



Love: for God, each other, our learning, and the world.

Spirituality and Spiritual Development Policy

Drawn up by
Ratified by

Spirituality Lead
Governors

Sept 2024

Version No	Date	Change/Review
V2.0	September 2024	Policy rewritten to align with new Spirituality model used in school

Legal Framework: Links to OFSTED and SIAMS expectations

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, November 2019 No. 190017, page 59 & 60, 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 but draws together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement.

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

The SIAMS Evaluation Schedule for Schools and Inspectors, April 2018, includes the question:

How well does the school support all pupils in their spiritual development, enabling all pupils to flourish? (Strand 2)

School Statement on Spirituality

To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something which is beyond words. To make conversations about spirituality more accessible to every member of our school community, St Francis has chosen to follow ideas developed by the Education Department at the Diocese of Gloucester.

This language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that everyone is a valued creation, individually and uniquely made by God, like pots made by a potter (Isaiah 64:8). Yet, in life things happen that impact on the physical 'pot' of life and create cracks that provide a glimpse of something 'beyond' the tangible. Christians would view this as an opportunity to relate to the Divine Creator God.

Cracks may be caused when something so good and breath-taking happens that the pot expands and cracks – the wows of life.

Cracks may happen when something challenging happens and threatens the comfort of everyday – the ows of life.

Cracks can also happen in the stillness and ordinariness of everyday – the nows of life, when a moment of stillness, a pause or prayer creates a crack in the normal, physical every day.

In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the wows, ows and nows of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with gold and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality.

St Francis uses this language and the concepts of wows, ows and nows. These are used to explore relationships with:

- ourselves
- others
- the wider natural world and beyond
- and offering the invitation to relate to God

Aims

School Vision:

'Love the lord God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'
'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.' (Matthew 22:39)

We believe that children are a gift from God and each one is unique with their own potential and character.

Our school is a diverse community where equality and collaboration are celebrated and where children flourish and develop curiosity and resilience through opportunity and spiritual moments underpinned by a broad and exciting curriculum so that children are ready to take their place in the world.

We want our children to develop a sense of **love** for God, a **love** for each other, a **love** for learning and a **love** for the world.

We seek to develop in each child:

- a sense of self-worth stemming from the recognition that they are created in the image of God (love for ourselves)
- an understanding of the source of Christian values, for example, The Bible and Christian tradition
- a response to the distinctive ethos of a church school and the content, language and symbolism of the Christian faith
- the ability to reflect upon experiences such as awe, compassion and beauty
- the ability to recognise that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth and development (OW moments)
- the ability to discuss and reflect upon key questions of meaning and truth such as the origins of the universe, life after death, good and evil, the being of God

- the ability to consider values such as justice, honesty, truth and responsibility for self and for the planet with which we have been entrusted
- a sense of social responsibility demonstrated in practical ways, for example, supporting charities
- a sense of being in relationship with others and a growing understanding of what it means to belong to a community (a love for each other)

We seek to provide a learning environment which:

- will introduce children to elements of Anglican Christian worship and prayer as an integrated part of school life
- will maintain a mutual involvement between St John's church and the school
- will promote understanding of and respect for other world faiths
- will encourage caring and respectful relationships
- will provide a supportive environment where children can develop self-confidence, self-discipline and a sense of responsibility
- enables children to explore, in age-appropriate ways, questions about meaning and purpose, for example about their identity, right and wrong, truth, suffering and relationships
- endeavours to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development recognising the uniqueness of each pupil within a Christian context
- will create a positive interaction between school and home, the church and the wider community

Organisation

The spiritual growth of pupils is not only dependent on learning in RE, opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners are developed in every aspect of our school life. We support the whole school community to share this responsibility and to develop the shared language of spirituality. Opportunities are available for all to develop spiritually in our supportive and nurturing school inspired by our vision and lived out through our Christian values. We have identified specific areas which contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils: collective worship, the whole curriculum, including RE and the general ethos of the school within daily life.

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of St Francis. It provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared. Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present (now moments) which are often linked to invitations to pray.

Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place for hearing the Christian story. They are offered an understanding of worship by being invited to participate in, or observe, Christian spiritual practices such as: prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible and liturgy and are introduced to different musical traditions.

Opportunities to reflect on the joys of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise with the low moments of disappointment or pain. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark seasonal Christian festivals and celebrations in the calendars of other faiths. In this way pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. Collective Worship at St Francis is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

Spirituality in Religious Education

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality. Learning activities in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality and the language of joys, lows and highs where appropriate.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

The school vision is behind everything we do at St Francis. The children are encouraged to develop a love for learning through a broad, balanced and exciting curriculum. The language of joys, lows and highs are also used within lessons outside of RE. Drawing on the language of joys, lows and highs, conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from Reception to Year 6. Displays in school are supported by thought provoking bible quotes that allow children to reflect upon their curriculum experiences.

Spirituality within the Ethos of the Daily Life of the School

At St Francis, we view spiritual growth as becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality. These opportunities happen throughout each and every day as children deal with delight, disappointment and the chance to be present with themselves. Throughout the daily life of the school pupils know that their references to joys, lows and highs will be heard and taken seriously. Our behaviour policy focuses on the three rules of being ready, respectful and safe and allow children to resolve conflict through restorative justice. This means pupils have time to reflect upon low moments and be present to move on from this. The children are also provided with opportunities for reflection during OPAL play. We also provide a themed Prayer Space each year.

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Curriculum Committee review the policy in partnership with Senior/ Middle Leaders and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff in order to make any changes or recommendations. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing body and are then actioned as appropriate. Governors ensure that this policy is fully implemented, and that practice is consistent with the school's Christian vision, in line with the school's monitoring policy and schedule for governors.

Roles and Responsibilities

Recognising there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners in every aspect of our school life, every member of our staff team is committed to support this spiritual growth wherever appropriate. Claire McLaughlin, Assistant Headteacher is responsible for supporting and leading spiritual development in our school, including monitoring opportunities for spiritual growth in collective worship, the whole curriculum (including RE) and the general ethos of the school within daily life. This role also includes:

- Ensuring personal knowledge and expertise are kept up to date by participating in CPD and shared good practice
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the shared language of spirituality
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process particularly around Strand 2

Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. ECTs and staff who are new to St Francis will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality. This policy is shared on the school's website and is part of the induction for new staff and new governors. This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently, as required.