

# **Spirituality Policy**

**Updated February 2024**

## Our Vision

We are a forward-thinking school rooted in the community –  
everyone learning and growing in faith.

“Do everything in love” 1 Corinthians 16:14

Love yourself, love others, love the world

<b>Our Values</b>	
<b>FORGIVENESS</b>	We forgive others and ask for forgiveness when we have done things that are wrong.
<b>JUSTICE</b>	We care for others and positively act against injustice and inequality. We always do what is right even when it is challenging and difficult
<b>ASPIRATION</b> Nothing holds us back. ‘Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us’ Hebrews 12 v1	We have high expectations, encouraging our students to achieve with confidence and knowledge for life in a rapidly changing world
<b>FRIENDSHIP</b>	We offer the hand of friendship to everyone in our school community and beyond.
<b>HOPE</b> We aim high all the time. ‘May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you might overflow with hope’ Romans 15 v13	We have hope for a great future for ourselves, others and the world.

School definition of flourish – To live a good life by loving yourself, loving others and loving the world

Do everything in love	Love yourself	Love others	Love the world
	Use your gifts and talents Be the best you can be Challenge yourself Love and care for yourself	Support and encourage others to achieve Stand up for others	Care for our world Be responsible citizens Reduce, reuse, recycle

## **Rationale:**

Spirituality is a powerful force that determines what we are, and our self-understanding. It forms the basis for successful relationships, and shapes our behaviour and outlook on life, others and the world.

‘For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have a full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed’ (John Bradford).

At St Mary’s School, we believe in the uniqueness and potential of each individual child. A key part of that belief is to nurture children’s spiritual awareness and develop each child’s spiritual character.

At St Marys School, the spiritual dimension is expressed through our strong Christian faith and the recognition of the spiritual nature of humankind. Our ethos enables and encourages all children to grow and flourish spiritually.

## **What is spirituality?**

At St Mary’s School we have defined spirituality: **To delight in awe and wonder and to ask big questions.**

Spirituality is about a person’s relationship with themselves, others, God (or another higher being), and the world around them. It is important that children are given the opportunity to form a strong sense of their own spirituality.

It is also vital that all of the adults in school also see the need to develop their own spirituality for their own well-being, and so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

## **Key elements of spirituality:**

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- A sense of being in a relationship with others and a growing understanding of what it means to belong to a community
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity
- Empathy and understanding, respect, tolerance
- To love and be loved
- Making a difference
- Encountering/experiencing God (or alternative higher power)
- Opportunities for prayer
- Making sense of the world
- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- The ability to realise that experience of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth and development

## **Aims:**

It is our aim that the children's individual spiritual development is fostered as an integral element of the range of learning opportunities and experience they encounter as part of the curriculum and that it permeates through all strands of school life.

The aims for spirituality at St Marys School are:

- To provide a context of faith, security and safe relationships to support each child's spiritual journey.
- To foster the spiritual development of each child, regardless of age, sex, ability or cultural background.
- To foster self-awareness and promote a feeling of self-worth.
- To develop a set of values, principles and beliefs.
- To develop positive human qualities.
- To develop respect and empathy for other people and their beliefs, feelings and values.
- To develop the children's enthusiasm to explore and learn through enquiry and first hand experience.
- To foster reflection and stillness.
- To foster a sense of meaning, purpose and direction in life.
- To develop a sense of awe and wonder at the miracle of creation, life and the natural world.
- To enable the children to experience a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible.
- To share Christian stories and respond to Christian festivals, rituals and symbols.

## **To achieve these aims, we will:**

- Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in assembly, using a reflection spa.
- Provide opportunities for prayer including silent and stillness.
- Use prayer stations to explore topical issues or enable deeper spiritual reflection.
- Sing often, especially with others – songs of worship.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings.
- Value the children's questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Use spirituality strips to enable the children to make links between different areas of the curriculum and spirituality and faith.
- Provide opportunities for the children to identify ways in which they would like to make an impact on the wider world.
- Encourage and enable children to engage in acts of courageous advocacy on a small or large scale.
- Create a culture in which children independently volunteer or look for ways to help others and improve the world in which they live in.
- Constantly reaffirm the important of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.
- Encourage children to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important part of healing and redemption.
- Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion and to express these in practical ways.
- Read often to children and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible.

- Reinforce our key values and how they relate to everyday life.
- Conduct daily collective worship either as a whole school or in class and give the children the opportunity to lead worship themselves.
- Displays pictures around the school to continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality.

**Monitoring:**

- Monitoring of lesson plans and teaching and learning
- Pupil voices
- Audit of policies and schemes of work
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings
- Sharing of classroom work and practice
- Evident from pupils' work
- Evaluation of collective worship by both adults and children

**Across the curriculum:**

Opportunities to deepen spirituality will be provided across all curriculum areas. These are reflected in the Intent, Implementation and Impact statements of every curriculum area. Children will be given the time and space to reflect; delighting in the awe of this world and asking big questions.

**Impact:**

At St Marys School, our spiritually aware children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them; they are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings; they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness. They possess an active imagination and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills. They value the opinions and beliefs of others and are able to express their own confidently and appropriately. They are passionate in wanting to have a positive impact on the wider world and pro-active in taking action to make improvements or to challenge injustice.

