

*'...those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not
grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.'* Isaiah 40:31



connect | nurture | aspire | learn | excel | hope



Charing Church of England Primary School

Spirituality Policy

Document Information	Date/source of Policy	Responsibility
Date of review	September 2022	Christian Distinctiveness Team
Date of new review	September 2024	Christian Distinctiveness Team

“Our school is an inclusive family, where each individual is respected and nurtured. Through our Christian values, we develop friendship within our school community and beyond, developing compassion, confidence and resilience in all. Our curriculum fosters aspiration, creativity, curiosity and determination, enabling all to flourish”

Confidence **Determination** **Faith** **Friendship** **Respect**

In our Church school, our vision is to “Our school is an inclusive family, where each individual is respected and nurtured. Through our Christian values, we develop friendship within our school community and beyond, developing compassion, confidence and resilience in all. Our curriculum fosters aspiration, creativity, curiosity and determination, enabling all to flourish”

This policy intends to outline how our whole school community lives this out in relation to developing spirituality. Our Christian Values of are firmly rooted in this policy.

As a school, we have defined spirituality as:

“Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something ‘bigger’ outside of ourselves.”

Christian Value	How is this value lived out in our Spirituality policy?
Determination	I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4.13) Developing spirituality is a journey. Spiritual development is not about becoming, more spiritual (in a measurable or expansive sense). It is about realising or becoming more and more aware of one’s natural, innate spirituality. This is sometimes a slow and gradual process, at other times there might be significant stages of realisation, which are part of the ongoing ‘developing’ process. During this process, there may also be times where big questions make us question our own ideas or beliefs. Throughout this whole process, perseverance is required for all to see that growth in spirituality is a journey.
Respect	So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you (Matthew 7:12), developing spirituality is regarded as an integral aspect of developing the whole child. Developing spirituality aims to promote mutual respect between all members of the school community and beyond. This involves respecting and valuing the views of all stakeholders equally. It is an inclusive opportunity for those of all faiths and none.
Faith	My God is my strength in whom I trust (Psalm 18:2) The journey of spirituality is something that involves many people. Establishing mutual trust amongst staff, children, families and the whole community will ensure that there is a trusting environment for all to develop their own spirituality journeys.

Rationale

This policy outlines how spirituality is developed across Charing. Our children engage in many planned and unplanned development opportunities throughout their time in school.

The Church of England’s Vision for Education outlines a desire for life to be lived “in all its fullness” (John 10:10). It is also said that: “For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed” (John Bradford)

The approach towards spirituality development at Charing looks to educate the whole child in fullness across broad, rich curriculum opportunities. Spiritual development is not specific to one curriculum area or activity.

In line with our school vision, we define spiritual development as:

- an ongoing, reflective journey. It teaches us about questioning, understanding and relationships: relationships with ourselves, others, the world and beyond.
- Spirituality enables our children to be happy; flourish and succeed and live life in all its fullness.

The Charing offer

Across the school, our staff team, using guidance documents from the Diocese of Canterbury have collated a summary of the planned Charing's offer for spirituality. This document can be downloaded from the website and provides clear ideas and guidance for how spirituality is developed and nurtured across our school.

The four elements of spiritual development

Spiritual development can be encouraged through a range of activities. These will include both planned and unplanned learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to ask questions and explore topics, discussing and responding to issues around them.

Whilst spiritual moments can just happen, at Charing we plan to provide high quality, thought provoking and purposeful opportunities for spiritual development.

The four elements of spiritual development form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality. We also believe that it is 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 help each other.

The four elements of spiritual development:

Element	What does this involve?
Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are <input type="checkbox"/> Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration of personal faith <input type="checkbox"/> Development of imagination and creativity
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance <input type="checkbox"/> To love and be loved (loving your neighbour) <input type="checkbox"/> Making a difference; duty
World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Developing a sense of awe and wonder <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoying the miracles of everyday life <input type="checkbox"/> Taking time for what really matters <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature
Beyond (transcendence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/ physical) <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God) <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Making sense of the world |
|--|--|

Opportunities to develop and support spirituality

Opportunities for spiritual development are both planned and unplanned and exploited spontaneously. Children are encouraged to reflect on their own development using the “Windows, Mirrors and Doors” framework.

Opportunity	What is involved?
Windows (learning about life)	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities to look out on the world to gaze and wonder: The “Wow” and “Ows” moments. The things we find amazing and bring us up short. We can <input type="checkbox"/> wonder at the world, technology, art, music, scientific advances all around us. We may work outside, visit places of interest, celebrate inspirational people. We can reflect on injustice and inequality in the world.
Mirrors (learning from experiences)	<input type="checkbox"/> Giving opportunities for children to reflect, to look inward to consider some of the big questions of life: To explore their own insights and those of others. This could be compared with looking in a mirror. Look at yourself in a situation... <input type="checkbox"/> How would you react, what would you say or do? These are questions which may arise through circle time.
Doors (learning to live out our values and beliefs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Giving opportunities to children to respond, to do something to go through the door of a creative expression of their own thoughts and convictions. Children would be living out our Christian values, considering how our own <input type="checkbox"/> beliefs and faiths drive changes in the wider world.

Where will spiritual development opportunities occur?

Spiritual development occurs in many ways, both planned and unplanned. However, at Charing we aim to ensure that children:

- Have regular times in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in collective worship, engaging in reflection activities in spaces around school.
- Will be provided with many opportunities for creativity and imagination.
- Will be provided with purposeful and regular opportunities for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful and allow the children an opportunity to open themselves up to God.
- Will have regular opportunities to explore, express and share feelings.
- Will see positive relationships role modelled around school. The importance of relationships will be reaffirmed to them. This will include clear exploration of how we talk to and relate to each other.
- Have opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms and appreciate connections and unity in the world.
- Will be encouraged to reflect on mistakes, and acknowledge them, and where appropriate apologise.
- Will be encouraged to show perseverance, respect and trust and express these in practical ways.

- Have opportunities to explore 'Big Questions'.

Monitoring this policy

The impact of this policy will be monitored by the Head teacher, other members of the Christian Distinctiveness Team and Governors. Discussions with all stakeholders will seek to identify how spiritual opportunities are being established and how these are impacting upon children's understanding and development.