



Long Lane Church of England Primary School

Spiritual Development Policy

***Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and stop keeping them away, because the kingdom from heaven belongs to people like these."
(Matthew 19:14)***

Through a journey of faith and exploration, we strive to enable all to grow as resilient life-long learners who value themselves and others. Rooted in God's love and our Christian values, we are a nurturing, inclusive community where all can flourish and achieve their full potential.

Written – April 2024

Spiritual Development is the Heart Beat of Our Curriculum

At Long Lane Church of England School, we believe children live up to their potential if they are happy, have fun, feel nurtured and grow from a foundation of strong Christian Values.

We value spirituality and the holistic development of the child. Our role as educators is to guide the children in our care along the path of life. As children grow in their understanding of spirituality and values they become secure enough to make mistakes and therefore move on with their spiritual learning and academic growth, rooted in God's love. We are a highly inclusive school and welcome all faiths, cultures and children from any background.

Spirituality is the heart beat of our school. It is how we understand ourselves and our place in the world: recognising strengths, weaknesses and having confidence to challenge ourselves. We care for the local and global community and our Christian values underpin our learning and encourage children to ask 'big questions'.

The four elements - what these consist of:

Self

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- Empathy and understanding; respect
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

Transcendence (Beyond)

- Encountering / experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material / physical)
- Ability to ask and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

Nature

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music and nature

How we aim to nurture spirituality

Children's spiritual development is nurtured through all aspects of our provision. We believe it is important to develop strong relationships using our school Vision and Values as well as the development of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. We give children opportunities to:

- Have a daily time for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting the candles in worship, listening to music, the reflection for the day, use of the reflection areas around school or the prayers shared.
- Have opportunities for creativity and using their imagination.
- Sing in lessons and as part of our daily worship.

- Explore, express, share and compare feelings and opinions. This is planned into all subjects across our curriculum but it is more focused within PSHE and RE lessons.
- Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.
- Express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
- Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important process that allows us to heal and grow from our experiences.
- Encourage everyone to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways.
- Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE curriculum, topics, worship, joint days and news events.
- Read often, giving them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible.
- Begin to develop their own system of beliefs, which may or may not include religious beliefs.
- Reflect on the situations of others through role play or stories.

Spirituality in Action

Using the popular 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors' strategy designed by Liz Mills to broaden and deepen understanding about spiritual learning, we will encourage children to think about inspirational experiences, challenge them to ask searching questions and prompt them to consider some possible opportunities for response.

Effective learning in itself is a spiritual experience. This is because learning involves engagement with and exploration of a new concept (windows), thinking deeply about it, trying to connect it to what we already know (mirrors). If we can successfully fit this new concept to our pre-existing web of understanding, this evokes a positive emotional response (we often describe this as: the penny drops!) With each new concept acquired, we transform ourselves (doors), moving forward in life a little altered, intrinsically motivated, fulfilled and inspired by the experience. Why is spiritual development important?

As a church school we believe that our role is to educate the whole child and that the spiritual growth of our children is as important as, and indeed is a vital contributor to, their academic development. The themes developed each week through our collective worship, our school vision, as well as opportunities woven throughout our curriculum underpin all we seek to develop in the lives of our children. Getting people to consider the world around them, reflecting and thinking for themselves, evoking positive emotional responses and pondering ultimate questions is the vital ingredient in our recipe for spiritual development. This will enable our children to take their place in society as fulfilled, responsible, spiritually aware and emotionally engaged individuals.

Spiritual growth will involve reflecting on the significance of an experience for our lives. If there is no such reflection, a feeling remains just a feeling. Dave Smith: Making sense of spiritual development 1999

Our Window, Our Mirror, Our Door and Our Candle

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, schools are required to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school and of society. Included in this is the expectation that schools will actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. This policy sets out how we meet these requirements guided by the principles in our Mission Statement and through the use of the Windows, Mirrors & Doors philosophy.

Structures to support and develop spirituality:

We have opportunities to support and develop spirituality planned across our curriculum.

Religious Education is a subject that looks at the spiritual experiences of others and how these change and shape their lives. RE allows children to use what they find out about other people and their beliefs to reflect on their own experiences. Through this process, children can engage with ultimate questions of meaning and purpose and begin to shape their own beliefs. RE allows children to engage with the idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers. The wider curriculum also provides opportunities for spiritual development.

In **Physical Education**: Being a team member. Pushing yourself to the limits. Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement. Emotion in sport such as those evoked through success and failure, personal limitation and acceptance that others may perform better. An appreciation of perfection and sportsmanship.

In **Design and Technology**: Discovering how something works. Appreciating ingenuity. Beauty in design. Perseverance to solve problems. Personal achievement. Learning from others and nature.

In **Literacy**: Empathy with authors and the characters in stories and plays. The appreciation of beauty in language. Emotions and sentiments in writing and speech. The values of great works. Heroes and heroines in literature. The reading and writing of poetry. Imagining oneself as someone else. Escaping into other worlds through literature. The element of wonder in literature. Pleasure derived from the creative process.

In **Numeracy**: Infinity and nothing. Pattern and order. Shape and regularity. Truth, certainty and likelihood. The universality of mathematics over time and space. The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations.

In **Science**: Wonder as the basis of science. Questions of beginning, creation and evolution. Discovering the limits of experimentation. Birth, life, death and renewal. The universe and beyond. Regularity and order in science. Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists. The impact of scientific achievements.

In **Computing**: The wonder of worldwide instant communication. The speed of the growth of knowledge. The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide.

In the **Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama and Dance)**: The work of creative artists from a variety of times and places. Beauty, truth and goodness. Expressing, interpreting and exploring deep feelings and profound beliefs. Artistic creativity. The effects of the arts on emotions and senses. The arts as means of expressing mood. Skill in creation and performance, and particularly in personal reflection upon their own creativity using various art forms. Effects on the emotions and senses. Personal response and preference. Mood. Skill. Pattern. Formulae. The sense of fulfilment and transcendence through performance.

In **Geography**: Wonder at the diversity of environments and people. Questions about the care of the environment. The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns. World (economic) development. Land formation. Empathy with people from other parts of the world.

In **History**: Being in touch with past people, things and ideas. Being part of history. Handling artefacts. Influential events and people. The commitment of significant people in history. War and peace. Interpretation in history. The nature and importance of invention and exploration. Empathy with people from other times in history

We have a planned programme for Collective Worship across the school. Themes are planned for the year, based on our School Values and Christian Values. Our Collective Worship also includes British Values and World events. There is a daily act of Collective Worship taking different forms, and involving our Worship leaders who set up the focus table and lead the welcome of each Collective Worship.

Visits and visitors support all our work, e.g. our local CHAT group, the ploughing match and visits to the Open Centre and adults

Impact: how do we know this is being effective?

Spiritually developed children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them and are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith / belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, as well as respect those of others. They have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.

What is the Role of the School Community?

All members of the school community have a responsibility for helping to nurture children's and adult's spiritual development.

School staff can do this through:

- Establishing and maintaining a partnership between children, parents and staff; recognising and respecting the faith background of the children and their families.
- Understanding and considering the needs and backgrounds of each individual child.
- Using our School Vision and Values to be positive role models within the community- promoting respect for other people and their views, showing consideration for and support towards others.
- Drawing on the experiences of children and their families to support teaching and learning across the curriculum, including RE lessons.
- Being willing to develop their own knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and the faiths of others.
- Taking part in, and supporting, Collective Worship.
- Having a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education.

Children can do this through:

- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.
- Using our School Vision and Values to help themselves and others to learn.
- Taking an active part in Collective Worship.
- Being active learners within lessons to enable them to engage with and develop the skills needed to enable them to fulfil their God given potential.
- Participating in learning that allows them to engage in examination of and reflection upon a range of religious belief and practice.

Parents and Governors can help through:

- Adopting a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education.
- Supporting the school's Christian ethos and acts of community worship such as the Church community carol service.
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others and demonstrating this to others.

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Aspects of Spirituality	School opportunities
A sense of the mystery of life:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creative curriculum Literacy – Poetry/Stories Relationships education Challenges in maths ‘Big’ questions through the NATRE RE curriculum Reflection corners Sacred spaces – visits to the open centre
A sense of choice, decision making and personal responsibility:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-evaluation Group work – peer marking Ethos / School Behaviour choices
A sense of awe and wonder:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits Curriculum Church visits Awareness of world Visitors to school Worship times Resources Real life experiences
A sense of awareness of there being something more to life than meets the eye:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflection RE lessons Stories Worship times Relationships Christian Symbols The Arts
A sense of love for the outside:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ploughing Match Outside areas Off-site visits / school trips / residential Forest School Joint days PE Events Church visits
A sense of pattern, sequence and order:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science / Music / Sport / Dance The Arts Behaviour policy Our curriculum Christian Year – Collective Worship A school week – timetables Visual timetables
A sense of enquiry and open mindedness:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE RE lessons ‘Big questions’ – asked in RE or PSHE Circle time Self-evaluation/ peer assessment Christian values of tolerance and respect British Values
A sense of life’s joys and achievements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebration Assembly Collective Worship Genuine achievement – high standards EYFS WOW moments Celebrations

	<p>Inspirational speakers Fun curriculum Humour in lessons</p>
<p>A sense of disappointment and failure, suffering and pain:</p>	<p>Pets, plants, Jesus Disasters in news Collective Worship stories (Bible and multi-cultural) Circle time Supporting charities In lessons – failing is positive – you are learning</p>
<p>A sense of others as feeling, thinking people:</p>	<p>Relationships with others Resolving conflicts Respect for each other – unique and special Caring for each other’s feelings Circle Time Worship Time - respecting Christian Values – sharing/giving/respecting Staff modelling – taking turns Behaviour policy – clear rules, rewards and consequences</p>
<p>A sense of empathy with others:</p>	<p>Social stories Stories Role play Supporting charities Sportsmanship Emotional intelligence</p>
<p>A sense of silence and reflection:</p>	<p>Noise level in classrooms – Quiet working Reflection spaces Planning and preparation time for teachers Music to enter Collective Worship Collective Worship is a time for stillness and reflection about oneself, Jesus and others Worship time daily Thinking time for children and staff Calm school Opportunities for Professional development as part of DDAT to reflect on practice</p>
<p>A sense of self-worth and the worth of others:</p>	<p>High academic standards Circle time - discussion Themed afternoons / days, e.g. Diwali, Chinese New Year Self / Peer marking Ethos – everyone unique and special in their own way. Praise learning styles Teaching about Jesus and Christian Values Celebration Collective Worship Staff knowing all children well</p>
<p>A sense of self-confidence in expressing inner thoughts:</p>	<p>Circle time Wide curriculum Leading Collective Worship Linking to our Christian Value of courage</p>
<p>A sense of the joy in life:</p>	<p>Our curriculum – real experiences Sports / The Arts Humour</p>