

**Eccleston C.E. Aided Primary School**

***"Let your light shine" - Matthew 5:16***

Spiritual Development

**Our Vision Statement**

At Eccleston C of E Primary School, we believe that every child is known and loved by God and is made in the image of God. We are united in our vision of every child fulfilling their God-given potential as they are nurtured to reflect the example Jesus set in all they do.

We aim to achieve this through instilling a life-long love of learning and development that is rooted in Christian Values. We strive for excellence in all we do enabling all members of our school to flourish.

**Our working definition of ‘spirituality’**

As a staff and governor team, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

Spiritual development is the development of an awareness that there is “something more to life than meets the eye, something more than the material, something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to.” (Terence Copley)

**Legal requirements:**

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.

The SIAMS Framework (2023) references Spirituality in in both the RE and Collective. The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for ‘Life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10) which requires educating the whole person.

The OFSTED framework 2021 states that pupil’s spiritual development is shown by their:

• ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life

• knowledge of, and respect for, different people’s faith, 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

**We support pupils in their spiritual development by:**

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum

- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as they arise

- providing ‘Sacred Spaces’ in classrooms, public spaces, outside, and by using the church building, and through the ‘Prayer Spaces in School’ website

- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership, through leading collective worship and other opportunities

Experiential learning opportunities in the wider curriculum enable children to question, consider, reflect and respond, and consider their own values, beliefs and feelings and those of others. Outlined below are some of the key ways in which spiritual development is nurtured and promoted as part of the curriculum:

**In Physical Education:**

• Being a team member

• Pushing yourself to the limits

• Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement

• Emotion in sport

• Personal limitation and failure

• Sportsmanship

**In Design and Technology:**

• Discovering how something works

• Appreciating genius

• Beauty in design

• Perseverance to solve problems

• Personal achievement

• Learning from others and nature

**In English:**

• Empathy with authors and the characters in stories and plays

• The appreciation of beauty in language

• Emotions and sentiments in writing and speech

• The values of great works

• Heroes and heroines in literature

• Imagining oneself as someone else

• Escaping into other worlds through literature

• The element of wonder in literature

**In Maths:**

• Infinity and nothing

• Pattern and order

• Shape and regularity

• Truth, certainty and likelihood

• The universality of mathematics over time and space

• The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations

**In Science:**

• Wonder as the basis of science

• Questions of beginning, creation and evolution

• Discovering the limits of experimentation

• Birth, life, death and renewal

• The universe and beyond

• Regularity and order in science

• Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists

• The impact of scientific achievements

**In Computing:**

• The wonder of worldwide instant communication

• The speed of the growth of knowledge

• The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide.

**In the Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama and Dance):**

• Beauty, truth and goodness

• Expressing, interpreting and exploring deep feelings and profound beliefs

• Artistic creativity

• The effects of the arts on emotions and senses

• The arts as means of expressing mood

• Skill in creation and performance, and particularly in personal reflection upon their own creativity using various art forms

• Effects on the emotions and senses

• Personal response and preference

**In Geography:**

• Wonder at the diversity of environments and people

• Questions about the care of the environment

• The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns

• World (economic) development

• Land formation

• Empathy with people from other parts of the world

**In History:**

• Being in touch with past people, things and ideas

• Being part of history

• Handling artefacts

• Influential events and people

• The commitment of significant people in history

• War and peace

• Interpretation in history

• The nature and importance of invention and exploration

• Empathy with people from other times in history

**In Religious Education:**

• People, places, things, books, actions and ideas held by religious believers to be holy

• Ultimate questions of meaning and purpose

• Ideas of the divine/questions of God

• Forms of worship

• Use of music, art and drama to express beliefs

• Varieties of beliefs, celebrations and rituals

• Ideas of commitment and belonging to groups and institutions

• The idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers

**In Collective Worship:**

• Opportunities for reflection and response are planned into worship

• Stillness

• Personal and collective beliefs are respected

• Sharing and celebrating common beliefs

• Celebrating success

• Sharing happiness, sorrow, hurt, excitement, anticipation and fear

• Common activities such as singing, listening, laughing, praying, reflecting on a theme

• Remembering and celebrating the lives of people of spiritual significance

• Emphasising common purpose and values

• Experiencing emotions

• Adopt a growth mindset

• Recognising that relationships with others are key

• Understanding that everyone has value

• Learning to love and accept ourselves as well as loving and responding well to others

In addition, as part of the curriculum the children have opportunities:

• To visit places of beauty, interest and challenge

• To admire and wonder at the natural environment and human creative efforts

• To work out personal relationships in unusual and challenging situations

• To experience community cohesion links at a local, national and global level

• To engage in charity based activities

In order to facilitate spiritual development, the organisation of the school and the environment for learning are such that:

• Everyone involved in the life of the school is valued

• Policies and ensuing practices are clearly seen to reflect the worth of individuals

• Behaviour and people management policies and practices are collectively arrived at and discussed regularly

• All adults recognise the need to set good examples of mutual respect and considerate behaviour

• The quality and nature of the learning environment and displays reflect the value placed on pupils and staff

• The atmosphere of the school welcomes differences in beliefs and values, and invites everyone to belong

• The achievements, successes and efforts of everyone are recognised and celebrated

**Assessment**

Spirituality will be assessed as an integral part of curriculum practice and the children’s involvement in the life of the school community. These are areas in which children are expected to grow as part of their spiritual development:

• Reflect on their experiences with increasing sensitivity

• Question and explore the meaning of different experiences

• Understand and evaluate a range of possible reasons and interpretations

• Develop personal views and insights

• Apply insights gained with increasing degrees of perception to their own lives in line with the school’s Anglican status and history

• Know that belief is valuable and that the Christian belief is endorsed by the whole school community

**As a staff team:**

- We have a staff understanding of spiritual development.

- We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.

- We revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings and offer training.

- Our governors monitor the impact of our spirituality focus through feedback from the Christian Distinctiveness and Collective Worship Leads.

- We have staff guidance accessible to continue to support staff in this aspect of our curriculum. All staff are attending the Spirituality training on offer from Chester Diocesan Board of Education.

- We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development.

- We have a variety of spiritual spaces both inside and outside the school building.

- We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett / Rebecca Nye).

- We recognise that children will have different ‘Spiritual Temperaments’ or ‘Sacred Pathways, through the work of Gary Thomas (2010) and Myra Perrine (2007). This will influence our planning as we look to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship. We encourage staff who are specialist subject leads to identify opportunities for spiritual development in their subject, and to share them with colleagues.

- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.

- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context.

- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website.

- We discuss spirituality with our church and others who can further support this thread.

- We have a Spirituality reminder displayed in our school environment.

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community.

**Other related policies:**

Collective Worship

Teaching and Learning

Relationships and Behaviour

SMSC

All subject specific curriculum policies

**Auditing Spirituality**

Having a whole school understanding of spirituality is key in the process of developing our shared language for spirituality.

**Where can we school show evidence for spiritual development?**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Quality of Education**  **Can we say:**   * our pupils are making rapid and sustained progress and learn exceptionally well? * our pupils develop, apply and transfer a wide range of skills to a variety of contexts? * Our pupils have opportunities to critically reflect and develop personal knowledge | **Yes we can, because at Eccleston:** | **Our Evidence** |
| * our pupils express enjoyment and curiosity in learning about themselves, others and the world around them * our pupils show imagination and creativity in their learning * our pupils critically reflect on their experiences * our pupils are nurtured and nurture each other to discover and develop their gifts * A safe time and space is created for thinking, reflection and structured opportunities for pupils to listen and talk to one another which supports their language development. * our pupils’ work is shared beyond the classroom and develops pupils as global neighbours * we celebrate occasions when pupils, staff or members of the community have risen above the ordinary, or shown courage in adversity * the more complex questions and concepts support personal learning and thinking skills development, and a safe space is provided for these to be explored * achievement is regarded as more than attainment and progress; it includes wider outcomes for pupils’ personal development and well being. * Every child is celebrated in their uniqueness * Every child has experiences to enhance the journey of ‘fullness of life’ |  |
| **Quality of Education**  **Can we say:**   * We have high expectations of all pupils? * we generate high levels of enthusiasm for, participation in and commitment to learning? | **Yes we can, because at Eccleston:** | **Our Evidence** |
| * we use imaginative teaching strategies which match individual needs accurately. * our teaching promotes pupils’ resilience, confidence and independence when tackling challenging activities * our pupils express a variety of religious and non-religious worldviews which inform their views on life and their interest in and respect for different people’s feelings and values * we plan learning from the pupils’ own experiences. We value each contribution, affirming, praising and challenging pupils * we allow subject matter to ‘speak for itself’ and allow pupils to draw out their own meaning, e.g. use of Godly Play; role play; creative and expressive arts * we create space for spontaneity when planning learning outcomes * our curriculum encourages use of the senses and alternative forms of expression * reflective time and silence is valued, and strategies are used to support this, e.g. visualisation; stilling, meditation * Feedback provides opportunities for pupils to think about and express their views on the reasons behind what they are learning * a sense of playfulness, curiosity and opportunity characterises our curriculum * our curriculum design ensures that there are big enquiry questions; pupils have plenty of time to think and talk about big ideas in all areas of the curriculum, not just in RE. E.g. we increase opportunities for saying ‘I wonder…’, trying to say it at least once a day! * in our curriculum we generate questions to allow children to explore the world they live in * we make sure our learning extends beyond the classroom. We ask ‘Where might this work go? Who else might be interested in what we have learned? Can we link this to something outside our school? |  |
| **Behaviour and attitudes**  **Can we say:**   * our pupils make an exceptional contribution to a safe, positive learning environment? * our pupils show a willingness to reflect on their experiences? * Our pupils encounter and display inclusivity and tolerance, embracing diversity. | **Yes we can, because at Eccleston:** | **Our Evidence** |
| * we encourage our pupils to express their feelings and emotions * our pupils’ behaviour and attitudes to learning improves when they engage in wondering; pupils show curiosity about what they are learning * our pupils know that each day they can start ‘afresh’ within a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation * we have an inclusive and accepting attitude towards ourselves and others, e.g. visitors; those with a disability * We celebrate diversity and difference through encountering experiences our pupils for the wider world. |  |
| **Leadership and management**  **Can we say:**   * we are committed to be the best we can everyday? * this is shown by a highly successful drive to enable all the school community to ‘live life in all its fullness’? * our school curriculum provides highly positive, memorable experiences and rich opportunities for high quality learning? | **Yes we can, because at Eccleston:** | **Our Evidence** |
| * there is time for reflection and silence - for the whole school community, not just pupils * we are prepared to ‘think differently’ about things, to take risks and think outside the box * there is a key word or phrase which is talked about, reflected on and delighted in on a regular basis. This involves everyone in the school. E.g. gratitude; flow; joy; contribution; creativity * a thought for the week or equivalent is articulated throughout the school community and in all communications * our pupils express their understanding of our school's values and Christian vision through words, art and artefacts. We show we value these through displays in high profile places such as the reception area * We have a shared language and policy for spirituality |  |
| **Personal Development**   * our school develops pupils confidence and resilience to support their wellbeing | * We are advocates for mental health. * We provide opportunities for self-awareness * We enable pupils to self-reflect so that they can flourish. * We recognize the school community can thrive together by enabling everybody’s uniqueness to contribute to our vision. * We acknowledge that we sometimes need others in order to reach goals. |  |