



Bollington Cross Church of England Primary School
Spiritual Development Policy

Vision: *At Bollington Cross, we aspire to be a kind, open-hearted community, rooted in relationship and the Christian faith. We look to one another and when our feet slip, we overcome challenges together, enabling flourishing for all.*

Values: *Love, Hope, Peace, Faithfulness*

Introduction

How is our theologically inspired vision reflected in this policy?

The Christian faith provides the moral and ethical framework that underpins the relationships and ethos that we aspire to foster, including the relational nature of spiritual development. However, spirituality is different to 'faith' in the sense that 'faith' requires an active commitment to a particular set of beliefs. Therefore, in order to live-out our vision of 'flourishing for all', our approach to spiritual development model is inclusive and beneficial to people of other faiths and none.

Our vision further highlights the relational nature of our community as 'we overcome challenges together, enabling flourishing for all' (Inspired by Psalm 121 and Hosea 14:7). Therefore, our model of spiritual development includes opportunities to explore our relationship with the self, others, the world and God (the beyond) with a framework for reflection that encourages spiritual growth - windows, mirrors, and doors.

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is the awareness of a relationship focused on understanding beliefs; finding meaning; connecting with ourselves, others, the world and with God (the beyond – a sense of the transcendent) (Hay and Nye, 2006).

Spirituality is an awareness that there is something other, something greater than the course of everyday events (McCreery, 1994). It is both so clearly visible but also invisible by nature and whilst entirely evident through an inner sense of knowing, quite difficult to 'know' through reason and cognition alone.

Imagine a bagel... you can't have a bagel without a hole in the middle – it's an essential part of its existence. The 'hole' is at the heart of the 'whole'. The 'hole' is there but equally not 'there' in the same way that cognitive reason can evidence the breaded part of the bagel. Spirituality involves a different type of knowing. (Church of England, 2019)



Spirituality is not the same as religious faith but it is the bedrock on which faith is founded. Belief in God is not essential to spiritual development as instead, we would look towards contemplating the transcendent/ that beyond which reason and cognition allows us understanding.

Spirituality is like a bird – if held too tightly it will choke, but if held too loosely it will fly away. It is the sense of our engagement with ourselves, others, the world and God (the beyond / the intangible). We like this [video](#) which explains spiritual development.

Aims

The aim of our spiritual development policy is to nurture growth of our children and staff as whole individuals. This policy sets out how we foster spiritual development through our connection with:

Self - Encouraging -awareness and personal growth.

Others - Cultivating empathy and respect for others.

World - Promoting a sense of awe and responsibility for the natural world.

God (Beyond) - Providing opportunities to explore life's big questions and the concept of the divine.

(Hay and Nye, 2006)



Our aim is to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual flourishing of all which includes but is not limited to:

- Developing an appreciation of individual uniqueness and value.
- Developing knowledge and understanding of the school's Christian values; Biblical teaching (and how it applies to modern life within and beyond our context); language and symbolism of the Christian faith.
- Developing an awareness of and respect for other people, including their beliefs, faith and the ability to articulate one's own beliefs and faith. This includes understanding the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others.
- Fostering self-awareness and encouraging pupils to make informed decisions.
- Developing an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community, the wider world, and to have a relationship with God, including moral and ethical decision making, rooted in Christian values, that cultivates positive progress with each.
- Developing the skills and language required to reflect on big questions, mysteries, and upon experiences of awe, wonder compassion, beauty etc.
- Beginning to understand and make sense of feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in life, including an awareness of 'suffering' such as experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth, leading us to 'fall upwards' (Rohr, 2011).
- Encouraging curiosity, creativity and imagination.

Spiritual Development

What is Spiritual Development?

Everyone has an inborn spirituality. At Bollington Cross, we aim to provide a platform to nurture the spirituality of everyone in the school community. If spirituality is not nurtured, it can wither and like an unused muscle, it ceases to feel useful and we find 'another way' of doing things. We might even begin to feel as though we don't need it without truly knowing the riches and power of strong spirituality. However, when it is used and spirituality is nurtured, we feel the benefits in ways that we couldn't imagine.

The windows, mirrors, and doors model allows moments for spiritual development explicitly through worship and across the curriculum or incidentally when daily life brings something to the surface – when things just 'crop-up.' Handled sensitively, the windows, mirrors, and doors model makes it possible to make the most of these situations.



windows

Consider - What did you see or experience?

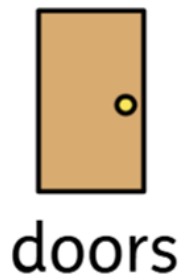
'Windows' represent what we experience - new things, ideas and perspectives and becoming aware of the world and its wonders, both the 'wows' and 'ows'; things that are 'awe-full' and 'awful'. Each inspire wonder, big feelings, challenge and questions. The curriculum and life itself are full of opportunities to recognise this sensitively. We ensure that learning has opportunities for children to see, experience and consider.



mirrors

Reflect - What do you think or feel?

'Mirrors' represent reflecting independently and together, to see things more clearly. It is a time for thinking and asking important questions and learning from our own and each other's responses. This allows for formation of values and feelings.



Respond – What change did it lead to?

Doors represent the ‘what next’ – what will we do or how will we be as a result of our reflection? It could be a change in attitude or strengthening of a particular belief or commitment. A response could include taking action by doing something creative, being active and purposeful or simply a change in attitude, behaviour, or thinking.

Spiritual development also helps us to understand who we are, with a focus on personal development. It encourages agency which lays the foundation for experientiality in learning which in turn leads to meaning making that is followed by reflection and either transformation or reinforcement (Farrugin and Gellel, 2024). This cycle helps children to ‘be’ well or what we might say as having positive ‘wellbeing’.

Reflecting back to the bagel analogy... Spiritual development is about the development of the precious ‘holy holes’ at the heart of our ‘wholes’. We need to think about how we ‘allow for this’ without attempting to ‘fill’ people with prescriptive indoctrination but also without leaving them in a spiritual ‘vacuum’ with no support or guidance or models to learn from and with. (Mills, 2019).

How do we provide opportunities for spiritual development?

We provide a wide range of activities throughout the week, including worship, the curriculum and additional initiatives and events A non-exhaustive list of these are as follows:

- Daily worship
- Pupil led aspects of worship
- Individual responses to worship
- Daily promotion of the school’s vision and values through our practice and policies
- Whole school initiatives and events

- Inter-school events and celebrations
- Pastoral Care
- Student Leadership Opportunities
- Residential Visits and trips
- Retreat days and experiences on and off campus
- Regular experiences led by clergy in church or in school
- Opportunities to explore big questions.

Each teacher is equipped with resources to help nurture spiritual development across the curriculum and throughout school life.



windows

What do you notice? Can you describe...

What are the 'wows' (amazing things) ?

What are the and 'ows' (things that upset you or challenge your thinking)?

How is this similar to...

How is this different to...

What does this teach you about...

What does this make you wonder about...

What does this tell us about yourself, others, the world, God/the beyond?



mirrors

What do you think now?

What do you wonder?

How does this affect your thinking, values, beliefs?

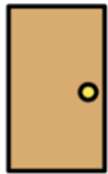
How does this affect how you feel about yourself, others, the world, God/the beyond?

What do you feel more/less strongly about now?

What would you do differently if...

What would you have done differently in the past based on your new thinking?

How has this changed you? How has this reinforced something that you already thought or felt?



doors

What would / will you do now?

How can you express your thoughts and feelings (through your learning)?

What would be a creative solution?

What opportunities does this open-up?

What difference does this make to your attitude?

How might your response affect your relationship with yourself, others, the world, God/the beyond?

Impact

By its very nature, spirituality is difficult to 'assess' in the same way as an academic subject or progress towards attaining a purely cognitively or physically evidenced skill. Impact will be assessed considering the aspects below.

- Comfort and confidence with listening, thinking deeply and asking questions.
- Comfort and confidence with self.
- Comfort and confidence with others
- Comfort and confidence with one's place in the world
- Comfort and confidence in one's relationship with the beyond, including times of silence and reflection

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). Children are able to express and understand feelings and they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to effectively 'be' in quiet and stillness, They possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills. This will be reflected at an age-appropriate level across the school.

At the very crux of the Christian faith is the 'how we are' and by its very nature, the Christian faith accepts that we all fall short. Therefore, it is inevitable... we will all make mistakes. We will all make choices that don't appear to align with our values and vision at times. However, as previously mentioned, this is integral to spiritual growth. Therefore, part of how we assess the impact of our policy for spiritual development is to observe and reflect on responses to 'suffering' which may present itself as a response to adversity or challenge. Christianity is founded on death and resurrection, forgiveness and reconciliation- thus revealing God's revelation-centred nature. Through the same process of adversity and regeneration, we can expect to see the same revelation of spirituality within our relationships with the self, others, the world, and God (the beyond).

Legal Requirements

Provision for the spiritual development of pupils includes developing their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life
- knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences

(Ofsted, 2023)

Monitoring and Review

We provide opportunities periodically for staff to reflect on the effectiveness of this policy and its impact in practice. Monitoring from governors and senior staff further informs the development of our practice. **Last review: October 2025.**



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