

# Bishop Perrin Church of England Primary School

## Spiritual Development Policy

Non-Statutory Policy



*Our school is a Church of England School and works in partnership with our two local parish churches, St Augustine's and Ss Philip & James'. We aim to reflect the values, traditions and beliefs of the Christian Faith and therefore our Spiritual Values underpin everything that we do.*

<b>Author</b>	Spiritual and Moral Values Leader
<b>Date Ratified</b>	September 2024
<b>Ratification Level</b>	FGB
<b>Frequency of Renewal</b>	Every 3 years
<b>Policy Renewal Date</b>	September 2027

## CONTENTS

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Aims](#)
3. [Legal Requirements](#)
4. [Shared understanding of spiritual development](#)
5. [Provision](#)
6. [CPD and Training](#)
7. [Monitoring and Evaluation](#)
8. [Opportunities for spiritual flourishing of adults](#)

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Church of England Vision for Education is rooted in Jesus' desire that we should have 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10). As our spiritual nature is such a fundamental part of our humanity, spiritual development is a key part of this holistic view of education:

*"Our vision embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people. We offer a vision of human flourishing for all, one that embraces excellence and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework."*<sup>1</sup>

As Derek Holloway writes, spiritual development is intrinsic to every part of our work:  
*"I would strongly contend that in all schools, and certainly in Church schools, that spiritual development is not something you should hide away in a couple of curriculum boxes or treat as an afterthought. I must be something that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life."*<sup>2</sup>

We believe that spiritual development is a core thread that runs through our school, and we see it as vital for the flourishing of all within our school community. In Acts 17:28, the Apostle Paul says that in God "we live and move and have our being"; becoming more aware of our innate spirituality is a life-long journey and it is our desire that all at Bishop Perrin School move forward on that journey during their time here.

## 2 AIMS

Our aim is to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual flourishing 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 knowledge and understanding of the school's Spiritual 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.
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils 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.

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<sup>1</sup> The Church of England Education Office, *Church of England Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good*. (The Church of England Education Office 2016)

<sup>2</sup> Derek Holloway et al, *Spiritual Development : Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom* (The Church of England Education Office April 2019)

- 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
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination

These objectives 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 Christian faith.

As over-arching aims, our approach to spiritual development will:

- Reflect the school's Church of England status
- Reflect and strengthen the school's Christian vision and ethos
- Take place within a school environment which enables pupils and adults to flourish

### **3 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

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

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

*The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:*  
*(a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*

Section 48 of the Education Act 2005

*Spiritual development is a particular focus of Church school inspections under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS) which asks:*

- *How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?*
- *How is collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?*
- *How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?*
- *In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individuals' spiritual development?*
- *How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?*

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (2019) states:

*Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities ...*

*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.*

## **4 SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Philip Sheldrake writes:

*"In Christian terms, spirituality refers to the way our fundamental values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices reflect particular understandings of God, human identity, and the material world as the context for human transformation... We shall see that all Christian spiritual traditions are rooted in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures, particularly in the gospels and in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Christian spirituality is fundamentally concerned with following the way of Jesus Christ."<sup>3</sup>*

As a church school, it is this Christian framework that shapes our shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development. We recognise the importance of engaging with our linked churches in determining this shared understanding in the context of our school's Christian vision and values.

To make conversations about spiritual flourishing more accessible to every member of our school community, Bishop Perrin School has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development:

At Bishop Perrin School we recognise the spirituality of every member of our school family. Our spiritual life is that aspect of all of us that connects to our sense of 'The Other', which in the case of our school connects to God the Creator through our relationship to Jesus Christ empowered by the Holy Spirit. We understand our spiritual side to be connected more to our hearts than our heads, where we have the opportunity to reflect on ourselves and our lives in the context of others. We value the Holy Bible and its many books as a means to understand how to live our spiritual lives more fully.

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<sup>3</sup> Philip Sheldrake, *Spirituality, A Brief History*. (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) p.7

At Bishop Perrin School, we value the uniqueness of every person's own spirituality as well as the shared spirituality that we have as a school family. Our school vision, based upon St Paul's words encourages us all to celebrate our learning and education in 'faith, hope and love' and in the context of the Christian spiritual values expressed through Scripture. Through faith, we learn that we do not act in our strength alone but through the guidance of our God; in hope we look to a brighter future where we all play a part; in love we celebrate the unique and perfect gifts expressed by all members of the school family, accepting them as they are.

The inner spiritual life is nourished through our acts of worship, focussed upon vibrant and well cared-for prayer tables in our classrooms, through our behaviour towards one another in school and in how we represent the school in the wider community. We are proud to embody a culture that acknowledges that some members of our school family are not Christians or even people of a particular faith, but their spiritual life is as important and as treasured as any other. We strive to improve by reflecting on our practice and taking guidance from others inside and outside of the school.

## **5 PROVISION**

The school pursues the aims 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 pupils.
- 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.
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness, and prayer.
- Pupils' 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.
- Moral development is linked to spiritual development.
- 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.
- The delivery and content will be made accessible to all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

- Consideration of Early Years curriculum and how the curriculum for younger children can support spiritual development.
- The religious background of all pupils will be taken into consideration when planning teaching.

### Why is Spiritual Development Important at Bishop Perrin School?

As a church school, we believe that our role is to educate the whole child and that the spiritual growth of our children is as important as, and indeed is a vital contributor to, their academic development. The deeper exploration of our Spiritual Values, developed each week through our Collective Worship, our School Vision, as well as opportunities woven throughout our curriculum, underpin all we seek to develop in the lives of our children. Getting children to consider the world around them, reflecting and thinking for themselves, evoking positive emotional responses are all key elements for spiritual development. By supporting the spiritual development of our children, our aim is that it will enable them to take their place in society as fulfilled, responsible, spiritually aware and emotionally engaged individuals.

## **6 CPD AND TRAINING**

This is a complex area and staff should be trained and equipped to provide for the spiritual development of pupils within the context of a Church of England school. We access diocesan-led training for those with a particular role in planning for and evaluating spiritual development.

## **7 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

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

- Observing and listening to pupils.
- 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 spiritual development means in this school by providing them with induction and development training.
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art.
- Regular 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 (e.g. collective worship)

The Faith and Vision Governor Committee are responsible, alongside the Headteacher and Spiritual and Moral Values Leader for the monitoring of the provision for spiritual development across the school. This is achieved through the annual RE and Vision Learning Walk, scrutiny of children's work, pupil conferences, staff surveys and monitoring of planning.

Provision for spiritual development is independently inspected by law under Section 48 of the Education Act 2005 (SIAMS).

## **8 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. We consider ways in which our routines and practices (e.g. staff meetings, CPD, collective worship, church services) can contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community.

### Review of Policy

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