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|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>POLICY</b>      | <b>Spirituality Policy</b> |
| <b>APPROVED BY</b> | <b>Full Governing Body</b> |
| <b>ADOPTED</b>     |                            |
| <b>REVIEW DATE</b> |                            |

## Our Vision Statement

At Holy Trinity we are passionate about growing tomorrow's leaders. We educate and equip our children with the skills they need to succeed and thrive.

We develop and value the characteristics of everyone, enabling them to flourish into the best version of themselves and be happy. We work as a community to create opportunities for all children to become confident and respectful citizens, who contribute positively to society.

We flourish when we help others flourish.

(Jeremiah 29:4-7)

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Holy Trinity CEP School is a Voluntary Aided Primary School catering for children between the ages of 4 – 11 years. We pride ourselves on being a church school with five specific Christian Values:

|          |            |         |       |        |
|----------|------------|---------|-------|--------|
| Koinonia | Friendship | Service | Trust | Wisdom |
|----------|------------|---------|-------|--------|

Schools approach Spiritual Development in many ways; we want to encourage variety and diversity in how staff at Holy Trinity help Spirituality to be a prominent part of our practice at Holy Trinity.

Our vision influences the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. We believe that spirituality is a core thread that runs through our school and we attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community.

This policy details some strategies that we have fostered as part of our approach.

## Aims

- To have a highly developed interpretation of spirituality shared across the school community that is distinguishable from social, moral and cultural development and is shared by staff.
- Develop a common language to enable meaningful reflection to take place on the significance of spirituality in the whole school life of the school.
- For learners to have regular opportunities to engage in high quality experiences that develop a personal spirituality.
- Learners are passionate and confident to express their thoughts and views in considerable depth.
- To provide increasingly challenging and thought-provoking experiences as pupils progress up the school that enable pupils to develop curiosity helping them explore and articulate spiritual and ethical issues.
- Pupils value learning and enjoy questioning, listening and responding creatively across a range of subjects.
- For our staff to be alive to the possibilities and opportunities for spiritual growth across the curriculum.

## Requirements

All schools have a responsibility to support their pupils' spiritual development, this is because the four Governments of the UK have each built this into their curriculum requirements and expectations.

In England, every state school must offer a curriculum that is balanced and broadly based and which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

This is expanded in the assessment criteria used by Ofsted: 'The spiritual development of pupils is shown by 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 and willingness to reflect on their experiences.' This is then supported by assessment criteria for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. (SMSC).

Spiritual development is the right of all young people:

All people have the right to explore and express their spirituality. Where children are concerned, this is established through the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As is often the case, spirituality is not mentioned directly, but is embedded in it i.e. young people being respected, safe and being able to be who they are.

Articles such as:

- Article 14 - Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practice their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide children on these matters.
- Article 16 - Children have the right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their families and their home.
- Article 29 - Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.

All children have the right to grow and develop as a 'full' person in every aspect of who they are.

## Defining spirituality

At Holy Trinity CEP School, we define Spirituality as being something we may not be able to see, but as something we feel inside ourselves.

We feel spirituality is something that touches us all, no matter our beliefs. It is a connection to something that is bigger than us and a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about ourselves, others and the world around us.

We have also used The Doughnut and Hole analogy from Liz Mills to help us to express what is meant by spiritual.

One might be able to talk about pupils as whole, (i.e. body and mind and spirit), with precious holy/holey centres. The 'spiritual' core is the central holy/holey centre and essential to, but also integral within the whole.

It is also the part which can be very tricky to express except in terms of one's own faith or belief words and ideas. The 'Doughnut and Hole' image was therefore offered in the hope that this might help in maintaining in equal status the need to care for pupils' 'hole' development as part of their 'whole' development.



**The Doughnut and Hole from Liz Mills**

## Spiritual Development

At Holy Trinity CEP School, our motto is to, 'Growing Tomorrow's Leaders,' which we entwine with the understanding that Spiritual Development is a life-long experience in which we grow together.

At Holy Trinity CEP School, we believe Spiritual Development is:

- Found in all faiths and cultures.
- Something that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life.
- Important for human flourishing and mental wellbeing.
- Part of the universal search for identity.
- To do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for the values by which to live.
- Not necessarily experienced through the physical senses.
- To do with relationships to other people and for believers, relationships with God.
- Something that impacts our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and bad.
- Developing a range of skills that will enable pupils to flourish in their learning and in life.

Pupils' Spiritual Development is shown by their:

- Beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values.

- Sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible.
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning.  
Willingness to reflect on their experiences.
- Telling and reliving of stories and reflecting on why they were valuable to them.
- Response to situations encountered and the way they think about, understand and respond to what we experience.

## Teaching and Learning

Opportunities to explore spiritual development generally, are not planned, they occur naturally in everyday life, however we do recognise that time within the school day can be set aside to help provide opportunities for members of our school community to reflect, be still, process and simply think, especially in the early stages of our journey with establishing Spirituality at our school.

Members of the school community make a conscious effort to stop and recognise / name moments of awe and wonder that we encounter, as well as our 'ow' and 'wow' moments. This helps with the need to become aware of the world in all its wonder but also a sad realisation of its many problems. To realise that the world is both 'awe-full' but also sadly 'awful' at times too; to be aware of both its 'wows' but also its 'ows,' can be very beneficial in helping us to be spiritual. To assist us with this, we use the windows, mirrors and doors approach to spirituality. Please see Appendix One for more information on this.

The spiritual development of our young people sits in, but is not restricted to, RE, SMCS, PSHE and to collective worship. Spirituality and its development cross all borders. It is part of each of the above, but it goes way beyond them and inhabits all aspects of learning and school life.

The below table provides many examples of how spirituality features across different areas of the Curriculum:

| Subject               | Opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PE                    | By delighting in movement, particularly when pupils are able to show spontaneity. By taking part in activities such as dance, games and gymnastics which help pupils to become more focused, connected and creative. By being aware of one's own strengths and limitations.                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Computing             | By wondering at the power of the digital age e.g. use of the internet and social media. By understanding the advantages and limitations of ICT. By using the internet as a gateway to big life issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Drama                 | By allowing for insight, self-expression and the chance to walk in someone else's shoes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Design and Technology | By enjoying and celebrating personal creativity. By reviewing and evaluating created things.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Music                 | By allowing pupils to show their delight and curiosity in creating their own sounds. By making links between their learning in another curriculum area, with music being played as background. By considering how music makes one feel and can 'move us' deeply. Coming together as a school in singing worship is a shared spiritual experience and through songs and hymns, it is an outlet for expressing different emotions- ie sadness, joy, reflection, praise etc |
| Art and Design        | By providing plenty of rich opportunities for pupils to explore both the spiritual dimension and natural phenomena e.g. Northern Lights.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PSHE/RSHE             | By developing awareness of and responding to others' needs and wants. By exploring meaning and purpose for themselves and society. By developing resilience and inner strength. By valuing self as unique in the image of God. By cherishing relationships.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| RE                    | By experiencing wonder and joy through learning about and from stories, celebrations, rituals and different expressions of religion and worldviews. By asking and responding to questions of meaning and purpose. By considering                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|           | questions about God and evaluating truth claims. By exploring spiritual practices such as worship and prayer, and considering the impact of these on believers as well as any relevance to their own life.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Geography | By using Google maps and asking pupils to imagine what it might be like to live in different parts of the world. By making links with history when exploring the environment and speculating on why the landscape is as it is. By comparing their lives with pupils living in other countries or other parts of the UK.                                                                        |
| History   | By considering how things would be different if the course of events had been different; for example, what difference would it have made if the Normans had not been successful in 1066? By looking at local history and investigating the reasons why there is a landmark, building or museum. By speculating about how we mark important events from history and the people who shaped them. |
| MFL       | By exploring the beauty of languages from around the world. By exploring the way language is constructed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Science   | By demonstrating openness to the fact that some answers cannot be provided by Science. By creating opportunities for pupils to ask questions about how living things rely on and contribute to their environment                                                                                                                                                                               |
| English   | In responding to a poem, story or text; pupils can be asked 'I wonder what you think happens next?' 'How would you feel if you were the person in the story?' 'Where have you met these ideas before?' By appreciating the beauty of language.                                                                                                                                                 |
| Maths     | By making connections between pupils' numeracy skills and real life; for example, pie charts could compare how a child in Africa spends their day with how children in the UK spend their time. By considering pattern, order, symmetry and scale both man-made and in the natural world. By appreciating the beauty of shape and space.                                                       |

## Our approach to help facilitate spiritual flourishing

**The Singing Bowl** – Each class has a singing bowl that is rung to mark moments of quiet time, periods of reflection, moments of stillness. This is also used in Worship time.

**Stilling** – Very similar to mindfulness, Stilling is an activity which offers children and young people a variety of techniques and exercises through which to acknowledge, explore and develop the spiritual dimension of their lives. This involves teaching pupils to be 'still,' some see this as a way to prepare for learning and being able to focus. Sometimes a series of guided imagery reflections are used to enhance learning across a range of curriculum subjects.

**Questioning** – A fundamental part of spirituality is the questioning of life, purpose and the meaning of things. We need to find ways of helping children to ask such philosophical questions as they may ask. The more opportunities they have to ask such questions, the way in which those questions are responded to, and the positive reinforcement given by us as adults when such questions are asked, will extend and enhance children's questioning of their world and thus promote their spiritual growth and journeying. We are all too often expected to know the right answers! But the one thing we must try not to do in relation to philosophical exploration is to 'give' the answer. Such an approach may close down the pupil's thinking journey and spiritual development.

**Wellbeing** - It is now recognised by many, that spirituality can make a significant, positive contribution not only to our mental health but also to our physical health and wellbeing. Good mental health enables us to learn, feel, express and manage a range of positive and negative emotions, to form and maintain good relationships with others (and ourselves) to cope with and manage change and uncertainty and to develop resilience. At Holy Trinity, we do not just emphasise the physical aspects of being healthy, we recognise the equally important role played by mental wellbeing in the lives of children all ages. We have wellbeing clubs that pupils can attend, adults designated to completing wellbeing check ins on pupils and a mental health check in that all classes complete each day.

| Categories of spirituality | Meaning                                                                                | Suggested activities                                                                          |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Awareness-sensing</b>   | Paying attention to, being aware of, one's awareness                                   | Stilling, meditation and contemplation                                                        |
| ● Here-and-now             | The ability to be 'in the moment'                                                      | Meditation exercises focusing on the breath                                                   |
| ● Tuning                   | An intense feeling of connection or belonging                                          | Listening to evocative music, viewing a beautiful image                                       |
| ● Flow                     | Getting caught up in an activity, where the experience transcends the physical         | Opportunities for pupils to become engrossed in an activity                                   |
| ● Focusing                 | Getting in touch with the felt-sense of reality                                        | 'Grounding' activities, e.g. getting in touch with bodily feelings                            |
| <b>Mystery-sensing</b>     | Seeing patterns in the world; becoming aware of transcendence                          | Asking big questions                                                                          |
| ● Wonder and awe           | Sensing our smallness in the vastness of the universe; a profound feeling of amazement | Creating 'wow' moments through sensual stimulation                                            |
| ● Imagination              | Transcending the ordinary through thoughts that go beyond the obvious                  | Telling stories; exploring symbolic meanings, myths and archetypes                            |
| <b>Value-sensing</b>       | Awareness of the significance and importance of truth, principles, justice, fairness   | Discussing ethical dilemmas                                                                   |
| ● Delight and despair      | Sensing the emotional impact of experiences                                            | Exploring issues related to the environment, poverty, human kindness, spiritual enlightenment |
| ● Ultimate goodness        | Trusting in goodness and love                                                          | Exploring examples of compassion, altruism and agape                                          |
| ● Meaning                  | Awareness of a deeper, transcendent meaning                                            | Exploring issues of identity and purpose                                                      |

## Inclusion

Spirituality is found in all faiths and cultures. To many it is the essence of life that lies within all people. For others, it is a fundamental divine power woven into the values and beliefs of life. To some, it is a focus on ourselves and the world in which we live.

No matter who we are, where we come from or what, if any, faith we have, we are all spiritual in some way.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

We maintain that it is difficult and indeed may not be desirable to try to 'measure' spirituality. **We feel spirituality should be treasured and not measured.**

At Holy Trinity, development, in terms of Spiritual Development, does not mean progress, instead it refers to the realisation or revelation of something which is already there, but just hidden...like an old-fashioned photograph. We are all on our own Spiritual journey with the possibility of discovering new aspects of ourselves that we either hadn't expected or are not used to encountering in our lives; at Holy Trinity, we want **to help enable and encourage to our young people** to unlock the doors of their spirituality, and enter into that fantastic world of self-discovery.

Our school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer.

Instead of measuring a pupil's Spiritual Development, we consider the following Spiritual Capacities helpful in thinking about whether children have the ability to:

- be guided by their beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them,

- be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community,
- love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges,
- exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder,
- be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life,
- be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer,
- be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others,
- be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success,
- demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions,
- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards others.

As well as this, the following spiritual skills are considered:

- Being honest and able to see yourself as others see you.
- Being able to stay focused in the present, to be alert, unhurried and attentive.
- Being able to rest, relax and create a still, peaceful state of mind.
- Developing a deeper sense of empathy for others.
- Finding a capacity for forgiveness.
- Being able to be with someone who is suffering whilst still being hopeful.
- Learning when it is ok to speak or act and when it is better to remain silent or do nothing.
- Learning how to give without feeling drained.
- Being able to grieve and let go.

## Sources and further reading

Children's Spirituality – what it is and why it matters? - Rebecca Nye with quotations from Gerald May, Rowan Williams and Jo Anne Taylor

- The Diocese of Salisbury Derek Holloway and David Rickett
- The Diocese of Exeter
- Making sense of spiritual development – David Smith
- More than Caring and Sharing. Making a church school distinctive – John Cox
- Ofsted SCAA discussion paper
- Adams, K, Hyde B, Wooley R (2008) The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Adams, K (2010). Unseen Worlds. Looking through the Lens of Childhood. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

## Appendix 1 - Windows, mirrors and doors approach to spirituality.

(Taken from Salisbury Diocese Spirituality 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.