

St Alban's C.E Primary School



Spirituality Policy January 2024

Renewed: January 2024
Review date: January 2026

Our school vision



Our vision is that all our pupils should grow in:

Faith in God, or be inspired by faith, and in their own ability to fulfil their potential,

Hope to be the best of examples, to work to change themselves and the world for the better, and

Love, reflecting God's love in unselfish love for others.

Our vision is based on the God given virtues of:

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

1 Corinthians 13:13

Faith

Hope

Love

1. How is this policy a reflection of our theologically rooted Christian vision?

As Paul states in his letter wrote to the Corinthians:

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

It is these values that are at the core of our pupils' spiritual development.

2. Introduction

The Church of England Vision for Education is rooted in Jesus' desire that we should have 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). As our spiritual nature is such a fundamental part of our humanity, spiritual development is a key part of this holistic view of education: "Our vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework." 1 As Derek Holloway writes, spiritual development is intrinsic to every part of our work: "I would strongly contend that in all schools, and certainly in Church schools, that spiritual development is not something you should hide away in a couple of curriculum boxes or treat as an afterthought. It must be something that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life. 2 We believe that spiritual development is a core thread that runs through our school, and we see it as vital for the flourishing of all within our school community. In Acts 17:28, the Apostle Paul says that in God "we live and move and have our being"; becoming more aware of our innate spirituality is a life-long journey and it is our desire that all at St Alban's CE School move forward on that journey during their time here.

3. Aims

Our aim is to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual flourishing 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 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 (Friendship, Perseverance, Compassion, Forgiveness, Courage and Creativity) and the Biblical teaching, 1 Corinthians's 13:13 that underpins them and our school vision, Faith, Hope, Love.

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 mental health policy);

Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils 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;

Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination;

Develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty, nature, unexpected etc

Develop a capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation and foster it where and when we can.

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

As over-arching aims, our approach to spiritual development will:

- Reflect the school's Church of England status.
- Reflect and strengthen the school's Christian vision and ethos.

Faith Hope Love

- Take place within a school environment which enables pupils and adults to flourish

4. Legal requirements

The importance of spiritual development in schools is recognised in legislation. Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 Spiritual development is a particular focus of Church school inspections under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) which asks

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

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (2019) states:

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 ... 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.
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

5. Shared understanding of spiritual development

Philip Sheldrake writes: "In Christian terms, spirituality refers to the way our fundamental values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices reflect particular understandings of God, human identity, and the material world as the context for human transformation... We shall see that all Christian spiritual traditions are rooted in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, particularly in the gospels and in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Christian spirituality is fundamentally concerned with following the way of Jesus Christ."³

As a church school, it is this Christian framework that shapes our shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development. We recognise the importance of engaging with our linked church in determining this shared understanding in the context of our school's Christian vision and values.

To make conversations about spiritual flourishing more accessible to every member of our school community, St Alban's CE School has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development

We recognise spirituality as the connection between our soul (or inner life) and the delight, meaning and purpose which is found outside or beyond self. It is exciting to develop a healthy spirituality. The Bible and Christian practice root us and enable us. We look outwards to appreciate and cherish the wonder and awe of the world. We learn to look inwards to reflect on our experiences, to build resilience and courage, and explore life's big questions all linked to our school vision of faith and hope. Furthermore, we look onwards to discover the meaning and creative impact of our lives on those around us, linked to our school vision of hope. Spirituality is a part of us; a window to look outwards on the world, a mirror to look inwards on our belief and values, and a door to how we can live in response. We want our pupils to be good citizens of the world, to make a change and a difference to those around them; spirituality prepares them for that.

We plan for such spiritual development by allowing time for these simple things: encouraging increased awareness of the world, its wows and ows, finding ways in which this can be reflected on with others'

Faith Hope Love

support and exploring a range of creative ways to live out and put the 'faith' which is growing from this, into practice. This approach is clear in our school vision of "Faith, Hope and Love", which underpins everything we do.

6. Provision

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 through **big questions, what if questions, pupil voice, entry points in topic, themed days and weeks, trips and residentials, Collective worship, PSHE and RE;**
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual 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; **prayer spaces, prayer tree, prayer circles.**
- 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; **we often ask the clergy to come and support teachers with this to ensure it is taught to the highest standard.**
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer; **the prayer space, the library and the den and often the Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers office are regularly used by children who need a space for silence, stillness and or prayer.**
- That 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; **Ullswater, Norfolk and Paris residentials, EYFS curriculum, garden and University, where children choose 6 weeks of art, music, drama or dance, planning and creating collaboratively the KS2 performance.**
- The provision of opportunities to listen attentively and observe carefully, listening with discernment, valuing what is good and worthwhile and making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas; **embedded in the PSHE. RE curriculum and Collective worship, prayer circles and class masses.**
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others; **school vision and it's spiritual values, growth-mindset, Collective Worship, PSHE curriculum, Outward Bound residential.**
- That moral development is linked to spiritual development through 'windows, mirrors and doors', taught and adopted as a whole school in January 2020. (see Appendix 2);
- That the outstanding LDBS RE curriculum and high quality teaching, delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives; **this is also supported through Collective Worship, Visits to places of worship and Faith days.**
- That 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; this is achieved **through sport, residentials and educational visits as well as the school gardens and outside areas.**
- Promotion of strategies for positive mental health; **worry box, PSHE circle times, playground friends, peer mediators and a member of SLT available every lunchtime for children to see. Deputy Headteacher checks the worry box weekly and meets with children who need to discuss their worries. (see Appendix 3).**

Faith

Hope

Love

7. CPD and training

This is a complex area and staff should be trained and equipped to provide for the spiritual development of pupils within the context of a Church of England school. We access diocesan-led training for those with a particular role in planning for and evaluating spiritual development.

8. 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 spiritual development 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, such as St George The Martyr
- Seeking to evaluate, formally and informally, with pupils and adults, activities with a particular focus on spirituality and spiritual development (e.g. collective worship) Provision for spiritual development is monitored by the Deputy head teacher, Jayne and the RE lead, Charlotte through:
 - Scrutiny of work, including portfolios and books
 - Learning walks
 - Joint school moderation
 - Pupil voice
 - Teacher voice
 - Data
 - Planning
 - Joint moderation

Provision for spiritual development is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

9. Opportunities for spiritual flourishing of adults

Under the SIAMS framework, it is also the intention that the spiritual flourishing of adults should be enabled and enhanced by the work of the school. We consider ways in which our routines and practices (e.g. staff meetings, CPD, collective worship, church services, staff retreats) can contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community.

This policy was adopted by the Governors:
The policy will be reviewed:

Date: 27th January 2020
Date: 7th March 2024

Appendix 1

Spiritual development: ways we foster spirituality at St. Alban's CE Primary School.

- School vision
- Half term spiritual value
- Curriculum overview and pedagogy
- Behaviour policy - the importance on making choices/reconciliation
- Class contracts
- Prayer space
- Class collective worship spaces
- Circle time in PSHE
- Themed weeks e.g Work Week
- University
- Peer mediators
- Playground friends
- Collective worship team
- Relationships with staff – trust, belief
- In teaching and learning policy.
- Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE).
- Religious education (RE).
- Visits to places of worship.
- Topic – learning journeys – starting with the child. The involvement of pupil voice.
- Child-initiated learning – self-awareness – particularly strong in the EYFS
- Opportunities for awe and wonder with the curriculum
- Mathematics – A.T 1 in particular.
- AFL
- School council
- Residential trips
- Educational visits – art galleries/performances/sites of interest
- Collective worship – moment of reflection, prayer circles, advocacy, Church of England vision links
- Whole school and class Mass
- Singing – music.
- Performance - Use of music/art, orchestra,
- Reflective/philosophical questions.

SMSC	What it means	Spiritual values / School values	Experiences and Opportunities	Curriculum Opportunities EYFS, KS1, KS2	Collective worship links	Community	Visual representation Collective worship board School display boards Classroom display
Spiritual Explore beliefs and experience; respect faiths, feelings and values; enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world; use imagination and creativity; reflect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability to be reflective about their own beliefs, religious or otherwise, that inform their perspective on life and their interest in 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 willingness to reflect on their experiences. • willingness to reflect on their experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hope, faith, love, 1 Corinthians 13: 13 • Friendship • Perseverance • Compassion • Forgiveness • Courage • Creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School council elections and process • Using opportunities of local or general elections to hold mock elections to promote fundamental British Values • Governing body elections and role • Stakeholder questionnaires • Opportunities to appreciate a voting system is a fair way to achieve an outcome (e.g. talent show, pupil voice at the start and end of each topic) • Visits to parliament, local council, law courts Visits from MPs and local councillors • School council meetings, follow ups and reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking turns • Visits to parliament/local council/important buildings • Ancient Greece/Romans – Year 3/4 • PSHE - citizenship • Writings, speeches, voting • Pupil voice • Big 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together building a respectful community • Value of democracy in Britain compared to countries without democracy • Addressing values identified • School charity and fundraising • Highlighted child advocates and things that we as a school community can be advocates for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent governor elections • Parents questionnaires • Transparency of governance • School rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Council Board • Newsletters • Spirituality display • Art week • Work week • Enrichment board • Values' display • Collective worship areas

Appendix 2 Windows, mirrors and doors approach to spirituality. (Taken from Salisbury Diocese Spirituality Policy – Derek Holloway/Andrew Rickett 2012)

Faith

Hope

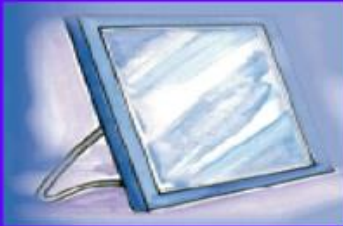
Love

WINDOWS:



□ giving children opportunities to become *aware* of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's 'WOWs' (things that are amazing) and 'OWs' (things that bring us up short). In this children are learning *about* life in all its fullness.

MIRRORS:



□ giving children opportunities to *reflect* on their experiences; to **meditate** on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this they are learning *from* life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.

DOORS:



□ giving children opportunities to *respond* to all of this; to **do** something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this they are learning to *live* by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

Appendix 3 Extract from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidance; Advice for Schools and SIAMS Inspectors 2018

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.