



St Richard's CE Primary School

Spiritual Development Policy 2025-2028

This policy was reviewed: Autumn 2025

This policy will be reviewed again: Autumn 2028

This policy will be reviewed by: Faith Group

Statutory policy: No

Source: Governing Body

Introduction

The Church of England Vision for Education is rooted in Jesus' desire that *"all may have life, and have it to the full"* (John 10:10). At our school, this vision shapes everything we do. We are committed to nurturing the whole child—spiritually, academically, and socially, so that every member of our community can flourish and grow into their God given potential.

Spiritual development is not something to be treated as a unit that can be covered in RE, as something that happens automatically in collective worship, or a topic that can be taught separately. As Derek Holloway reminds us:

"In all schools, and certainly in Church schools, spiritual development is not something you should hide away in a couple of curriculum boxes or treat as an afterthought. It must be something that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life."

We believe, therefore, that spiritual development should be the golden thread running through our school life. Rooted in faith and guided by love, we strive to build a community where wisdom, purpose and kindness shape learning and relationships, and where each child can truly flourish.

What are Spirituality and Spiritual Development?

Spirituality is the way we connect our thoughts and emotions to reflect on, respond to, and make sense of the experiences we encounter in life. It involves our search for meaning and purpose, and relates to our sense of wholeness as human beings. Spirituality shapes how we respond to both the awe-inspiring and the difficult moments in life. It is deeply connected to our ability to think profoundly, to feel deeply, and to live meaningfully. While it often aligns with a person's moral framework, it may or may not include a relationship with God.

In a Church school like St Richard's, however, a Christian framework shapes our understanding of spirituality and spiritual development. Christian spirituality is shaped by particular understandings of God, human identity, and the world which are shaped by the Bible and Christian tradition. We believe that the school's Christian vision, with its strong theological underpinning, will lead to those who have faith and those who do not flourishing and thriving side by side. It will create a strong and safe community in which pupils and adults alike can grow and develop spiritually.

It is our responsibility and desire to create a nurturing and supportive environment where pupils and adults will have opportunities, experiences, and space for spiritual development. In this way they can grow in their understanding of themselves, others, and the world around them.

Aims

Our approach to spiritual development will reflect the school's Church of England status, strengthen our Christian vision and ethos, and create an environment which enables pupils to flourish as they:

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them, as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith.
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people's beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own.
- Grow in self-awareness and learn to make informed decisions.
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts in the service of others), understanding the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life, and upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc.
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life, including an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth.
- Become more curious, creative and imaginative.

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

Opportunities for Spiritual Development

The opportunity for spiritual development should be a key feature of any church school, both intentional and planned. Having said that, there will also be unplanned opportunities which present themselves at unexpected auspicious moments. These rely on staff who have been trained and encouraged to be spiritually attuned to give space and time to reflection and potential enlightenment in an otherwise busy day.

Planned opportunities include the following:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life are driven by the school's Christian vision statement and associated values.
- Collective Worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this.
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness, and prayer.
- Pupils 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.

- They are encouraged to listen attentively and observe carefully, to listen with discernment, value what is good and worthwhile and to make judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas.
- They are helped to learn to live with success and failure for themselves and others.
- All pupils are included, with no exception for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND),
- The Early Years curriculum also supports spiritual development for younger children.
- The religious background of all pupils is taken into consideration.
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and pupils.

Opportunities for Spiritual Flourishing of Adults

Under the SIAMS framework, it is also the intention that the spiritual flourishing of adults should be enabled and enhanced by the work of the school. Our routines and practices, including staff meetings, CPD, Collective Worship and church services can all contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community. As school chaplain, the vicar of St Richard's also plays a part in this.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Individual spiritual development is not something that can or should be measured, and we do not assess or make judgements about a child's spiritual growth. However, we will monitor and evaluate the opportunities which are being offered to pupils for spiritual development in the following ways:

- Observing and listening to pupils.
- Reflection and 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 spiritual development means in this school by providing them with induction and development training.
- Evidence from pupils' work and pupil voice, e.g. Collective Worship reflective journal, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art.
- Reflection and inclusion in the SEF.
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.
- Seeking to evaluate, formally and informally, with pupils and adults, activities with a particular focus on spirituality and spiritual development in Collective Worship

The Governing Body Faith Group, which includes the Headteacher and RE Leader, oversees the process of monitoring and evaluation. This includes RE and Ethos Learning Walks, scrutiny of children's work, pupil voice, staff surveys and monitoring of planning. Provision for spiritual development is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

Legal Requirements

The importance of spiritual development in schools is recognised in legislation.

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002

Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (2024) Part 2 345.

Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed every three years on behalf of the Full Governing Board by the Faith Group. It can be updated within this review cycle if there are changes of guidance, legislation and good practice. This policy is published on the [school website](#).