

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Malmesbury

Spirituality Policy



“Walking in the footsteps of Jesus, loving and serving together”

Rationale

'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).

Our vision statement states that '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.

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality concerns a person's relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or the transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements: self; others; transcendence and beauty form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

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

The four elements - what these consist of:

Self

- 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
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- Empathy and understanding; respect,
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

Transcendence (Beyond)

- Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

Beauty

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature

How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality

- Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in assembly, taking part in class reflection, spending time in the class reflection area/ hall reflection area
- Provide many opportunities for creativity and using the imagination
- Valuing play opportunities
- Singing often, especially with others.
- Ensuring regular time for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful, saying sorry. Allow children the opportunity to open themselves to God.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings. We use the Scarf and Ten Ten Programmes structure to support this across the school.
- Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.
- Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
- Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process.
- Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways, such as how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after pets
- Explore the 'Big Questions' - particularly through our RE programme
- Read often to children and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect.
- This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible

Structures to support and develop spirituality

Opportunities are planned across our curriculum to develop spirituality, such as:

- We have a planned programme for Collective Worship across the school. This maps out themes across the year, based on the Gospel readings.
- There is a daily act of collective worship taking different forms, and involving children
- Displays and pictures around the school continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality
- Our RE curriculum is inspiring and motivating
- Visits and visitors inspire and support all our work

Impact: how do we know this is being effective?

- Spiritually developed 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.

Spirituality across the Curriculum

Within English:

- Developing confidence and expertise in language, which is an important aspect of individual and social identity. Speaking and listening skills are actively encouraged through activities such as group discussions and presentations as well as drama role play and hot seating.
- Enabling pupils to understand, engage and empathise with the feelings and values embodied in high quality poetry, fiction, drama, film and television, including texts describing different countries and cultures.
- Developing pupils' awareness of moral and social issues in fiction, journalism, magazines, radio, television and film through a range of resources such as from the Ten Ten programme, Scarf and through the Cornerstones Curriculum resources.
- Helping pupils to understand how language changes over time, the influences on spoken, and written language and social attitudes to the use of language. Pupils are encouraged to share their own language and consider how they communicate with others.

Mathematics contributes to pupils' SMSC development through:

- Encouraging pupils to delve deeply into their understanding of Mathematics and how it relates to the world around them. Maths teaching actively encourages risk taking which enables pupils to explore and try new ideas without the fear of failure.
- Promoting discussion about mathematical understanding and challenging assumptions, encouraging and supporting pupils to question information and data that they are presented with.
- Helping pupils develop their mathematical voice and powers of logic, reasoning and explanation including, for example, offering explanations to each other.
- Encouraging pupils to appreciate the enormity of the world of Mathematics as it has evolved through time and how its language and symbols have developed from many different cultures around the world: eg. Egyptian, Indian, Islamic and Greek roots.
- Promoting a sense of wonder in the exactness of mathematics through the investigation of perfect numbers, infinity, pi and complex numbers as well as exploring mathematics in nature through sequences, patterns and symmetry.
- Making explicit links to real world examples such as exploring and evaluating the use of statistics to inform or mislead and percentage work, clearly linked to current financial topics such as loans, debts and investment returns. The implications of taking on debt are highlighted and discussed.
- Highlighting cross curricular work embedding maths concepts in all subjects.

Science contributes to pupils' SMSC development through:

- Encouraging pupils to reflect on the wonder of the natural world;
- Awareness of the ways that science and technology can affect society and the environment;
- Consideration of the moral dilemmas that can result in scientific developments;
- Showing respect for differing opinions, on creation for example;
- Co-operation in practical activity
- Raising awareness that scientific developments are the products of many different cultures.

ICT contributes to pupils' development through:

- Preparing pupils for the challenges of living and learning in a technologically-enriched, increasingly inter-connected world;
- Making clear the guidelines about the ethical use of the internet;
- Acknowledging advances in technology and appreciation for human achievement.

PE actively promotes pupils' SMSC development through:

- Activities involving co-operation, teamwork, competition, rules, self-discipline and fair play;
- Exploring the sports and traditions of a variety of cultures;
- Individual activities that provide the opportunity for self-reflection, awareness and challenge.

Art contributes to SMSC through:

- Art lessons that develop pupil's aesthetic appreciation;
- In turn Art evokes feelings of 'awe' and 'wonder';
- Giving pupil's the chance to reflect on nature, their environment and surroundings;
- Studying artists with spiritual or religious theme, issues raised by artists which concern ethical issues, such as War paintings.

Music contributes to SMSC through:

- Music provides a direct pathway from the soul to the Creator.
- The central element of human nature is the innate ability to relate to God, who made humans as spiritual beings in the way that He himself is spiritual.
- His desire is to be in relationship with His creation.
- Music can be a wonderful vehicle for expression, growth and the nurture of spirituality. Stravinsky, a composer of the 20th Century said: 'God is the greatest musician of all times, the greatest composer. Since I myself was created, I cannot help having the desire to create.'
- Through music we can experience awe and wonder, and explore beauty, transcendence, self and others. It can be a channel for deep human emotions such as anguish, pain, joy. The Bible says that we are innately creative beings and through the process of listening to, and creating together, we can experience community, belonging and inclusion.
- Music can be a powerful way of teaching about God. We can use music to lead children towards the truth about Jesus and a deeper understanding of God in our songs. Through singing together, we can come directly into God's presence.

Arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and review

Responsible committee for monitoring & evaluation:	Mission and Vision Committee
Policy reviewed by:	Mission and Vision Committee
Policy review & approval date:	June 2020
Next review date:	September 2024