



**St Mary's C of E School**  
**LEARNING WITH HOPE**

## **Spirituality Policy**



**An Baya**

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

<b>Date agreed:</b>	<b>November 2023</b>
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Headteacher:</b>
<b>Signed</b>	<b>Chair of governors:</b>
<b>Date for review:</b>	<b>November 2025</b>

## Mission and Aims Statement

Recognising their historic foundation, An Baya Primary Schools will preserve and develop their religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at Parish and Diocesan level.

At St Mary's C of E Primary, our mission is to educate children spiritually, intellectually, socially, morally, aesthetically and physically to be able to make a difference by following the example of Jesus in the gospels living out 'life in it's fullness.'

**The schools aim to achieve this by:**

- **Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills** by following a broad and balanced curriculum that stimulates a sense of curiosity and excitement about the world whilst developing the full potential of all children
- **Educating for Hope and Aspiration** by providing a safe, nurturing and caring environment where all children can take risks, build resilience, flourish and demonstrate courageous advocacy in action.
- **Educating for Community and Living well together** by building positive relationships with our local, national and international communities and for the schools to be hubs of learning in the community, making a positive difference to children and their families.
- **Educating for Dignity and Respect** by promoting perseverance, generosity, and courage so that children leave our schools equipped with the character virtues to make a difference.

## Our approach to Spiritual Development

At St. Mary's C of E Primary school, the promotion of spiritual development is an integral dimension of school life and achieving our vision of "Learning with Hope". We aim to nurture the spirituality of everyone in our school community and recognise that if it not nurtured than spirituality can wither.

Therefore, spiritual development permeates and is promoted through all areas of the curriculum and through the ethos of the school and daily collective worship.

Understanding of self and others is at the heart of spiritual development and is not linked solely to a particular doctrine or faith. Spiritual development is accessible to everyone. It involves accompanying children of all faiths and none, in their search for self and identity, recognising that this search will not always result in following the Christian way.

However, as a Church of England school, we place special emphasis on the specific teaching and beliefs of the Christian faith, both within the daily life of the school and through the curriculum.

## Defining Spirituality

At St Mary's C of E Primary, we use the following definition of spirituality by Prof. Ursula King to guide our practise: "Spirituality is about our relationships with ourselves, our family, friends, those around us, to God and to all of creation." **Spirituality can be defined as an awareness of myself, others, the world and beyond.**

## Aims for Spiritual Development

## **Aims**

To foster spiritual development, the school aims to provide children with opportunities to:

- Develop the ability to listen and be still;
- Develop the ability to reflect;
- 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 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 the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of 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.

## **Provision for Spiritual Development**

For children's spirituality to develop and flourish, there must be trust that school is a safe place where their doubts, fears and questions will be listened to. There is a shared understanding that the spiritual life of the school is the wellspring of moral, social and cultural development and all that makes the community what it is and strives to become.

Providing opportunities for spiritual development is encouraged in all areas of school life. Explicit opportunities for Spirituality have been planned and developed across the curriculum and across all age groups. In addition, staff actively plan two opportunities for spiritual development with their class each term using the Spirituality Progression Grids (Andrew Rickett). Evidence of these opportunities are placed in class Spirituality folders.

However, it is recognised that opportunities for spiritual development can also occur spontaneously. Evidence of these opportunities are also placed in Spirituality folders.

## **Visual Models of Spirituality**

We use the window, mirrors, doors and beyond to help use plan and think about Spirituality. This model is referred to in collective worship and in our planning of opportunities for spiritual development for the pupils at our school.



### **Windows**

Giving pupils opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways. Learning about life in all its fullness. This includes both the things that amaze them and also challenge them.



### **Mirrors**

Giving pupils opportunities to reflect upon their experiences. To meditate on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. Learning from life, by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.



### **Doors**

Giving pupils opportunities to respond, to do something creative in order to express, apply and further develop their thoughts and convictions. Learning to live by putting into action their beliefs and values.

## **The role of Collective Worship**

Collective Worship provides daily opportunities for the children's spirituality to develop and flourish. Children are given the opportunity to learn from the example of Jesus through gospel stories and other Biblical teaching. This forms the root of the Christian values that shape our whole school ethos, ensuring that Collective Worship is a central activity in the life of our school.

Within RE, Collective Worship and PSHE, the school will:

- allow pupils to investigate and reflect upon their own beliefs and values;
- provide opportunities for pupils to share what is meaningful and significant to them, including the 'darker' side of life;
- provide opportunities for prayer/reflection/silence, the exploration of inner space;
- encourage a balance of music, speech, silence and the creative arts when exploring spiritual development.

- explore the case of symbol, image, allegory and metaphor in the curriculum;
- explore what commitment means;
- always invite a response and never coerce.

### **Curricular Opportunities**

The curriculum and all areas of our community life is explicitly rooted in Christian values. Within the Curriculum, pupils will be able to explore:

- an imaginative approach to the world;
- a spirit of enquiry and open-mindedness;
- an approach to the holy or the sacred;
- an awareness of order and pattern in the world

Children will be encouraged to express their creativity and imagination.

We foster a sense of respect for the integrity of each person and create an atmosphere which enables children and staff to speak freely about their beliefs.

### **Using our natural environment**

All classes at St Mary's have reflection areas. There is also a place for reflection, stillness and prayer in the school hall. During the school year there are also opportunities to write prayers for more specific occasions. We also use the natural space in Cornwall and outdoor resources in Penwith for encouraging spiritual development and appreciation of the natural world.

Beyond the Formal Curriculum, the school will:

- Encourage children to express such feelings as transcendence, wonder, transience and change, paradox and unease, injustice or inequality whilst listening carefully to others' questions and responses;
- Treat everyone in our community, pupils, staff, parents and governors with respect;
- St Mary's School works closely with Penlee Cluster with themes being explored both in school and church. Children have opportunities in the school year to contribute and participate in church services and events.

### **Assessment of Spiritual Development**

We recognise that whilst we can endeavour to provide opportunities for Spiritual development the usual models for assessing cannot apply to spiritual development. All staff need to be mindful to 'invite but not coerce' responses. We strongly acknowledge that children are their own agents in forming their individual belief base. Through carefully thought-out opportunities we *may* be able to gauge children's involvement and response to opportunities which *may* show the child

- becoming aware of God in their life and in the life of others
- becoming aware of and reflecting on experience
- questioning and exploring the meaning of experience

- understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations
- developing personal views and insights and a grasp of the intangible
- applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to one's own life
- acquiring a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion.
- development is best seen through pupil's relationships and conversations with others.

Pupil conferencing will be carried out each year on this area with the Governors for SMSC and a member of staff. This will involve a group of KS1 and KS2 children talking about their understanding of Spirituality. Each class has an 'Awe and Wonder' or Spirituality book in order to collect photos and examples of work to help develop talk about spirituality.

### **Responsibilities**

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- ensuring that the Church Foundation of the school is honoured and that the SMSC Policy promotes an ethos based on Christian principles and practice.
- ensuring that the SMSC is put into practice and monitored by the appropriate governor

The SMSC co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Understand the impact that good spiritual (moral, social and cultural) development can have on the school as a whole.
- Overseeing the planning, the provision and the monitoring and evaluation of Spirituality development.
- Keep in touch with national developments and will act in an advisory capacity, supporting colleagues.
- Provide staff with updates of information.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links with the existing policies:

- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Equality Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- RE Policy
- Collective Worship
- SMC Policy
- Overall Curriculum Policies
- PSHE

### **Resources**

Developing Children's Spirituality resource box is kept in the staff room with books and articles linked to this area.

Key text: Developing Children's Spirituality by Rebecca Nye Useful Websites:

Diocese of Salisbury: [www.salisbury.anglican.org](http://www.salisbury.anglican.org)

Diocese of Norwich: [www.dioceseofnorwich.org](http://www.dioceseofnorwich.org)

Diocese of Bristol: [www.bristol.anglican.org](http://www.bristol.anglican.org) (good SMSC lesson plans)

### **Review**

The Governing Body will review this policy, formally, two years from the date of its adoption. Informal Review may be necessary in the interim and should take place as and when required.