



Diocese of Norwich
St Benet's
Multi Academy Trust

Happisburgh CE Primary Academy St Mary's CE Primary Academy

Spirituality Policy

Our Christian Ethos and Values

All policies within the St Benet's Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as "the Trust"), whether relating to an individual academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our Christian ethos and values.

Our academies are open to all and accepting of all regardless of faith. Our passion and ambition are to see children and young people in all our academies achieve excellent educational outcomes alongside developing and growing into their potential as individuals made in the image of God.

Our culture is one of high aspiration for all. This is rooted in our Christian values as demonstrated in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. We have a desire to see our academies acknowledged as places of aspiration, high quality learning, achievement and hope making a significant contribution to the communities they serve.

Overall accountabilities and roles

The Trust has overall accountability for all its academies and staff. Through a Scheme of Delegation for each academy it sets out the responsibilities of the Trust, its Executive Officers, the Local Governance Committee and the Principal / Head Teacher. The Principal / Head Teacher of each academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Trust.

All employees of the Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

Our vision

Happisburgh Church of England Primary Academy

Learning for Life to be the best you can be 'Let your Light shine ' Matthew 5:16

St Mary's Church of England Primary Academy

At St. Mary's we take care of each other, aim high, enjoy learning and achieve success within the family of a church school. This is our vision for everyone at St. Mary's, inspired by key Christian Values seen in the parable of the Good Samaritan.

Our vision influences the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. We believe that spirituality is a core thread that runs through our school, and we attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community.

We aim for children, and adults, to grow in their 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

(From David Smith's work on Spiritual Capacities)

Our working definition of 'spirituality'

As a staff 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)

Legal requirements:

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.

The new SIAMS Inspection Framework (September 2023) threads spirituality and spiritual development throughout each of the Inspection Questions (IQS). It features as the impact of collective worship – adults and pupils flourish spiritually, but also expects that spiritual development is planned within the taught and wider curriculum offer of the school. It continues to make those strong links between vision and spirituality, expecting a school's theologically rooted Christian vision to shape what spirituality may look like in a school and provide direction for how it is planned and developed.

Spirituality and spiritual development are best placed and most impactful in school when it is not just left to chance. Relying on ad hoc spiritual encounters in the daily life of the school and thus the pupils and adults within it, will limit development over time. It does not fully support the Church of England's vision for education (2016) where the core desire, it to enable everyone to 'live life in all its fullness' (John 10.10).

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (September 2023) states inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development alongside the school's provision for moral, social and cultural education. That this is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities, but draws together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement.

Paragraph 322. 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

We support pupils in their spiritual development by:

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as they arise
- providing 'Sacred Spaces' in classrooms, public spaces, outside, and by using the church building
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership, through leading collective worship and other opportunities

As a staff team:

- We have a staff understanding of spiritual development.
- We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.
- We revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings and offer training.
- Our governors monitor the impact of our spirituality focus through learning walks, pupil voice interviews and regular discussion in Local Governance Committee meetings.
- We have staff guidance accessible to continue to support staff in this aspect of our curriculum.
- We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development.
- We use models to support our own thinking in spirituality, such as the 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors, Candle' approach.
- We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett / Rebecca Nye).
- We recognise that children will have different 'Spiritual Temperaments' or 'Sacred Pathways, through the work of Gary Thomas (2010) and Myra Perrine (2007). This will influence our planning as we look to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship.
- We use the 'Ricketts Grids' to support our understanding of progression in spiritual development in these four areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond.
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.
- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context.
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website.
- We discuss spirituality with our church and others who can further support this thread.

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community.

Other related policies:

Collective Worship
Religious Education
Teaching and Learning
Behaviour

Referenced reading:

Church of England Education Office (CEEO) Spiritual Development – Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (2019)

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-children/school-effectiveness/re-collective-worship-and-spirituality/spiritual-development/>

Appendix 1

Spirituality Vocabulary Spine

Spirituality Vocabulary Spine

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|-----------|
| faith | think | prayer |
| compassion | me | kindness |
| strength | others | truth |
| courage | ideas | change |
| humility | questions | transform |
| love | response | embrace |
| care | transform | celebrate |
| reflect | hope | meditate |
| challenge | profound | eternal |
| spiritual | philosophical | listen |
| grace | attitude | joy |
| rejoice | nourish | nurture |
| inspire | aspire | dream |
| contemplate | absorb | grasp |
| heal | peace | calm |
| pause | enlighten | seek |
| forgive | repent | unify |

Appendix 2

Words and Ways we Articulate Spirituality in School

Spirituality in Church schools is about relationships with...



Self

IN



Others

OUT



Transcendental

UP



IN

Mirrors allow us to reflect upon ourselves, to look inside, to consider our own views and those of others.



OUT

We use windows to look out, to seek something new from a safe place.



UP

Doors allow us to walk through to experience something new, to find a new path, to respond in a new way.

Spirituality is...



Spirituality can be seen in three layers...

