



### Spiritual Development at St Matthew's 2021/22

The Church of England's Vision for Education states a core desire that children will experience **life in all its fullness** (John 10:10). The worth of each student impels us to work to fulfil their God-given potential, whatever the religious or other tradition with which they or their family identify. All pupils at St Matthew's are encouraged to stretch themselves spiritually, morally, intellectually, imaginatively and actively, and to aspire to be well-educated to prepare for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, enabling them to make a positive contribution to society.

We define Spirituality as an ongoing, reflective journey. It is something that teaches us about questioning, understanding and relationships.

*Spirituality is primarily about relationships. It is about understanding the internal relationship with ourselves, and external relationships with one other and from a Christian perspective with God.*" Spiritual Development: Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (Church of England, 2019)

Spirituality enables our children to be happy; flourish and succeed and live life in all its fullness. Children are provided with opportunities to develop the four elements of spirituality during half termly spiritual afternoons and across the curriculum. These elements are:

- Self (Autumn)
- Others (Spring)
- World (Summer)
- Beyond (Summer)

The four elements of spiritual development form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

| Element                | What does this involve?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Self                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express</li><li>▪ Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are</li><li>▪ Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are</li><li>▪ Exploration of personal faith</li><li>▪ Development of imagination and creativity</li></ul>                     |
| Others                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance</li><li>▪ To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)</li><li>▪ Making a difference; duty</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                |
| World                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Developing a sense of awe and wonder</li><li>▪ Enjoying the miracles of everyday life</li><li>▪ Taking time for what really matters</li><li>▪ Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature</li></ul>                                                                                                                 |
| Beyond (Transcendence) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/ physical)</li><li>▪ Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (e.g. about life, death, suffering, nature of God)</li><li>▪ Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God</li><li>▪ Making sense of the world</li></ul> |

Children are encouraged to reflect on their own development using the "Windows, Mirrors and Doors" framework. Opportunities for spiritual development are established through the following task styles:

- Windows - to learn about life
- Mirrors - to learn about ourselves
- Doors - to live out our Christian values in the wider world.

| Element                                              | What is involved?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Windows - Learning about Life                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ We can wonder at the world, technology, art, music, scientific advances all around us. We may work outside, visit places of interest, celebrate inspirational people. We can reflect on injustice and inequality in the world.</li> </ul> |
| Mirrors - Learning from Experiences                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 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.</li> <li>▪ This could be compared with looking in a mirror. Look at yourself in a situation... How would you react, what would you say or do? These are questions which may arise through circle time.</li> </ul>               |
| Doors - Learning to live out our values and beliefs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Giving opportunities to children to respond, to do something to go through the door of a creative expression of their own thoughts and convictions.</li> <li>▪ Children would be living out our Christian values, considering how our own beliefs and faiths drive changes in the wider world.</li> </ul>                                                                                      |

*Spiritual Development: Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (Church of England, 2019)*

Spiritual Development occurs in many ways, both planned and unplanned. We aim to ensure that children:

- Have regular times in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in worship, engaging in reflection activities in spaces around school e.g. The Rainbow Suite or Nature Garden during lunchtimes.
- Will be provided with many opportunities for creativity and imagination.
- Will be provided with purposeful and regular opportunities for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful and allow the children an opportunity to open themselves up to God.
- Will have regular opportunities to explore, express and share feelings.
- Will see positive relationships role modelled around school. The importance of relationships will be reaffirmed to them. This will include clear exploration of how we talk to and relate to each other.
- Have opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms and appreciate connections and unity in the world.
- Will be encouraged to reflect on mistakes and say sorry, where appropriate.
- Will be encouraged to show perseverance, respect and trust and express these in practical ways.
- Have opportunities to explore ‘Big Questions’, particularly through RE learning.

Spiritual development can be encouraged through a range of activities. These will include both planned and unplanned learning opportunities. Children are encouraged to ask questions and explore topics, discussing and responding to issues around them. This is a working document and the activities described below will develop over time.