



The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Aided Primary School

Spirituality Policy

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Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H. (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)

At 'The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Primary School', our children & families are at the centre of everything we do. In our inclusive & unique learning community with two distinctive Christian Foundations, every experience enables all to flourish as individuals so we thrive together as God intended. We are blessed with beautiful outdoor & indoor spaces which we use fully to play and learn, nurturing one another mentally, physically, emotionally, academically and spiritually. We strive for our school community keep being compassionate, loving, kind, responsible citizens who act wisely and keep giving.

Love your neighbour as you love yourself.

The John Wesley is a Church of England and Methodist Voluntary Aided Primary School and our Christian values are at the heart of everything we do.

- ❖ **Koinonia**
- ❖ **Love**
- ❖ **Compassion**
- ❖ **Wisdom**
- ❖ **Forgiveness**
- ❖ **Service**

These are underpinned by our learning values:

- ❖ **Promoting curiosity** – asking questions, delving deeper and analysing
- ❖ **Developing communication** – listening, empathy and relationship-building
- ❖ **'Prove it' opportunities** – problem solving, decision making and exploration
- ❖ **Sharing views and opinions** – visual, spoken and written
- ❖ **Encouraging creativity** – innovation, imagination and spirituality

Our whole school vision is built upon and guided by these. Every school policy is written with this in mind and implemented in way that reflects our vision of our children being able to '**Flourishing in F.A.I.T.H**' (Family, All Included, Thriving & Healthy)'.

SPIRITUALITY POLICY

1. OUR VISION

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)

2. WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

At The John Wesley Church of England & Methodist Primary School, we understand Spirituality is unique to every person and is a very personal experience. We believe by exploring Spirituality by educating the whole child and providing experiences supports our school vision to allow everyone to flourish.

We define Spirituality as a personal journey to nurture the soul. It is something that allows us to explore and question things that are bigger than us and help understand relationships with themselves and others, with nature, the environment and the world and with God.

We recognise being Spiritual is not the same as having a faith a person can be spiritual without having a faith.

Spirituality in our school allows us to explore the WOWS (the breath-taking moments to celebrate and be happy) the OWs (the pains and challenges in life) and the NOW (being in the everyday life moments of stillness and prayer).

We explore spiritual development in three vital ways in our school:

Windows:

Giving children opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's 'Wows' (things that are amazing) and 'Ows' (things that bring us up short). In this children are learning about life in all its fullness.

Mirrors:

Giving children opportunities to reflect on their experiences; to **meditate** on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this they are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.

Doors:

Giving children opportunity to respond to all of this; to do something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

3. FOUR ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

The John Wesley CEM Primary School uses the language and the concepts of *wows*, *ows* and *nows* and used to explore relationships with:

Self

- The understanding of being a unique human being
- Awareness of our own feelings and the ability to reflect and express them
- Celebrating personal growth and development
- Development of imagination and creativity
- Developing our own ideas, beliefs, values and identity
- Exploration of own personal faith

Others

- Growing empathy, concern and compassion for others
- Reflect how values and principles affect the relationship with others
- Understand how they can make a difference
- Duties towards others
- Learning how to respond to others

World and Beauty (nature)

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Responding emotionally to experiences with the natural world
- Understand where they are in the world and how they fit in
- Responding to Art, Music, nature

Beyond (Transcendence)

- Growing relationship with something beyond the everyday (the material and physical)
- Opportunities to connect with God
- Ability to discuss the 'Big Questions' of life (their existence in life, death, suffering, God)
- Understanding their place in the greater scheme of things

4. OPPORTUNITIES TO NURTURE SPIRITUALITY

Spiritual development can be nurtured through a range of activities these will include both planned through the curriculum and unplanned. The spiritual growth of pupils is not dependent on learning in RE; opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners are developed in every aspect of our school life.

The whole school community 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.

Children and staff are encouraged to reflect on their own development through encounter, reflection and transformation.

We aim to ensure that children:

- Have regular times in the day for quiet reflection this might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in worship, engaging with reflection spaces around the school, listening to music
- Have opportunities for creativity and using their imagination
- Be provided with purposeful and regular opportunities for prayer
- Have regular opportunities to explore, express and share feelings
- Have times to sing both in lessons and as part of worships
- Will see positive relationships modelled around the school
- Have opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms and appreciate connections and the unity in the world
- Will be encouraged to reflect in mistakes and say sorry, where appropriate
- Have opportunities to explore 'Big Questions'
- Are encouraged to show kindness, caring and compassion to others and express this in practical ways

5. SPIRITUALITY IN COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Collective Worship is the beating heart of The John Wesley CEM Primary School. 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, our community (staff and children) are offered a space and a place for reflection. 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 **wows** of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise with the **ow** moments of disappointment or pain. Children 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 children are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually.

Collective Worship in The John Wesley CEM Primary School is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

6. 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 children, 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 *wows*, *ows* and *nows* where appropriate.

For further details, please refer to The John Wesley CEM Primary School's Religious Education Policy and The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

7. SPIRITUALITY WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

Drawing on the language of *wows*, *ows* and *nows*, conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from EYFS to Year 6.

We are continually identifying areas which can contribute to the spiritual growth of our children. Collective Worship, the whole curriculum including RE and the general ethos of the school within daily life:

ENCOUNTER	Areas that can contribute to nurture our children's Spiritual Development:
SELF	Vision & Values Forest School PSHE/RSE Broad Curriculum After school clubs Collective worship Charity Days Workshops/ Trips Visiting church Zones of Regulation OPAL Commando Joe Nurture UK Project Celebration Display/ Worships School Council Best work folders FRIENDS Fairs
OTHERS	Vision & Values Zones of Regulation Collective Worship PSHE

	Geography History RE Charity Days Zones of Regulation OPAL Commando Joe Nurture UK project FRIENDS Fairs
WORLD AND BEAUTY	Forest School Science Geography Art Music RE
BEYOND (TRANSCENDENCE)	RE Science Collective Worship

8. SPIRITUALITY WITHIN THE ETHOS OF THE DAILY LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

In The John Wesley CEM Primary School, 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.

For this reason, every member of the school community, including Playworkers and Office staff are familiar with the school’s shared language of spirituality and will respond to children appropriately.

Throughout the daily life of the school, including OPAL times, children know that their references to **wows**, **ows** and **nows** will be heard and taken seriously. They will be encouraged to reflect on these experiences and be comfortable about talking about the **golden glue of spirituality**.

9. RECORDING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Spirituality Leader reviews this policy bi-annually in partnership with Senior 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.

10. 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 and have a responsibility for helping nurture the children’s spiritual development.

This can be done through:

- Establishing and maintaining a partnership between children, parents and staff; recognising and respecting the faith background of the children and their families
- Understanding the needs and backgrounds of each individual
- Using the school's vision and values to help promote positive role models within the community-promoting respect for other people and their values, showing consideration for and support towards others
- Draw on the experiences of children and their families to support teaching and learning across the curriculum
- Being willing to develop their own knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and other world faiths
- Taking part in and supporting Collective Worship
- Have a positive attitude towards the value of spiritual education

The Spirituality Leader 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
- Monitoring the opportunities for spiritual growth through regular observations and learning walks in both formal and informal contexts, discussions with peers and pupil voice

APPENDIX A: SPIRITUALITY CONVERSATION STARTERS

*Learning from **wow** Experiences*

- What I've learnt from this wonderful **wow** experience...
- I think this is amazing because...
- The biggest day in my life was...
- A person who I think is really good is...
- What matters most to me is...
- I am most thankful for...

*Learning from **ow** Experiences*

- What I've learnt from this difficult **ow** experience...
- What I've learnt about forgiveness is...
- What I've learnt about truth is...
- Lying is wrong because...
- No-one is perfect because...
- There would be less trouble if...

*Learning from **now** Experiences*

- What I've learnt from this now experience...
- What I've learnt about love is...
- The world would be a better place if...
- I can find peace by...
- I think God is like...
- One thing I wonder about God is...
- I felt God was near me when...
- Silence makes you feel...