

Policy for Spiritual development.

Introduction.

The co-ordinator for Spiritual Development at this school is Mrs Yvonne Shaw. Each year the Governing Body will agree a budget to be spent on the INSET needs for all staff and the provision of appropriate resources.

The Education Reform Act refers to a dimension of human existence which is termed 'spiritual' and which applies to all pupils. The potential for spiritual development is open to everyone and is not confined to the development of religious beliefs or conversion to a particular faith.

The term needs to be seen as applying to something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with relationships with other people and, for believers, with God. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It is to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live.

Aims and Values.

As a Church School, spiritual development of the pupils is an important aspect of our work, which is reflected in our school's philosophy statement. We believe that we need to develop in the children their inner life, including creativity and imagination; we foster an inclination to believe in ideals and particular attributes such as love, goodness, compassion and forgiveness; we lead them in the quest for meaning, truth and values and encourage a capacity to respond to the 'Ultimate' or God.

Definitions of Spirituality?

Spiritual education inspires young people to live for others.
Spirituality exists not inside people but between them.
Spirituality is to do with solidarity and communion.

(John Hull)

Spirituality is like a bird: if you hold it too tightly, it chokes; if you hold it too loosely, it flies away.
Fundamental to spirituality is the absence of force.

(Rabbi Hugo Gryn)

Spiritual Development is the concern to develop the most distinctive and desirable capacities of the human person, for example, self awareness, self esteem, transcendence, sensitivity and responsiveness,

inner strength and resilience, ideals and aspirations, love and relationships, seeking and striving, reflection and experience, mystery, awe and wonder.

Creating Opportunities throughout the Curriculum for Spiritual Development.

1) Self Awareness and Self Esteem.

Pupils will be given opportunities to become aware of their own

- Developing personality
- Thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, needs and wishes
- Gifts, abilities, strengths and weaknesses

2) Sensitivity and Responsiveness.

Pupils will be given opportunities to

- Transcend the present moment e.g. in recalling the past, reflecting on the future or exercising their imagination
- Become aware of their moral obligations e.g. keeping your word
- Be moved to deep emotion, reflection and/or action by aspects of life such as the natural world, music, art, literature, poverty, injustice, suffering, mystery and human achievement
- Express appreciation and gratitude to each other

3) Love and Relationships.

Pupils will be given opportunities and encouraged to

- Sympathise and empathise with other people and respond accordingly
- Develop caring and trusting relationships with other people, and for some, a loving relationship with God
- Value themselves, other people and the environment
- Seek to create and maintain relationships with others and be able to forgive and be forgiven
- Display an active goodwill towards others
- Be compassionate
- Express regret and apologise, with understanding, when appropriate to do so

4) Seeking and Striving

Pupils will be encouraged to

- Seek for an understanding of change, loss, suffering, beauty, birth and death to influence their lives, and encourage that understanding in others
- Seek to learn from the insights of different spiritual traditions
- Seek the truth
- Seek to do what is right

5) Reflection on Experience

Pupils will be encouraged to

- Reflect on the way their attitudes and values have been formed by their experiences of life
- Reflect on moral choices e.g. when it is right to be totally honest with another person
- Ask questions and seek answers to deep or ultimate questions such as our place in the world, the purpose of life, our origins and final destiny and the possible existence of God
- Reflect on mortality

6) Inner Strength.

Pupils will be given opportunities to

- Be guided and encouraged to make decisions about their future development
- To be involved in setting targets and planning to achieve them
- Respond creatively and positively to difficult and challenging experiences
- Respond with honesty and courage to challenging situations through PSHE
- Be hopeful, patient, persevering and resilient in the face of difficulty e.g. in learning from the experience of disappointment

7) Ideals and Aspirations.

Pupils will be given opportunities to

- Create and celebrate their own work
- To feel that their work is valued
- Develop lasting beliefs and values
- Learn about the process of spiritual development through the curriculum, Collective Worship and Religious Education
- To pursue ideals and visions of the future

This policy was drawn up in consultation with the whole staff, Curriculum Committee of the Governing Body and under the guidance of the Diocesan Board RE Adviser. It was agreed by the full Board at its meeting in September 2000. It will be reviewed every other year or sooner, as required.