

'But now are they many members, yet but one body.'
1 Corinthians, 12:20

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Spirituality Policy

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

At St Aidan's VC Primary School, our caring ethos, and the value which we place on the development of the whole child spiritually, morally, socially, culturally, and intellectually, is reflected throughout the school in everything that we do. The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by the school's Christian vision statement and associated values:

Our School Vision and Values-

At St Aidan's VC Primary School, our vision draws inspiration from St Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, **'but now we are many members, yet one body'** (1 Corinthians 12:20)

We cultivate an environment where diverse strengths, cultures and experiences are recognised and valued. We welcome and include every member of the school community. We provide strong foundations that give children the self-belief to thrive academically and grow personally. Spiritual development flows from working together through the cultivation of virtues, the creation of a supportive and inclusive community, and the shared pursuit of a greater purpose, further reflecting our school vision of 'many members, one body'. We believe that collaboration acts as a fundamental foundation for individual and collective flourishing by fostering specific attitudes and behaviours, fulfilling a fundamental human and spiritual need for connections. We work together to ensure that each child is nurtured to be ambitious, resilient, resourceful, curious and creative, ready to make full use of the opportunities that life will bring. We prepare children for their life beyond St Aidan's; to look outwards, to contribute to the wider community and to be global citizens-embodiment of the spirit of 'many members, one body'.

In 1 Corinthians 12 we learn of 'spiritual gifts', as a school we recognise our diverse community and value the different ways in which people flourish spiritually within a community that is united. In our school, individuals learn from others' experiences, insights and spiritual gifts. This collective wisdom accelerates personal growth beyond what one could learn alone, deepening understanding and faith.

Our school values of community, sustainability, kindness, resilience, inclusiveness and peace work together to encourage reflection, a sense of identity, and an appreciation for the non-materialistic aspects of life, enabling both staff and children to flourish spiritually.

2. Introduction

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

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)

an afterthought. I 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 St Aidan’s VC Primary School move forward on that journey during their time here.

3. Aims

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

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school’s Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them, as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith.
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people’s beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own beliefs.
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts in the service of others), recognising others’ contributions and understanding the value of difference and diversity through lived experience.
- 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, beauty etc. To articulate and develop their own sense of faith.
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions from a values basis.
- 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.

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.

As over-arching aims, our approach to spiritual development will:

- Reflect the school’s Church of England status.
- Be rooted in the school’s vision to be an inclusive ‘one body, many members’ community.
- Take place within a school environment which enables pupils and adults to flourish.

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

4. **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.*

5. **Shared understanding of spiritual development**

As a church school, it is this Christian framework that shapes our understanding of spirituality and spiritual development. We recognise the importance of engaging with our linked church in determining this shared understanding in the context of our school's Christian vision and values. Our now retired incumbent member Father Patrick was an integral part of creating our vision alongside members of our school community. We wait for his successor, while continuing to work closely with the Haringey Area Dean Fr Ben Kerridge, a former governor of the school.

To make conversations about spiritual flourishing more accessible to every member of our school community, St Aidan's Primary School has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development by using the imagery of 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' (as can be found in Chapter 3 of The Church of England Education Office's 2019 publication '*Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the classroom*'

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/2019-spiritual-developmentinterpretations-of-spiritual-developments-in-the-classroom.pdf>) See Appendix 1.

What does Spirituality mean to our school?

Spirituality enables us to become aware of ourselves, one another, the World around us; and allows us all to flourish. Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions and an increasing awareness of the meaning and purpose of life which affects everyone no matter who you are. It involves a growing sense of love, empathy, concern and compassion and an ability to reflect on how our values and principles affect our relationships with others. It is a connection to the wider world through stillness, awe and wonder and hopes for the future.

We look outwards to appreciate and cherish the wonder and awe of the world, caring for nature and other living things. We learn to look inwards to reflect on our experiences, to build resilience and courage, and explore life's big questions. We look onwards to discover the meaning and creative impact of our lives on those around us. Spirituality is a part of us; a window to look outwards on the world, a mirror to look inwards on our belief and values, and a door to how we can live in response.

Working in a collaborative environment allows individuals to discover and use their unique talents and abilities to benefit others; seeing how one's skills compliment others reinforces a sense of purpose and worth in the larger picture. By uniting efforts for our shared vision, individuals become part of something larger themselves. This provides a sense of transcendent purpose and meaning that goes beyond individual achievement, which is a core component of spiritual satisfaction. Our shared understanding helps us plan for and evaluate spiritual development ensuring that there are opportunities for flourishing through both the curriculum and daily collective worship. Our value of resilience is deeply linked to spiritual development, providing the beliefs, values, and purpose that fuel an individual's capacity to adapt and grow through adversity. An environment of mutual support ensures that individuals are not alone on their spiritual journey, allowing for shared encouragement and strength in difficult times. Our values of kindness and inclusivity, involve cultivating compassion, love, and a connection to something greater than oneself and are fundamental in spiritual practise across many faiths, this is therefore key in our community, where we welcome a diversity of people within spiritual or religious/non-religious communities.

There are opportunities throughout the day for children and staff to reflect, including at the end of collective worships/assemblies. Reflection times are used to contemplate spiritual, moral and personal issues, giving opportunities for introspection, quiet thought and a response to themes discussed (in collective worship) ensuring that our value of peace is being lived out. At the end of each RE lesson, children in years 1-6 complete a written reflection, in the EYFS, this is done verbally.

6. Provision

The school pursues the aims by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by the school's Christian vision statement 'one body, many members' and the associated values.
- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life.
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness, and reflection e.g. our sensory room and garden.
- Pupils' 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.

- 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.
- Moral development is linked to spiritual development.
- Pupils 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.

At St Aidan's VC Primary School children are encouraged to-

- Explore and experience the beliefs of themselves and others,
- Respect other faiths, feelings and values,
- Enjoy learning about oneself, others and the surrounding world,
- Use their imagination,
- Use reflection.

Our values of community, kindness, sustainability, peace, inclusiveness, resilience are taught alongside the core British Values (see appendix 2) to ensure that pupils have a quality of life that encompasses respect, awareness, compassion, curiosity, understanding and relationships that reflect order, reason, balance and integrity.

In our PSHE sessions we use the myHappyminds programme (<https://myhappymind.org/>), this brings together PSHE education, the compulsory Relationship and Health Education, emotional literacy, mindfulness, social skills and spiritual development; it is a whole school approach where all year groups work on the same theme, at the same time, at their level.

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. The RE lead attends RE networking meetings on a regular basis. The staff attend moderation meetings with other schools.

8. **Monitoring and evaluation**

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

- Observing and listening to pupils both during lessons, and out, regular pupil questionnaires are also carried out.

- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school's Christian vision and values including staff questionnaires.
- Link governor visits- learning walks and book looks.
- 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.
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. RE books, PSHE work, creative writing, art, floor book evidence etc...
- Regular inclusion in the SEF/ Separate RE SEF.
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools/ cross moderation/peer observations.
- 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 Head of School as well as the link Governor through:

- Book looks,
- Pupil and staff voice,
- Learning walks,

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

9. 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 routines and practices (e.g. staff meetings, CPD, collective worship, church services, staff retreats) can contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community.

Date of policy: January 2026

Policy ratified: October 2025

Review due: October 2028

Appendices-

Appendix 1- Based on the model by Liz Mills

Spirituality in Our School

	<p>MIRRORS - SELF</p> <p><i>Like looking in a mirror..</i></p> <p>Thinking about ourselves and how we feel about things.</p>
	<p>WINDOWS - BEAUTY</p> <p><i>Like looking through a window...</i></p> <p>Looking at the world in new ways.</p>
	<p>DOORS - OTHERS</p> <p><i>Like opening a door to welcome people in ...</i></p> <p>Understanding how other people feel.</p>
	<p>CANDLE- BEYOND</p> <p><i>Like watching a flame and thinking..</i></p> <p>Reflecting on our learning and experiences.</p>

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Core British Values

