

BILLINGHAY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL
Spirituality Policy
July 2024

‘Ask and it shall be given, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened.’ Matthew 7.7

For our community we aim to give them the confidence to ask questions, be curious, resilient and ambitious, and in doing so, encourage them to open doors to opportunities. We are to ask our Heavenly Father for the things we need and to keep asking with full assurance that He hears. We are to seek and keep seeking and to knock and keep knocking as He has promised that the door will be opened.

Our motto:

Believe to achieve, empowering a community of hope and aspiration

Our motto reflects the firm foundations we believe we give to our children. Children know that with God’s help their aspirations can be reached alongside their hard work and determination.

Our theologically rooted vision:

Working together to raise aspirations, empowering a community of hope. We seek to develop resilient, curious and creative minds, inspiring everyone to shine bright and be positive, ambitious members within our school community.

Our pupils will learn to love themselves, believe in their potential to achieve (their aspirations) and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges. Whilst full of love and compassion for the marginalised, Jesus was also courageous when he needed to be. We want our children to be willing to take risks and reflect, to learn and grow from experiences, demonstrating curiosity and open mindedness.

Our vision influences the ethos of our school. Our children will experience the Bible’s teaching that every person is made in the image of God and is loved unconditionally by him.

For some in our community, spiritual development is about the development of a relationship with God, while for others it is about the development of the human spirit, and for others, a continual quest after truth. For all, we must ensure that in order to develop spiritually, all members of our school community are allowed space to develop their own faith, beliefs and values. Spiritual development differs from person to person and is a very personal experience. Spirituality concerns a person’s relationship with themselves, with others, with God, and with nature and the environment.

Spiritual Capacities include our ability to:

- be guided by our beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them
- be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community
- love ourselves, care for ourselves, believe in our potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges
- exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder
- be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
- be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer
- be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others
- be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success
- demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life’s big questions

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- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life and show generosity towards others

We provide our community with openings for spiritual development through the Windows, Mirrors and Doors approach. Our starting point is the Big Questions about life and we plan a series of encounters (windows) that open up the possibility of reflection (mirrors) and the community put into action what they believe and value (doors). To this end spiritual development is fostered as an integral element of the range of learning opportunities and experiences encountered as part of the curriculum, and that it permeates all strands of school life.

Implementation

Christians believe that God became human and therefore strive to be the best human they can possibly be. We want everyone in our school community to be the best that they can be. Part of this is to develop spirituality.

We want our community to be willing to take risks and reflect. To learn and grow from experiences, demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness. To love themselves, care for themselves and believe in the potential to achieve and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges.

St Thomas was one of Jesus' disciples. He had the courage to challenge his friends and ask questions with curiosity. He travelled the world, taking Jesus' good news for a hopeful future to people. This is a journey that required great resilience.

Without curiosity, without the inclination to question, and without the exercise of imagination, insight and intuition, children would lack the motivation to learn. In view of this we:

- Value questions and give time to reflect and consider their own thoughts, ideas and concerns.
- Enable connections to be made between aspects of learning.
- Giving all opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's 'Wows' (things that are amazing) and 'Ows' (things that bring us up short). In this we are learning about life in all its fullness (windows).
- Giving all opportunities to reflect on their experiences; to **meditate** on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this they are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others (mirrors).
- Giving all the opportunity 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 they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value (doors).
- Spiritual development is nurtured through all aspects of our provision. Opportunities are planned into the curriculum including visits to places of beauty, interest and challenge, visitors into school, experiencing community cohesion links at a local, national and global level, participating in a wide range of events and activities etc. Other opportunities are through acts of Collective Worship, engaging in charity based activities including the community charity that school supports, through celebrating all achievements, through philosophical questions and our Thought for the Term. Other opportunities may naturally arise. All opportunities are promoted in all aspects of the curriculum and school life as we become actively engaged in an enquiry based curriculum, which provides a wide range of experiential learning opportunities that enables all to question, consider, reflect and respond, and consider their own values, beliefs and feelings and those of others, with whom they are working alongside or with.
- We have developed Big Books for 'Thoughts, Prayers and Reflections' to show the developing reflection and spirituality across the school.

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How do we know if this is being effective?

Spiritually has helped to develop love and acceptance of themselves and enjoying good relationships with each other. Everyone takes an interest and delight in the world around them and are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, as well as respect those of others. They have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.

Monitoring and Review

Provision for spiritual development is monitored and reviewed by:

- Monitoring of teaching and learning and work scrutiny by RE/Collective Worship Leader, Head Teacher and governors.
- Pupil Discussions.
- A Spirituality Walk.
- Discussions at staff and Governing Body meetings.
- Audits of policies and schemes of work.
- RE and Collective Worship Development Plans.

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