



Defining spirituality?

“Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone and is not dependent on a religious affiliation.” (Ofsted)

Spirituality is a very personal experience. It differs from person to person and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith. Spiritual development is not about becoming more spiritual (in a measurable or expansive sense). It is about realising or becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality.

You do not need to be religious to grow spiritually.

The Doughnut and the hole (Liz Mills)

Imagine a doughnut

This delicious treat is us as a person, our body, mind and spirit, which includes the precious hole in the middle. While the soft, sweet outer ring can be easy to explain, the important inner space is often harder to understand but is equally important to the 'whole' of the doughnut.

It is the space inside the doughnut where our spiritual self lives; where our beliefs, faith and ideas support us to share our outer selves with the world.

Spiritual development focuses on relationships and connectedness; relationships with ourselves, others, the world and beyond. It helps us have an understanding that there is something greater than self.



A framework for a common reflective structure for spirituality

A focus on spirituality enables our children to be happy, to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. 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.

Spiritual development is the development of an awareness that there is “something more to life than meets the eye, something more than the material, something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to.” (Terence Copley)

We use the Windows, Mirrors, Doors concept as a common reflective structure for spirituality: Windows and Mirrors (Nursery and Reception), Windows, Mirrors and Doors (Y1 – Y6).



WINDOWS



MIRRORS



DOORS

Windows are for looking out into the world and becoming aware of its wonders, both the ‘wows’ and ‘ows’; things that are ‘awe-full’ and make us wonder and be grateful and things that are ‘awful’ and make us wonder and ask questions. The whole curriculum and life itself are full of opportunities to recognise this sensitively.

Mirrors are for looking into and reflecting, alone and together, to see things more clearly, for thinking and asking important questions and learning from our own and each other’s responses. In schools we must allow time for this for individual and group reflection and sharing of perspectives. Some subjects and times allow for this specifically, such as Religious Education and collective worship but in all subjects there will be opportunities, unexpected or planned, when things just ‘crop up’. Handled sensitively, it is possible to make the most of all these times.

Doors are for looking through in order to then act or express this in some way in response; for moving on, making choices, and doing something creative, active and purposeful in response. This can simply be done through a change in attitude or behaviour or thinking. It can also be expressed powerfully through music or art or drama or dance and through some form of social action or specific acts of giving.

Spiritual development will happen in all aspects of school life and beyond. There will be opportunities in the classroom woven throughout our curriculum, there will be space and time given during our collective worship and SMSC learning. We are committed to modelling, leading and supporting all of our school community to enjoy and appreciate the strength and faith in oneself that spirituality can bring.

How do we provide opportunities for spiritual development?

In school we have a wide range of activities throughout the week and school year that help develop spirituality across different areas of the curriculum. A non-exhaustive list of these are as follows:

- Daily worship
- Pupil led worship
- Individual / paired & class responses to worship

- Weekly reflection activities
- Living out our school's vision
- Living out our school values
- RE
- Visits to places of worship of all major religions
- HeartSmart PSHE programme
- School Ethos Group
- School linking, locally, regionally and internationally
- Inter school competition
- Career Education
- Pastoral Care
- Leadership Opportunities – including Pupil Parliament, H&S officers & Green Team.
- Intergenerational work – link with church and wider volunteers
- Residential Visits
- Forest School
- Reflective Hall Display
- 12 before 12 Commitment – 12 experiences and challenges to achieve by the time the children reach Y7.
- Mindful Maze & Peace Garden

Windows, mirrors and doors are displayed within our classroom reflection areas. Teachers and children add to this display examples (categorised using windows, mirrors and doors) from our planned curriculum and other incidental opportunities. This gives teachers and children a common language to discuss spirituality.

How do we recognise spiritual development?

Spiritual Capacities - which include children's 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