

Christ Church (Brondesbury) CE Primary School

Spiritual Development Policy

(From LDBS Spiritual Development Policy)



Responsible Governors' Committee	Full Governing Board
Date approved	December 2025
Date of next review	Autumn 2026
Signature	

*Going for **GOLD** with faith*

Christ Church (Brondesbury) CE Primary School

School Vision

Christ Church (Brondesbury) CE Primary School is a vibrant, welcoming and inclusive school at the centre of our diverse local community. We are perceived as a “family” by all who know us.

As a Christian school, we encourage everyone to be their best and to grow in God's creation. We provide a supportive, safe, respectful and reflective environment in which all flourish irrespective of their culture and belief.

We provide the highest standard of learning for all of our community and encourage them to pursue aspirational goals.

The school's vision is deeply rooted within the scripture passage:

2 Corinthians 8:7

“But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, and in all eagerness and in the love from us that is in you—make sure that you excel in this act of kindness too.”

Our vision is embedded within the Christian values of:

Compassion, Respect, Friendship, Forgiveness, Perseverance, Wisdom.

Our vision is expressed by all as “**Going for GOLD with faith**”.

This is explained and explored below:

Vision	Demonstrated as
Give learning your best	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Try your best at everything• Follow the “give me five” rules
Own your choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be respectful and polite• Be honest and take responsibility for your words and actions
Love yourself, as God loves you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Love yourself, for you are special• Love your neighbours with all your heart
Dream big, work hard and pray	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aim high• Always be ready to learn• With prayer, everything is possible

This policy reflects and supports our school vision in that through our spirituality at Christ Church we strive to “...encourage everyone to be their best and grow in God's creation.” This is echoed in our Going for GOLD with faith statement in each of the letters.

1. How is this policy a reflection of our theologically rooted Christian vision?

In line with our Vision and Values, at Christ Church (Brondesbury) CE Primary School we believe that:

- Spirituality is finding God in all things;
- Spirituality is a way of living in a relationship with God;
- Spirituality is The search for God in response to God's search for us;
- Spirituality is the nurturing of the inner life of the soul of a child, enabling and embracing their questions, doubts and wonder of existence;
- Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone. Whilst these questions are not dependent on religious affiliation or on the prerogative of religions, religion explains and addresses the fundamental questions which affect everyone;
- Based upon these fundamental questions and answers, spiritual development encourages learners to think about and act upon the choices they make whilst giving thoughts to their ongoing relationships with those around them at school and outside;
- Spiritual learners become increasingly aware of the concept of beyond – a growing relationship with the transcendental and the ability to explore experience beyond the everyday. Spiritual learners search for meaning in their very existence and their place in the greater scheme of things.

2. 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."*¹

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."*²

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 **Christ Church (Brondesbury) C of E Primary School** move forward on that journey during their time here.

3. 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 Christian 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.

¹ 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)

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

- 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.
- 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.

4. 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.*

5. 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.”³

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 church/es 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, **Christ Church (Brondesbury) C of E Primary School** has chosen to use the following shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development ...

Windows, mirrors and doors approach to spirituality. (Taken from Salisbury Diocese Spirituality Policy – Derek Holloway/Andrew Rickett 2012)

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 that bring us up short). In this, children are learning about life in all its fullness.
Mirrors	Giving children 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.
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 they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

Below are some examples of how some Church of England schools have expressed their shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development. These could provide a stimulus for discussion.

We recognise spirituality as the connection between our soul (or inner life) and the delight, meaning and purpose which is found outside or beyond self. It is exciting to develop a healthy spirituality. The Bible and Christian practice root us and enable us. We look outwards to appreciate and cherish the wonder and awe of the world. We learn to look inwards to reflect on our experiences, to build resilience and courage, and explore life's big questions. We look onwards to discover the meaning and creative impact of our lives on those around us. Spirituality is a part of us; a window to look outwards on the world, a mirror to look inwards on our belief and values, and a door to how we can live in response.

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

Spirituality is a unique experience for every person involving stillness, appreciation, reflection and/or prayer. It is a feeling, sense or belief that there is something greater than our physical existence, something more to being human than the things they can see, hear, smell, taste or touch, helping them to consider how it affects the way they live. In our Christian context it means that the divine nature of God affects their lives beyond our daily sensory experiences.

Through our school's vision, '...I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength'. Phil. 4:13, we encourage our pupils to know that they can find God's strength in all things. Our school ethos contributes to this as it is deeply rooted in the Bible, helping to support pupils' understanding of faith and prayer and living within a relationship with God. In our community we respect that everyone is uniquely made in the image of God. Through this respect we encourage our pupils to understand and accept diversity and difference within cultures and each other. This nurtures the inner soul of our pupils, enabling them to embrace questions, doubts and the wonder of existence. We encourage our pupils to grow together in wisdom, compassion, strength and instil a sense of hope. This allows our pupils to spiritually appreciate all that is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in respectful relationship with others, to value and embrace all that the world around them has to offer.

6. 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.**

Approaches

In our school we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to children's spiritual development and to highlight opportunities for these in our planning by:

- Seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy;
- Allowing children the security and opportunity to explore and express feelings and emotions and to celebrate diversity;
- Providing opportunities for prayer including silence and stillness;
- Sharing feelings and experiences that foster hope, joy, reassurance and encouragement;
- Encouraging children to develop relationships based on the school's Christian vision and associated values;
- Enabling children to make the links between the Church and Biblical teachings, the life of the school and the wider community and how these impact on their own understanding of themselves and their place within the world today;
- Providing an environment that promotes space to reflect, think and wonder
- Collecting children's thoughts and prayers using class Wonder Books

7. 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.

8. 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. reflective diary, 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)**

Provision for spiritual development is monitored by *the Headteacher, the Clergy and the RE Leader* through monitoring of the teaching & learning cycle, collection and reflection on pupil voice and through children's responses to themed RE days/weeks.

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

9. 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, staff retreats) can contribute to the spiritual life of adults in our community.

Evaluation/Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by the Headteacher and/or designated senior teacher and ratified every **year** by the Governing Body.