

St. Michael's C.E. (VC) First School

Spiritual Development Policy

Date Approved: **Nov 2021**

Date to be Reviewed: Nov 2023

Renewal Date

Signed

Spirituality Development at St Michael's CE (VC) First School

At St Michael's we identify Spirituality as an appreciation and cherishing of what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in relationship with others, of what is generous, supportive and caring.

This is seen in acts of courage and perseverance, in dealing with both setbacks and praise, in endeavour and enquiry within both school and home life.

Christian spirituality is a life nurtured on the example of Jesus Christ and his care for others which is reflected in our daily life.

Our Vision

Our School vision encapsulates all that we do and strive to achieve here at St Michael's CE (VC) First School.

Our Church of England School community where all children flourish into confident, happy individuals with a love of learning.

Where curiosity, independence and a feeling of self-belief are nurtured and valued by all.

This is underpinned by our school motto

Through God we love, laugh and learn

Which is supported by the biblical scripture

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalms 118:24

As a school we embrace our Christian values and these and our vision are at the centre of all that we do. It is within this positive, caring and supportive environment that all children are given the opportunity to achieve their very best both socially and academically. This allows children to develop into well rounded, confident and healthy citizens of the future.

Aims

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

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God and to recognise their own self-worth.
- Develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of our church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them.
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people's beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own.
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community and feel part of different communities (St Michael's School, St Michael's Church, the local area).
- Develop strategies to build good mental health and develop their awareness of their own well-being.
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions.
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life.
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life.
- Develop 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.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination.
- Develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc.

- Develop 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 integrity within the context of Christian faith.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues the aims and objectives 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 opportunities for spiritual development 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 and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer.
- 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 the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits.
- 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.

- Use of the outside environment to promote learning and well-being whilst developing children's appreciation of *God's* world.
- Moral development is promoted within school life and opportunities are both planned and spontaneous to develop children's moral development.
- The outstanding RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives.
- 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 and develop children's responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and that of others including Nurture and the Hope project.

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.
 - Develop a direct link in children's understanding of how their actions impact on the lives of others (both in the local community and on a global level).

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 by providing them with development training.
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. Reflection book, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art, outdoor learning.
- Regular inclusion in the SEF.
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.