

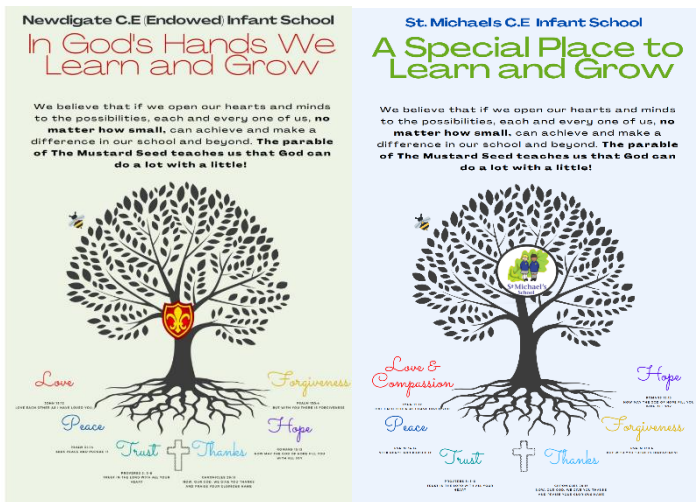
Spirituality Policy

Newdigate C.E Infant School and St. Michael's C.E Infant School

(Mole Valley Gateway Infant Church Schools Federation)

What is spirituality?

Spirituality is a core component to 'living life in all its fullness' as the mind, body and soul needs to be nurtured equally. It relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone and is not dependant on a religious belief. It is also based on the search for **ways to answer questions about life and a search for identity.**



Our visions:

Our vision underpins 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. Even our very young children can flourish when provided with opportunities to develop relational awareness.

Our working definition of 'spirituality'

As a staff and governor team, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

Spirituality is delighting in all things, being absorbed into the present moment, not too attached to self, and eager to explore boundaries of 'beyond' and 'other', searching for meaning, discovering purpose, open to more. (Rebecca Nye)

We will explain this to children using a repeated phrase and associated visuals:

"I will grow and learn about:

♥ *myself, who I am (hands overlapping on heart)*

- ♥ *my relationships with **Others**, and how I treat them (hold hands out to the side to link with imaginary others)*
- ♥ *how I understand and look after this **Wonderful World** (hands draw circle from top to bottom)*
- ♥ *and think about everything **Beyond the everyday** (Jump up and draw bigger circle)”*

Spirituality is a core component to ‘living life in all its fullness’ as the mind, body and soul needs to be nurtured equally. It relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone and is not dependant on a religious belief. It is also based on the search for ways to answer questions about life and a search for identity.

Rebecca Nye, (Nye R (2009) [Children’s Spirituality: What it is and why it matters](#)

London: Church House Publishing) suggests that spirituality can be defined as relational awareness. That means awareness of my relationship with:

Self (being a unique person and understanding self-perception)

Others (how empathy, concern, compassion and other values and principles affect relationships)

World and Beauty (perceiving and relating to the physical and creative world through responses to nature and art)

Beyond – (relating to the transcendental and understanding experiences and meaning outside the ‘everyday’)

We use the Rebecca Nye acronym (SPIRIT) Space, Process, Imagination, Relationship Intimacy and Trust as a guide to how we nurture spirituality at our schools and provide opportunities for children to encounter it.

Legal requirements:

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.

The SIAMS Schedule (amended September 2021) references spirituality in both the RE and Collective Worship strands but the main focus is part of strand two on Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills. The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for ‘Life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10) which requires educating the whole person.

The OFSTED framework 2021 states that pupil’s spiritual development 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 faith, 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

We support pupils in their spiritual development by:

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as they arise
- providing reflective spaces in classrooms, communal areas and outside, (many using resources from the 'Prayer Spaces in School' website)
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership, through leading collective worship and other opportunities

As a staff team:

- We are developing a shared staff understanding of spiritual development.
- We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.
- We revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings and offer training.
- Our governors monitor the impact of our spirituality focus through planned visits and discussions in governor meetings.
- We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development.
- We use visual models with associated actions to support our own thinking in spirituality (see above)
- We have a variety of spiritual spaces both inside and outside the school building.
- We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, World/Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett / Rebecca Nye).
- We work to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship and think how we want our children to learn and grow within each subject specialism
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.
- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context.
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website.

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community.

Auditing Spirituality

As part of our self-evaluation process we ask ourselves these questions and look for evidence to show the impact of what we do:

Do our pupils express enjoyment and curiosity in learning about themselves, others and the world around them?

Do our pupils show imagination and creativity in their learning?

Do our pupils critically reflect on their experiences?

Are our pupils nurtured and nurture each other to discover and develop their gifts?

Is a safe time and space created for thinking, reflection and structured opportunities for pupils to listen and talk to one another which supports their language development?

Do our pupils have the opportunity to be good global neighbours?

Do we celebrate occasions when pupils, staff or members of the community have risen above the ordinary, or shown courage in adversity?

Do we provide more complex questions and concepts that support personal learning and thinking skills development, and is there a safe space provided for these to be explored?

Is achievement regarded as more than attainment and progress; does it include wider outcomes for pupils' personal development and well-being?

Is every child celebrated in their uniqueness?

Does our teaching promote pupils' resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities?

Do our pupils express a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews which inform their views on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values?

Are we plan learning from the pupils' own experiences?

Do we value each contribution, affirming, praising and challenging pupils?

Do we allow subject matter to 'speak for itself' and allow pupils to draw out their own meaning, e.g. use of role play; creative and expressive arts?

Do we create space for spontaneity when planning learning outcomes?

Does our curriculum encourage use of the senses and alternative forms of expression?

Is reflective time and silence valued, and strategies are used to support this, e.g. visualisation; stilling, breathing techniques, yoga, meditation?

Does our curriculum provide a sense of playfulness, curiosity and opportunity?

Does our curriculum design ensure that there are big enquiry questions; pupils have plenty of time to think and talk about big ideas in all areas of the curriculum, not just in RE. E.g. we increase opportunities for saying 'I wonder...', trying to say it at least once a day!

Does our curriculum generate questions to allow children to explore the world they live in?

Do we make sure our learning extends beyond the classroom? Do we ask 'Where might this work go?

Who else might be interested in what we have learned? Can we link this to something outside our school?

Do we encourage our pupils to express their feelings and emotions?

Does our pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning improve when they engage in wondering? Do pupils show curiosity about what they are learning?

Do our pupils know that each day they can start 'afresh' within a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation?

Do we have an inclusive and accepting attitude towards ourselves and others, e.g. visitors; those with a disability?

Do we celebrate diversity and difference through encountering experiences our pupils for the wider world?

Are we prepared to 'think differently' about things, to take risks and think outside the box?

Do our pupils express their understanding of our school's values and Christian vision through words, art and artefacts?

Do we show we value these through displays in high profile places and on our website?

Do we have a shared language and policy for spirituality?

Are we advocates for mental health?

Do we provide opportunities for self-awareness?

We enable pupils to self-reflect?