

St. Luke's Spirituality Policy

St. Luke's school motto: ***'Hearts over flowing with truth and love'***

Our Vision

The diverse community of the Isle of Dogs is part of God's rich, varied, and wonderful creation, where his truth can be known and his love experienced.

St Luke's School looks to embed that truth and love by opening hearts and minds. Guided by the story of the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35), the Staff, as educators, walk alongside each child, nurturing their aspirations, helping them navigate change with resilience and celebrating their uniqueness.

We encourage everyone to take responsibility in contributing to human flourishing and developing a strong sense of community in an ever-changing world, resourced by the truth and love they have known at St Luke's School.

Our vision is captured in our school motto: **'Hearts overflowing with truth and love'.**

Core Values

We seek to promote core values within our children that will prepare them for a successful life. They should be:

- **Helpful** showing kind and excellent manners and teamwork.
- **Enthusiastic** showing passion for learning and developing a strong sense of discovery.
- **Aspirational** striving towards high personal standards and excellence in all that they do.
- **Resilient** and determined and able to rise to challenges.
- **Truthful** being truthful to yourself and others and developing a sense of discovery.

Highly principled with moral, spiritual, cultural and social awareness, including shared British Values.

At St. Luke's we seek to educate the children that what matters is our impact on others. We allow the values to guide our behaviours so that we can have a positive impact upon others. This feeds the opportunity for the development of **spirituality** for our children which at St. Luke's we describe as:

- An appreciation and cherishing of what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in **partnership** with others, of what is generous, creative and loving.
- The spirit of a person is seen in acts of courage and perseverance, in dealing with both setbacks and praise, in endeavour and enquiry.

Our spirituality enables us to become aware of God; God's ways of being with us and our ways of being with God, as well as one another, and the world around us.

We believe that through our spirituality we have a higher awareness and deeper awareness and concern for others in the world around us, underpinning the importance of our values and their impact.

Our Spirituality is a state that enables us to be truly reflective learners.

Our aim is to: establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual development of all pupils through the following objectives;

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- Develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of this church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people's beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own;
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their values and abilities in the service of others);
- Develop strategies to build good mental health;
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions;
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life; (*See our Wider Curriculum Framework*)
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life;
- Develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others;
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination;
- Develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc
- Develop a capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation.

These objectives will enable the pupils to have a quality of life that encompasses respect, awareness, compassion, curiosity, understanding and relationships that reflect order, reason, balance and integrity within the context of Christian faith.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues the aims and objectives by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by the school's Christian vision statement and associated values;
- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life;
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children;
- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this;
- A solid understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of prayer and of the Bible is nurtured and developed;

- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies making use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits;
- The provision of opportunities to listen attentively and observe carefully, listening with discernment, valuing what is good and worthwhile and making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas;
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others;
- That moral development is linked to spiritual development through strategies such as 'windows, mirrors and doors' (*see Appendix 1*);
- That the outstanding RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives;
- That children are given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected;
- Promotion of strategies for positive mental health. (*Appendix 2*)

An aspect of provision that needs further consideration and development is:

- The school building and outdoor environment providing appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer;

Approaches

In our school we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to children's spiritual development and to highlight opportunities for these in our planning by:

- Seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy;
- Allowing children the security and opportunity to explore and express feelings and emotions and to celebrate diversity;
- Providing opportunities for prayer including silence and stillness;
- Sharing feelings and experiences that foster hope, joy, reassurance and encouragement;
- Encouraging children to develop relationships based on the school's Christian vision and associated values;
- Enabling children to make the links between the Church and Biblical teachings, the life of the school and the wider community and how these impact on their own understanding of themselves and their place within the world today;
- Providing an environment that promotes space to reflect, think and wonder.

Monitoring and evaluation

Spiritual development cannot be measured and continues throughout our lives. However, opportunities offered to children for spiritual development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways;

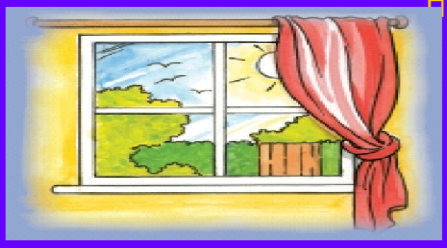
- Observing and listening to children;
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school's Christian vision and values;
- Sharing of classroom work and practice;
- Ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spirituality means in this school by providing them with induction and development training;
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. reflective diary, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art;
- Regular inclusion in the SEF;
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.

Sources and further reading:

Children's Spirituality – what it is and why it matters? - Rebecca Nye with quotations from Gerald May , Rowan Williams and Jo Anne Taylor
The Diocese of Salisbury Derek Holloway and David Rickett
The Diocese of Exeter
Making sense of spiritual development – David Smith
More than Caring and Sharing. Making a church school distinctive – John Cox
Ofsted SCAA discussion paper
Adams, K, Hyde B, Wooley R (2008) The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
Adams, K (2010). Unseen Worlds. Looking through the Lens of Childhood. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

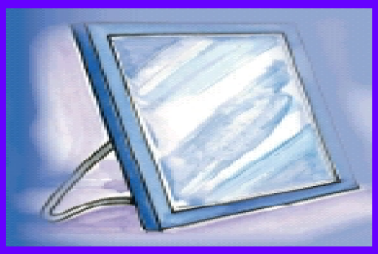
Appendix 1 Windows, mirrors and doors approach to spirituality. (Taken from Salisbury Diocese Sprituality Policy – Derek Holloway/Andrew Rickett 2012)

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 opportunities 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.

Appendix 2 Extract from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidance; Advice for Schools and SIAMS Inspectors 2018

1. Spirituality and mental health

   The Royal College of Psychiatrists has published some useful guidance on spirituality and mental health where they identify ways in which some aspects of spirituality can offer real benefits for mental health. They identify spirituality as being within and beyond formal religion and recognise that it 'often becomes more important to people in times of emotional stress and physical and mental illness, loss, bereavement and the approach to death.

They recommend that a person with a religious belief may need support which acknowledges and gives space to their faith as part of their support. Schools should therefore look to provide opportunities for inclusive spiritual development that supports good mental health as well as opportunities to learn from people of different faiths and beliefs about how their spirituality shapes them and supports their mental health and wellbeing. Religious Education which offers the opportunity for young people to engage with a diversity of people can support this. Schools would also benefit from building relationships with the religious leaders in their community.