

St Matthew's Bloxam Church of England (VC) Primary School



Spirituality Policy

December 2024

Let Your Light Shine

"In the same way, let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven"

Matthew Chapter 5 Verse 16

We aim for forgiveness and reconciliation in safe surroundings. We seek experiences to spark confidence to nurture and show delight. We want to illuminate hopes, dreams and aspirations and to build humanity through relationships inspired by the glow of others. We value everyone through thoughts and actions.

Introduction

At St Matthew's Bloxam we recognise all of our children as individuals, created in God's image. Our school vision encompasses our values of forgiveness, hope, love, friendship and respect. Our aspiration is that everyone will SHINE at SMB. The aim of this policy is to provide opportunities for spiritual experiences and spiritual reflection within all aspects of the school day, ensuring that our children have the opportunity to SHINE in all they do.



Aims of spirituality at SMB

Sense feelings and emotions around events and encounters

Human relationships based on belonging to a community

Imagination, curiosity and creativity are encouraged

Nurturing environment gives space and opportunities to grow

Experience connectedness to the world and appreciate our place in it

What is Spirituality?

Whilst the concept of spirituality is difficult to define, here at SMB, our shared definition see the concept as central to what makes us truly human. There is an understanding that there is much awe and wonder in the world, along with a sense that we are all

part of something greater. As breathing is essential to living, spirituality is viewed as the breath within our school, giving life and inspiration to all that we do. We acknowledge that spirituality is deeply personal and so we afford individuals the space and opportunity to develop along their own spiritual journey.

How we approach the concept of Spirituality at SMB



Liz Mills, The Farmington Institute.

The Doughnut and the hole (1997)

The doughnut represents the whole person. The outer ring is the tangible (Mind and Body), the hole represents the intangible (Spirit) but if there was no hole it would not be a doughnut. It is the exploration and development of the hole in our centre that makes us whole - Holy Wholes with Holy Holes.

Linking with children's moral development, we use the window, mirrors and doors approach to planning spirituality across topics and subjects.



Encounter

Windows: Giving children opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's WOWs (things that are amazing) and OWs (things which bring us up short). In this children are learning about life in all its fullness



Reflection

Mirrors: Giving children opportunities to *reflect* on their experiences; to **meditate** on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this children are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others



Transformation

Doors: Giving children opportunities to *respond* to all of this; to **do** something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this, children are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to

Spirituality and Faith

Promoting spirituality should not be confused with developing faith. Faith is a set of principles by which you live your life and could be a response to a belief in God. Faith is something which is chosen. Whereas spirituality is an aspect of human development, it is what makes us whole. Spirituality is for everyone, regardless of faith.

How Spirituality is promoted at SMB

Across topics and subjects areas we provide children with big questions that may not have a definite answer. Through a learning sequence the children are encouraged to reflect, thereby awe and wonder is created. Time and space are then given for spiritual growth and understanding of their place in the world.

Opportunities for the development of spirituality come when:

- Children are given space to stop, look, listen, think and reflect
- Children feel safe to share opinions and think differently from others
- Children use their imagination

Children need:

- Time to be listened to
- Adults that are respectful
- Space to explore, discuss and think
- Opportunities that encourage wonder and surprise
- To know there is not always a product or end result
- To know that there is another way

Activities and opportunities include:

- Exposure to and appreciation of nature
- Use of prayer and reflection times
- Time for silence and stillness
- Acts of service that benefit others
- Agents for change and injustice through debate and action (courageous advocacy).
- Stories that promote thought and imagination (without the need to find a moral)

Barriers to the development of spirituality

The development of spirituality can be hindered when:

- Adults trivialise something small to them but which is big to a child
- The 'busyness' of life and not having the time to look and think
- Lack of space for stillness and listening

By being aware of these potential barriers, staff at SMB are able to allow children to develop their spirituality throughout their daily lives whilst in the school environment.

Links with other policies

Collective worship policy

RE policy

Wellbeing policy

SMSC policy

PSHE/RSHE policy

Monitoring and evaluation

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

- Observing and listening to children
- Through discussion at staff meetings and governor meetings alongside the Christian vision and values
- Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of spirituality through CPD
- Evidence in children's books e.g. RE, Science, Writing, Art
- Sharing of good classroom practice
- Learning walks
- Governor monitoring visits

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every three years.

Next review date Autumn 2027