values us all as unique individuals and children of God. We **aspire** to be the best version of ourselves; **believing** that through the gifts God has given us, we can make a positive contribution, flourish and **achieve** together to make a difference in our ever-changing world’ runs through our whole school life, like a thread that ties us together as a school family. At St Matthias, spirituality means taking time to think about the big questions in life – like how we connect with God, the world around us, each other, and things that are deep and sometimes hard to explain.*

Spiritual moments at St Matthias are when we provide opportunities for individuals to ‘pause for thought’, connect and reflect deeply, it can also happen spontaneously. Spirituality enables us to explore the meaning and purpose of our ever-changing world and what lies beyond. It helps us to empathise and consider our role within our world, and how we can make a positive contribution using the gifts God has given us to flourish as we become the best version of ourselves. Spirituality helps us to understand, respect, and celebrate what makes each of us unique. It helps us see that everyone is important, and it encourages us to grow in every part of our lives as we learn and experience new things together as reflected in [Psalm 139:14](#) –HCS Bible- *I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and I know this very well. This reflects us individually as we are wonderfully crafted by God's hands, each one of us beautiful and unique. God has made each one of us special and loves each of us for who we are.*’

It is well planned and of high quality so that the whole school community is engaged on a journey of discovery.

Spiritual development differs from person to person and is a very personal experience. For this reason, it is difficult to put into words. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith. For Christians in church, spirituality is about developing a deeper understanding of and connection with God. It is about God’s way of being with us and our way of being with God. Through this we are able to respond to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a church, but it is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. Family backgrounds may be very different and spiritual development must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

Therefore, in light of this at St Matthias CE Primary School, spirituality lies at the heart of our Christian vision.

We value every member of our school family as a unique individual and child of God. Spirituality is a reflective journey that encourages us to explore life’s mysteries, ask thoughtful questions, and embrace our sense of wonder. For Christian believers, it also means seeking an understanding of God’s presence.

Spirituality helps us appreciate the world, recognise the gifts we each have, and strive to be the best version of ourselves. It enables us to flourish, achieve, and make a positive difference—both individually and together as a community—in our ever-changing world.

Aims and Guiding Principles

Through establishing the right learning environment in which spiritual development can be fostered, we aim to support pupils and adults to:

- 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 this church school, 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
- foster self-awareness and the ability to make informed decisions
- develop the skills and language required to enable them 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
- develop a love of curiosity, creativity and imagination
- develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc.
- develop a capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation.

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

Guiding Principles

Spiritual development contains many facets and it is concerned with a number of areas of an individual's life. Therefore, when developing spirituality in pupils and adults, we, in line with our distinctively Christian vision and our school's definition for spirituality, look at four key areas:

- 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.
 - 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 ask and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God).
 - Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God.
 - Making sense of the world.
- Nature
 - 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, etc.

Approaches to Spiritual Development

At St Matthias CE Primary School, we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to pupils' spiritual development and to highlight opportunities for these in our planning by:

- seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy
- allowing pupils 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 pupils to develop relationships based on the school's Christian vision and associated values
- enabling pupils 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.

As part of our approach to spiritual development, we use the follow strategy in our school:

Heads, Hearts & Hands Model

This learning strategy encourages pupils to engage their head for critical analysis, their heart for emotional reflection and their hand for a practical application of what they have learned.

At St Matthias CE Primary School, because of our distinctively Christian Vision, we believe that the 'Head, Hearts, Hands' approach is beneficial to our learners with SEMH needs. It reminds us that our whole wellbeing is important: mental health and learning (head), spiritual health and relationships (heart) and physical health (hands)

In our school, Children and adults have time for personal reflection and are encouraged to follow this approach to develop spiritual growth. Because of our Christian Vision, our curriculum and school day is tailored to meet the needs of our pupils and provides opportunities, enabling our children's spirituality to unfurl and flourish through their learning and play.

As a Trauma Informed School, we recognise that spirituality can have a huge impact on the ways in which we manage life events, trying to understand what is happening and why.

Courageous Advocacy within our school is celebrated, we encourage pupils and staff to develop a greater awareness of the challenges others face and how we can use the gifts God has given us to make a positive contribution to our school family, local community and further afield. Lending itself to a Head, heart and hands approach.

Theme.		My Reflection:
HEAD 	What have I learned? What can I take away?	
HEART 	How has this made me feel? What might be the impact for others?	
HAND 	What do I need to do now? What is my response? How can I change or change the situation?	

Planning, Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues the aims and objectives 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 pupils 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
- that 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
- opportunities are provided for pupils to listen attentively and observe carefully, to listen with discernment, to value what is good and worthwhile and to make judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas
- support is provided for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others
- that the outstanding RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives
- that 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
- strategies for positive mental health are promoted.

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 spirituality 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
- regular diocesan Spirituality review.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- provide a statement within the school prospectus which makes clear that the aims of spiritual development within the school are based on its Christian foundation, but are inclusive in practice
- in conjunction with the Headteacher, monitor the effectiveness of spirituality within the school and make recommendations for its development in accordance with the SIAMS Schedule.

The Headteacher will:

- co-ordinate timetabling / themes across the year(s) into long, medium and short-term planning, in conjunction with school staff and church community, so that spirituality can be embedded throughout the curriculum
- ensure that the school prospectus, welcome / induction pack and website have clear statements about the school's ethos for developing spirituality and its distinction from moral, social and cultural development
- be a part of the SIAMS inspection process
- support other members of staff
- know where to access good resources to support spiritual development
- lead staff meetings or provide quality CPD other sources that have a focus on development of spirituality.

Staff will:

- support how important it is to grow spiritually in our school
- plan and lead activities for the development of spirituality when required
- provide opportunities for pupils to reflect, ask big questions and feel inspired
- learn what spirituality means in our school and share it with others

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. This support is provided by Diocese of Worcester Education Team, Trust Lead meetings and in-house training. Training needs for staff may be identified through regular subject leader audits as well as performance management cycles.

Resources

A number of resources are available to support the development of spiritual development within school including:

- Roots and Fruits
- Spirituality resources on StaffShare
- Diocesan Wellbeing and Spirituality Compendium
- Diocesan Prayer Area resources.

Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the Governing Board every year. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- a change in the SIAMS Schedule for Inspections
- a change in the understanding of spiritual development.