



Spirituality Policy

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” Matthew 7: 7

Our school vision is deeply rooted in the theology and Biblical teachings of Matthew 7:7 which speaks of the importance of prayer as a way of developing an enriched life and personal relationship with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

At the heart of our school community is a commitment to prayer and worship. Our curriculum provides children with a thirst for knowledge and wisdom, a high level of challenge and a deep understanding that we are all equal and made in the image of God. Our relationships with each other, our local community and global companions leads us to want to care and serve others.

At Hampden Gurney C of E School, we describe spirituality as being an appreciation and cherishing of what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in relationship with others, of what is generous, creative and loving. The spirit of a person is seen in acts of courage and perseverance, in dealing with both setbacks and praise, in endeavour and enquiry.

Spirituality is also about freedom and detachment, helping us not being tied down by unimportant things and keep mindful of important things such as God and other people i.e. not ‘things and accomplishments’

At the heart of our weekly collective worship is the Thursday school mass. Here we anchor the lives of the children and staff in way of living that is about being thankful.

Our aim is to: establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual development of all pupils through the following objectives:

To develop:

- an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- an understanding of the distinctive ethos of this church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- a knowledge and understanding of the school’s core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- an openness to feelings of wonder;
- an awareness of and respect for other peoples’ beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own;

- an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community;
- strategies to build good mental health and combat loneliness;
- self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions;
- the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- An understanding of and make sense of feelings and emotions in response to life events and encounters;
- 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;
- curiosity, creativity and imagination;
- the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc;
- 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.

Teaching and learning

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 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 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 relevant educational visits;
- Opportunities to look 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 through strategies such as 'windows, mirrors and doors' (see Appendix 2);
- 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 Appendix 3)

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. 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 and providing induction and development training;
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. reflective diary, RE books, SMSC work; creative writing;
- Regular inclusion in the SEF;
- CPD opportunities.

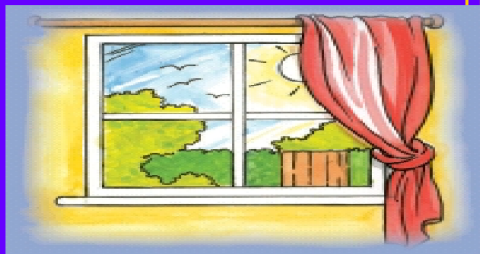
We want our school to be a place where spiritual growth and development are central to our learning and community life together, knowing that it is when we stop and listen, children and staff are able to flourish and live life in all its fullness.

'I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness.'

John 10:10

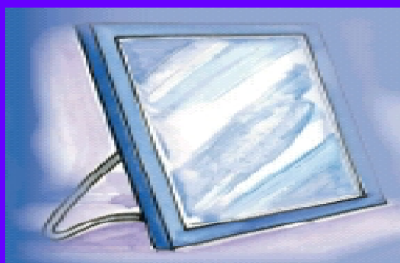
This policy was adopted by the governors 01.07.2019
The policy will be renewed 2021

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

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.