

Forty Hill CE School Spirituality Policy



Our Vision

that our safe and welcoming Christian community gives every child every opportunity to be **fulfilled, healthy and successful.**



Our Values

to develop **confidence**,
respect and **determination**,
create **friendships**,
learn **forgiveness**,
and share in **celebration**



Fulfilled Healthy Successful

Our shared definition of 'Spirituality'

To help shape the culture of the school we undertook a 'vision consultation' in 2017 that helped us define our vision statement which centres around 'every child', 'every opportunity' and 'becoming Fulfilled, Healthy and Successful'. As we embed an understanding of the vision across our school, we are exploring and developing the Biblical text and teaching that sit as a foundation to our vision and to the culture of the school and therefore, ultimately, to who we are encouraging the children to become.

Jesus Church defines Spirituality as:

God revealing to us through his word that we are made in his image and that he has plans and purposes for us at every stage of our lives. This includes enjoying being in his presence, bringing his light into situations and our privilege to minister to, and serve, others. We also know that we have failed to keep God's commandments so we need to come in repentance and seek his forgiveness in order to continually renew our relationship with God the Father through his Son. We are promised the help of the Holy Spirit who will equip us to bear the fruit of love in our lives leading us towards wholeness.

While closely aligned to our Parish Church, we recognise that the Jesus Church definition of 'spirituality' is written in the context of a healthy spiritual journey in the Christian Faith. At Forty Hill, we celebrate and embrace the spectrum of religious and non-religious, 'faith' and 'of-no-faith', diversity in our community. We encourage everyone in our community to pursue a healthy spirituality in the context of 'health and wellness' of the Mind Body and Soul (*1 Thessalonians 5:23*).

At Forty Hill C of E Primary School, 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 roots us and enables 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. We look onwards to discover the meaning and creative impact of our lives on those around us.

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.

Our aim is 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 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 (see Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy);
- 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 one's 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 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 the pupils 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.

Teaching and Learning

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 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;
- 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 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 making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas;
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others;

- That moral development is linked to spiritual development such as ‘windows, mirrors and doors’ (see Appendix 1);
- That the outstanding RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives;
- 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;
- Promotion of strategies for positive mental health (See Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and Appendix 2)

Approaches

In our school 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 associated 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. We expect its presence to be felt around our school. 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 by providing them with induction and development training;
- Evidence from pupils’ work, e.g. RE books, PSHE and SMSC work, creative writing, art;
- Regular inclusion in the SIAMs SEF and the whole School SEF and SDP;
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.

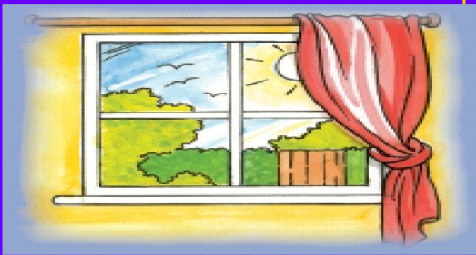
This policy was adopted by the governors: July 2021

The policy will be reviewed: July 2024

Appendix 1 Windows, Mirrors and Doors Approach to Spirituality.

(Taken from Salisbury Diocese Sprituality Policy – Derek Holloway/Andrew Rickett 2012)

WINDOWS:



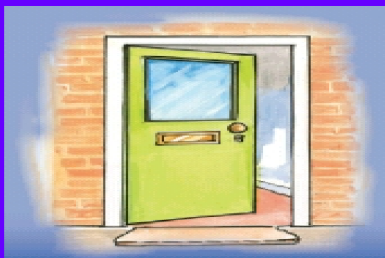
giving children opportunities to become *aware* of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's 'WOWs' (things that are amazing) and 'OWs' (things that bring us up short). In this children are learning *about* life in all its fullness.

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 2 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.