



**Branscombe CE Primary School, Broadhembury CE Primary School,
Farway CE Primary School, Littleham CE Primary School and
Woodbury Salterton CE Primary School**

Spirituality Policy

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| Responsible for review | |
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| Due for review: Spring | Approved by Governing Body on | Head teacher signature | Chair of Governors signature |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2021 | 7/12/21 | | |
| 2024 | | | |
| 2027 | | | |

Biblical Reference:

"Let the word of Christ dwell richly within you with all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Colossians 3:16.

Our Definition of Spirituality

The Jubilee with Pebblebed Federation, with its attractive and welcoming learning environments, offers a high standard of education to all children from the neighbouring communities whatever their parents' religious beliefs. The spiritual dimension is expressed through our strong Christian faith, and the recognition of the spiritual nature of mankind. Our ethos enables and encourages all children, with faith or of no faith, to grow and flourish spiritually.

We consider that spirituality is a powerful force that determines what we are, and our self-understanding. It forms the basis for successful relationships, and shapes our behaviour and outlook on life, others and the world. Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which we acquire insight into our personal experiences which are of enduring worth.

"The Intelligent School" by MacGilchrist, Myers and Reed defines spirituality in this way:

"Spirituality is a source of creativity open to us all. It brings that quality of aliveness which sparks inquiry, ideas, observations, insights, empathy, artistic expression, earnest endeavour and playfulness. It opens us to life and to each other. Spirituality is a thread which runs through our life, bringing hope, compassion, thankfulness, courage, peace and a sense of purpose and meaning to the everyday, while reaching beyond the immediate world of the visible and tangible. It drives us

to seek and stay true to values not ruled by material success.”

Spirituality is essentially something very personal and has to do with us as people –mind, body and spirit. Although it is not bound by any agreed wording, we have developed this definition in order to communicate something of our understanding of what spirituality means in our federation.

The Jubilee with Pebblebed Federation’s Definition of Spirituality

Within The Jubilee with Pebblebed Federation we consider that attending to the spiritual affirms children for who they are, rather than what they achieve so that they become well rounded and ready to take their place in society fulfilled, happy, spiritually aware and socially and emotionally engaged. We believe that spirituality is the awareness of something both within ourselves and outside ourselves; a search for meaning; an awareness of God of the transcendent; a deep awareness of the natural world; an understanding of the centrality of love, friendship and mutual respect; a search for meaning.

Spirituality is a thread which runs through every part of school life and every aspect of the curriculum. We need to encourage children to express their spirituality through language, silence, creativity and action.

Aims

It is our aim that the children’s individual spiritual development is fostered as an integral element of the range of learning opportunities and experiences they encounter as part of the curriculum we offer, and that it permeates all strands of school life.

During the recent Global Pandemic it has become increasingly apparent that we need to prioritise mental health and wellbeing.

‘If we want our schools to be places of flourishing, we need to acknowledge the synergy and inter relatedness of spirituality, mental health and well being.’ Wilson 2019.

We believe that spirituality is essential for personal happiness. No child is complete without spiritual engagement, be it through art, music, literature, nature etc. One of the ways spirituality can be expressed is through the awareness or understanding of the value of silence and reflection. We therefore actively provide opportunities for our children to reflect and give them time to think more deeply about things to fully appreciate the world around them and to consider the contribution they can make to it.

It is often said that Spirituality will only happen when we are open and willing to go deeper. Within The Jubilee with Pebblebed Federation we try to develop spirituality by being creative and engaging, by enabling our pupils to connect with stories, by empowering our children to ask and respond to questions, by promoting play and creativity, by developing relationships, by providing a sense of belonging and by the use of rituals and symbols. In our schools we hope that our pupils will value learning and enjoy questioning, listening and responding creatively across a range of subjects. These intentions are reflected in our Curriculum Intent Statement:

To provide a curriculum which encourages pupils, within a supportive Christian environment, to aspire to reach their full potential. This will be achieved through experiential learning, using the richness of our local rural community and culture, but also by opening the children’s eyes further to gain knowledge about, and see the opportunities in, the wider British, European and global contexts.

We are committed to ensuring spirituality encompasses everything that we do within The Jubilee with Pebblebed Federation. We aim to support spiritual capacities enabling all pupils to flourish by:

- fostering the spiritual characteristics in the school
- fostering sensitive relationships and empathy for others as feeling, thinking individuals
- fostering the spiritual development of each pupil, regardless of age, ability, faith, sex or cultural background
- encouraging pupils to be comfortable with reflection, meditation and stillness
- exercising imagination and creativity
- valuing the inner self
- ensuring children respect and value their own bodies and those of others
- fostering an appreciation of, and value for, the natural environment
- valuing the spiritual search of each individual
- appreciating the importance of beliefs
- fostering a sense of meaning, purpose and direction in life
- exploring festivals, rituals and symbols
- sharing the Christian story and affirming the value of Christian spirituality whilst valuing and respecting other belief systems
- supporting the development of communication skills and confidence to communicate appropriately
- providing a context for security
- fostering self-awareness and empathy
- challenging prejudices and stereotypes
- encouraging intrigue and being open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
- encouraging curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions.

All staff take responsibility for this area of experience and account for the spiritual in planning and policies. The Collective Worship and R.E. subject leaders recognise the special role that their particular curriculum area contributes to the spiritual life of the school. The Executive Headteacher, Heads of Learning, Governing Body, and staff ensure that spirituality is affirmed in the values and principles prevalent in our schools.

Success Criteria

In line with the National Curriculum (2014) we have an expectation that children's spirituality will develop. Through our teaching of the curriculum, we aim to develop the whole child; their educational growth, their emotional growth and their understanding and acceptance of themselves. We recognise that spiritual growth is only possible where there is growth of the whole person. Children need to acquire skills, explore experiences and assimilate knowledge within the area of spiritual development. By creating opportunities for spiritual development, moral, social and cultural issues will be enhanced and link closely with spirituality through activities in the classroom, the school and the community using the curriculum as a vehicle.

Learning experiences will provide opportunities for children to be able to:

- be inspired by the natural world and human achievement
- understand and evaluate a range of responses and interpretations
- develop personal views and insight
- Increase their awareness of their own thoughts, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences
- apply insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to their own lives
- know that beliefs are valued

- know that respect for both Christian and non-Christian belief is endorsed by the school community
- grow in understanding of personal identity and worth
- recognise the values and worth of all individuals
- recognise a sense of community
- question and explore the meaning of experience
- reflect on their experience with increasing sensitivity.

From the exciting and engaging opportunities and experiences for spiritual development that teachers plan, create or develop for their pupils the children will, in turn, wish to retell and explore these as stories. As explained by Andrew Rickett these retellings will invariably fall into four definite themes, and will explore the relationship, and therefore emotional response we have, with those themes;

Self - stories about their own personal experiences (the relationship with ourselves, our self identity)

Others - stories that relate to their engagement with others (the relationship with those we know and our connections with people we have never met)

Beauty - stories that speak about beauty (the relationship we have, and appreciation of, stunning views, stirring words, compelling art and consoling music)

Beyond - stories that tackle the transcendent questions of meaning and purpose (the relationship we have with our place in the world).

More importantly than the experience itself is to provide the time and opportunity for children to relive their stories and reflect on why they were valuable to them. This allows pupils to express an emotional reaction to them. The ability to live the emotion again, in the retelling of a significant story, provides the means for our children to move in their minds to the land of the spirit.

Relationships bind each of the four aspects together and can be seen at the heart. What connects them all is our federation core value of Love.

Current Practice

The spiritual curriculum is recognised in:

1) The Ethos of the School.

This is evident in the valuing of children and the celebration of their success and endeavour. The schools each have a vision statement which the children have contributed to. The schools have a Code of Conduct which aims to ensure appropriate interactions between pupils. The same considerate interaction is also expected between adults in the school community and between children and adults. Children are encouraged to express themselves, enjoy their learning and to seek support from other children and adults in times of joy, and in times of sorrow and difficulty - eg. family breakdown or bereavement. All schools have a weekly sharing/praise/celebration assembly to celebrate achievement. The schools all have a pastoral structure involving all staff, teaching and non-teaching, together with support from local clergy. The whole school community recognises the importance of looking after our own, and others' mental health.

2) Collective Worship

This, together with the special school services throughout the year, helps children to experience the whole school coming together and to develop a sense of group identity. It offers the chance to find stillness in a busy existence, and it helps to foster a sense of personal and social responsibility. A desire to pray and worship may develop and children take an active part on these occasions in leading and contributing to worship.

3) The Curriculum.

Every area of the curriculum can provide opportunities for spiritual development and staff are aware

of this as they do their personal planning. These opportunities may arise spontaneously so cannot be planned for specifically, although some aspects of learning may be predicted to be more likely to lead to such chances. In different curriculum areas there will be the chance for children to explore questions about the meaning of life, to ponder the mysteries of the created world, to dwell on beauty, to explore the diversity of different cultures and to find out about the lives of others. This is reflected in our Curriculum Intent Statement. R.E. clearly has a significant role to play in the spiritual development of pupils.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is hoped that through the three areas above children will develop a greater awareness of self and others, a sense of beauty and appreciation of the world around them and finally a sense of beyond.

We are mindful when considering the children's development in this area that a spiritual journey is relevant to everyone and not just members of a faith community. We should also show sensitivity when talking about spiritual matters and considering whether pupils are developing in their spiritual awareness - children have the right to be silent and not share their views.

As a federation we believe that outcomes cannot be formally assessed in this area as we believe that the response of the pupil to opportunities provided for spiritual development is something personal. However, a development of deeper questioning and discussions through the four stages of self, others, beauty and beyond will be noted across the school. Informal notes and photos will be collated in scrapbooks or displays and teachers will note any key observations in a monitoring document see appendix 2. This will enable the teacher to try to plan for opportunities to develop areas where there has been a lack of discussion or enquiry in the past.

Spiritual moments can be spontaneous and staff will develop these moments to the benefit of the children. They will consider providing opportunities for fostering spiritual sensitivities, attitudes and key skills and these are specified in Appendix 1.

In summary and in line with the schools' Anglican Foundation we expect that children in our federation will

- be affirmed in their spiritual journey
- be encouraged to move on to commitment in the Christian faith
- know that belief is valuable and Christian belief is endorsed by the school community and Foundation.

Appendix 1

Spiritual Sensitivities, Spiritual Attitudes and Spiritual Key Skills

Spiritual Sensitivities

- A sense of the mystery of life.
- A sense of awe and wonder.
- A sense of transcendence and an awareness of there being something more to life than meets the eye.
- An imaginative approach to the world.
- A reflective attitude to the natural world.
- A sense of transience and change.
- A sense of pattern, sequence and order.
- A spirit of enquiry and open mindedness.
- Awareness that life involves moral choices between good and bad.
- An awareness of paradox and unease.
- A sense of life's joys and achievements.
- A sense of meaning, purpose and direction.
- An awareness of the darker side of life, of suffering, pain, decay and loss.
- An awareness of community – it's demands, values, rituals and celebrations.
- A sense of others as thinkers, feeling persons.
- An increasing ability to empathise with others.
- The capacity to be still.
- The practice of silence, reflection and inner awareness
- The capacity to be aware of one's own inner life and to reflect.
- An increasing awareness of the presence of God or a transcendent source in one's own life and in the life of others.
- A sense of the sacred, the holy, the Divine.
- The increasing ability to question one's beliefs, actions and those of others in a search for meaning.
- The ability to communicate responses and feelings with increasing confidence.
- The ability to be challenged and inspired by the achievements of the human spirit.
- A sense of justice.
- An awareness of the importance of relationships within the natural world.
- An ability to apply insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to their own lives.

Spiritual Key Skills

- Reflection
- Empathy
- Questioning
- Communicating
- Stilling
- Listening
- Interpretation
- Expression
- Awareness

Spiritual Attitudes

- A reverential attitude to the Divine
- A reflective attitude to the natural world
- An empathetic attitude to others
- Positive attitudes to one's self worth and one's identity
- An attitude of openness to the spiritual search
- Affirming beliefs of others

Appendix 2

Spiritual Development

| (Year 1) | | | (Year 2) | | |
|--|------------|--------|---|------------|--------|
| <p>Spiritual development - self A growing awareness of knowing what I like and what I don't like both materially and in the way that I want to be treated. Can say what I like and what I am good at</p> <p>Spiritual development - others Understanding that other people have their own views and opinions and may value different things to you.</p> <p>Spiritual development – world and beauty Have an instant response to something wonderful/ exciting and awesome happening. Evident in expression and simple phrases. Respond to sensory feelings and be able to show it.</p> <p>Spiritual development – beyond Have the confidence to ask questions that have no answers</p> | | | <p>Spiritual development - self An evolving awareness of the concept of self as more than purely physical characteristics. A growing realisation that being content with who you are is important for personal happiness. Know how to apologise and to try again. Beginning to recognise mistakes and how to deal with them in a positive way.</p> <p>Spiritual development – others A growing appreciation that the views and opinions of others should be listened to with respect whether those views are similar to your own or different.</p> <p>Spiritual development – world and beauty Give a verbal response that explains a reaction to something wonderful/ exciting or awesome. Be seen to respond to a stimulus and begin to explain in simple terms verbally or through body language.</p> <p>Spiritual development – beyond Have a sense of enjoyment in devising and discussing questions that have no answer. Use imagination to interpret responses to big questions.</p> | | |
| Emerging | Developing | Secure | Emerging | Developing | Secure |
| | | | | | |

| (Year 3-4) | | | (Year 5-6) | | |
|---|------------|--------|---|------------|--------|
| <p>Spiritual development - self The awareness that the growing development of a personal identity is an important aspect of being human. A growing realisation that an emphasis on self alone is not sufficient as a means of living out the self. An evolving sense of the concept of identity as more than purely physical characteristics or our likes and hobbies. Can set goals for my work and behaviour that will help me to progress.</p> <p>Spiritual development – others Acknowledgement and respect for the rights of others to have their own deep thoughts that shape their inner self. A developing ability to enter into discussions with others about their values and opinions.</p> <p>Spiritual development – world and beauty Be able to understand and give meaning to something wonderful/ exciting or awesome. Be able to verbalise their sensory responses and begin to explore their reactions to stimuli. A growing confidence to explore concepts orally.</p> <p>Spiritual development – beyond Understand what big questions are. Be able to explain imaginative responses to questions of meaning.</p> | | | <p>Spiritual development - self The awareness of the value of reflection to explore deeper responses to thoughts that help shapes the 'inner self'. An understanding that we express our personal values in the way that we approach our relationship with others and the world around us. The ability to express an interpretation of this verbally. Can explain my opinions.</p> <p>Spiritual development – others A growing empathy with the values of others and developing an understanding of the need to appreciate them to build meaningful relationships. A growing ability to express how understanding the value of others is an important part of building meaningful relationships.</p> <p>Spiritual development – world and beauty Be able to explain/ give an emotional response to stimuli and begin to articulate this from a personal perspective. Be able to display shades of meaning when verbalising sensory responses and understand and interpret their reaction. A developing appreciation that some things don't have answers.</p> <p>Spiritual development – beyond Can generate big questions. Begin to express through a personal vocabulary responses to questions of meaning. Begin to be able to use critical reasoning in responding to a big question</p> | | |
| Emerging | Developing | Secure | Emerging | Developing | Secure |
| | | | | | |

(Exceeding)

Spiritual development - self

A growing appreciation that a sense of personal identity is connected to the way that we relate with others. The ability to articulate difficult concepts such as conscience, morals, suffering and love through a developing verbal confidence.

Know that my feelings may change as I grow older.

Spiritual development – others

To understand how and why rules and laws are made and why different rules are needed in different situations. To realise the consequences of anti-social and aggressive behaviours such as bullying and racism on others and communities.

To question and challenge assumptions based on stereotyping.

Spiritual development – world and beauty

Begins to articulate responses to beauty. Starts to express an understanding of connectedness to the world

Spiritual development – beyond

A growing desire to explore concepts that don't have immediate answers or words to describe/explain them.

Begins to use a bank of ideas and knowledge to think critically about question with no immediate answers. Can begin to articulate difficult concepts.

Starts to develop a personal integrity.

| Emerging | Developing | Secure |
|----------|------------|--------|
| | | |

