



Forty Hill Spiritual Development Policy

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

Our Vision



Jesus said "As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples." John 13:34 -35

Following Jesus's example, we treat each other, our community, and God's amazing world with love, respect and compassion. We aspire to ignite curious minds, nurture a passion for learning and enable everyone to experience and share **faith**, **hope** and **service**.

Learning and living in Faith, Hope and Service

Our Values



To develop **confidence** and **respect**,
to show **compassion**,
to learn to be **reflective** and **responsible**,
to grow **resilience**.

Learning and living in Faith, Hope and Service

Our Vision and Values

Our Vision naturally supports the nurturing of spiritual development as children are asked to consider their relationship with God, one another and the world around them. When looking at our virtues of Faith, Hope and Service, children reflect upon these through the examples of Jesus, and the concepts of spirituality- 'Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond'. Guided by faith, we encourage respect, reflection, and a sense of purpose in learning and daily life. Through hope, we inspire positivity and resilience, fostering an attitude that embraces challenges as opportunities to grow. By emphasizing service, we teach compassion, kindness, and the importance of contributing to the community. We aspire to ignite curious minds and nurture a passion of learning through a holistic approach to teaching and learning, allowing room within the curriculum to ask and answer big questions and continually grow and develop spiritually, with the hope that when our children go into the world, they have a navigation system for how they feel and respond to the challenges and celebrations of life.

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 Forty Hill School move forward on that journey during their time here.

¹ The Church of England Education Office, Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good. (The Church of England Education Office 2016)

² Derek Holloway et al, Spiritual Development: Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom (The Church of England Education Office April 2019)

2. Our Definition of Spiritual Development?

To make conversations about spiritual flourishing more accessible to every member of our school community, Forty Hill has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development:

Our definition of Spiritual development is the ongoing journey of understanding our sense of self and identity, inspired by the God-given spirit and breath of life. It is about being nourished in heart, mind, and soul, developing a sense of belonging, and learning to flourish as unique individuals. Pupils are encouraged to ask and reflect on life's big questions—about purpose, meaning, and their place in the world—within a safe and supportive space. They are invited to explore these questions from their own viewpoint, while being nurtured through Christian values and example, helping them grow in wisdom, compassion, and understanding.

Our environment naturally lends itself to understanding spiritual development through the analogy of trees and gardens in both a personal and communal context, both of which need continual care and nurture.

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/es 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, Forty Hill has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development:

Alongside this introduction to spirituality, we adopt the imagery of Windows, Mirrors and Doors.

Jesus Church defines Spirituality as:

Our collective spirituality is founded upon the Revelation of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As Christians, we believe that we have been brought back into a right relationship with God the Father who created us, through the atoning sacrifice and resurrection of God the Son, in the person of Jesus Christ. We know the presence and power of God in our lives today through God the Holy Spirit.

3. What do we aim to achieve for all children?

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

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- Experience feelings of awe and wonder;
- 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, using their gifts and abilities in the service of others and understanding the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.
- Develop strategies to build good mental health and wellbeing
- 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, and upon experiences of awe, compassion and beauty.
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life, including an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination in all areas of life
- Develop a capacity to value the natural world and a commitment to care for creation through positive action.

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

4. How do we do it?

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues these aims 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 experiences are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children.
- Collective worship celebrates God's love 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.
- The school, church and other sacred places are used across the curriculum, giving children the opportunity to explore their own spirituality;
- 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.
- Spiritual development is given a specific focus during September transition and our bi-annual Mental Health and Wellbeing Weeks
- 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.
- Our enquiry based RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality through a religion and worldview approach. The idea that religion and beliefs are constantly changing and dynamic and each person will experience these differently.
- 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.
- The delivery and content will be made accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Consideration of Early Years curriculum and how the curriculum for younger children can support spiritual development.
- The religious background of all pupils will be taken into consideration when planning teaching.

- That moral development is linked to spiritual development through using the ‘windows, mirrors and doors’ approach:

A) WINDOWS: Encounter - The Learning about life.

We give 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).

B) MIRRORS: Reflection - The learning from life.

We provide children with time for REFLECTION. We give children opportunities to reflect on their experiences, to look inward & consider the big questions of life. In this they are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others. Give emotional, physical and auditory space.

C) DOORS: Transformation - The learning to live by putting into action what they believe.

We give 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.

5. How do we monitor and evaluate the impact?

Spiritual development cannot be measured and continues throughout our lives. However, opportunities offered to children for spiritual development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways;

- Observing and listening to children.
- Opportunities for children to reflect and create their own thoughts and comments on collective worship.
- 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.
- Pupil Surveys and feedback from pupil councils
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. reflective diary, RE books, Floorbooks, creative writing, art
- Regular inclusion in the SEF
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.
- 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 Headteacher and the RE Lead through:

- Regular learning walks and book looks
- Acts of Worship and Arts Trophies
- Children's roles and responsibilities
- Governor visits for subject reviews, acts of worship and enrichment events.
- Pupil voice is regularly recorded across the school in our RE, Global Neighbours and PSHE Floorbooks as well as displays and this provides a range of evidence of spiritual development.
- Community quiet time
- Reflection areas and activities

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

6. 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 primary school routines and practices can contribute to the spiritual life of staff by shaping an environment where every adult is supported to grow in faith, purpose, and wellbeing.

- Inspired by Jesus's example of loving one another, we nurture a culture of encouragement, respect, and compassion, so that staff feel valued not only for what they do, but for who they are.
- Collective worship provides invitational opportunities for staff to worship, reflect and pray and provides a space to pause, connect and draw strength.
- Staff flourish best when their emotional needs are met and by offering confidential mental health and pastoral support the school provides safe spaces where staff can process challenges, celebrate joys, and feel supported. This holistic care reflects our belief that sustaining staff resilience and mental health is an expression of Christian love in action.
- CPD provides opportunities to develop staff to flourish both intellectually and spiritually. Through shared acts of service such as caring for God's world, supporting one another, and engaging with the wider community staff live out the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Service in their daily practice. In this way, ordinary routines provide the potential to become channels of spiritual renewal, allowing staff to thrive as whole persons and to be sustained in the vocation of teaching and nurturing children.

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. 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.

Evaluation/Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Headteacher and/or designated senior teacher and ratified every three years by the Governing Body.

Date of validation- September 2025

Date of review- September 2028