



Upper Arley C of E Primary School

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IN SCHOOL POLICY

With Guidance from the
Diocesan Board of Education

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Diocesan Education Team

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SCHOOL STATEMENT ON SPIRITUALITY AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

In Upper Arley C of E Primary School, development of character is central to the life of school and is driven by the school's vision.

One community, learning and growing together, sharing God's love

"I can do all this through Christ because he gives me strength"

'The purpose of Church of England education is to offer a spiritual dimension to the lives of young people' The Way Ahead (The Archbishops' Council, 2001),

At Upper Arley C of E Primary School, all aspects of school life reflect our Christian ethos. We aim for all children to live life in all its fullness (John 10:10) and this includes their spiritual development and wisdom. That wisdom is about knowledge of and relationship to creation, including the cosmos, animals and plants. The formation of character, and of relational practices, including service, prayer, worship and contact with the natural world are at the heart of human flourishing.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control". (Galatians 5).

What is Spirituality?

Whilst the concept of spirituality is difficult to define, here at Upper Arley C of E Primary School, our shared definition sees 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. In essence, it refers to a connectedness to and appreciation of the wider world and our place within it. Spirituality is felt within ourselves by individuals and hence cannot be taught or measured - instead being something that needs to be nurtured and given the right conditions and space to grow. Therefore we acknowledge that spirituality is deeply personal and so we afford every individual with the space and opportunity to develop along their own spiritual journey. Our shared understanding of opportunities to encourage spiritual development draws upon the work of David Smith who suggested four windows into spiritual development:

□ **Spiritual Capacities:** this is the recognition that all human beings are capable of spiritual growth through capacities such as self-awareness, reflection, empathy, imagination and creativity.

□ **Spiritual Experiences:** describes the ways in which pupils can encounter the spiritual dimension of life

- **Spiritual Understanding:** acknowledges the need to have developed an understanding to make sense of the spiritual experiences encountered and capacities exercised
- **Spiritual responses:** demonstrates how this experience and understanding impacts on our lives and shapes the way in which we live our lives.



Here at Upper Arley C of E Primary School, we use the concept of a ring doughnut to explain Spirituality. This idea is taken from the work of Liz Mills. The Doughnut represents the 'Whole Child'. The outer ring is the tangible (Mind and Body), the hole represents the intangible (Spirit) but if there was no hole it wouldn't be a doughnut. It is the exploration and development of that inner self, creating calm spaces of reflection, that makes us whole.



At Upper Arley C of E Primary School, we are conscious of the 'Windows Mirrors Doors and Traffic Lights' analogy as ways of opening and encouraging spiritual development across the curriculum.



Windows - Encounter - Learning about life 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.



Mirrors - Reflection - Learning from life 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.



Doors - Transformation - learning to live by putting into action what they believe Giving opportunities to children to respond, to do something to go through the door of a creative expression of their own thoughts and convictions.



Traffic lights allow us time to stop and look, to wait and think and then to move on.

At Upper Arley C of E Primary School we promote spirituality across the curriculum and school life. Faith is a set of beliefs by which you live your life and may be a response to a belief in God. Faith is something you choose whereas spirituality is an aspect of human development - it is not separate but integral to who we are and what makes us whole. Spirituality is for everybody regardless of faith. At Upper Arley C of E Primary School spiritual development is not solely situated within Religious Education and Collective Worship.

How is spirituality promoted at At Upper Arley C of E Primary School?

To encourage spiritual growth within our children, we set aside a short period of time each week for children to reflect on our school values. Children are presented with a piece of scripture from the Bible, writings from other world religions or inspirational quotes or poems related to one of our school values. Children are invited to reflect through writing, drawing a picture or respond to what they have heard and how this has affected them. Across topics and subject areas, we provide children with big questions that may not have a definite

answer. Throughout a learning sequence or journey, the children are encouraged to reflect upon these questions. In this sense, awe and wonder is created, allowing time and space for spiritual growth and understanding of one's place within 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 that there is not always a product or end result
- ☐ To know that there is another way

Activities and opportunities will include:

- ☐ Exposure to and appreciation of nature
- ☐ Use of prayer and reflection time
- ☐ Time for silence and stillness
- ☐ Acts of service that benefit others
- ☐ Stories that promote thought and imagination (without the need to find a moral)

Barriers to the Development of Spirituality

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 Upper Arley C of E Primary School enable our children to develop spirituality throughout their daily lives whilst in the school environment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the:

Collective Worship Policy

RE Policy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy Review This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in September 2024.

Resources

A number of resources are available to support the development of spiritual development within school including:

Roots and Fruits

- Prayer Area resources.
- Feelings resources
- Roots and Fruits

Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. This support is provided by Diocese of Worcester Education Team. Training needs for staff may be identified through regular subject leader audits as well as performance management cycles.

Review

This policy will be subject to the normal cycle of policy review and will be reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body every three years. Furthermore, there may be occasions where this policy is reviewed outside the normal review cycle, including but not limited to:

- a change in the SIAMS Schedule for Inspections
- a change in advice from Church of England Education Office.