



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

A place for all to **grow and flourish**



Chudleigh Church of England C.E. V.C. Community Primary School

Last Updated **June 2025**

Next Review date: June 2027



In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do. Our Christian school will provide a safe and nurturing environment in which every child's gifts are celebrated so that they can flourish and achieve. Our school family will reach outwards to our community and the wider world in exploration, love and friendship.

Mark 4:30-32

*The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. The mustard seed is the smallest seed you **plant** in the ground. But when you plant this seed, it **grows** and becomes the largest of all garden plants. It **produces** large branches. Even the wild birds can make nests in it and be protected from the sun."*

Our vision drives and supports the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. We believe that spirituality is the golden thread that runs through our school. We attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community. Spiritual development is supported through collective worship, the curriculum, the school environment and how we interact with ourselves, others, the world and God/divine being through stillness, creativity, curiosity and big questions.

We aim for children, and adults, to grow in their ability to:

- be guided by their 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 themselves, care for themselves, believe in their 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
- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards others

(From David Smith's work on Spiritual Capacities)

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Our working definition of 'spirituality'

As a staff and Governor team, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

'Spirituality is an awareness of my relationship with myself, others, the world and beyond.'

Inspired by Rebecca Nye, we understand spirituality as:

- A capacity for **deep relationships** (with self, others, the world, and possibly with God or a higher power);
- A search for **meaning, purpose, and connection**;
- The experience of **wonder, awe, compassion, and reflection**.

Legal requirements:

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.

To fulfil their legal obligations under section 48 of the 2005 Education Act, SIAMS inspections make judgments on SMSC education in Church of England and Methodist schools.

The SIAMS Framework (2024) references spirituality implicitly and explicitly in two of the inspector questions:

IQ2: How does the curriculum reflect the school's theologically rooted Christian vision?

b) How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?

IQ3: How is daily collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican/Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?

b) How do partnerships with the DBE and/or MAST, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?

c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational, and inspirational?

d) 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?

e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) which requires educating the whole person.

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The OFSTED framework 2024 states that provision for pupil's spiritual 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*

Evidence may be gathered by Ofsted inspectors from anywhere relevant to ensure that schools are promoting SMSC, mental and physical development of pupils at the schools; and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

We support pupils in their spiritual development by:

providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship

providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE

providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum

capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as planned moments and as they arise

providing 'spiritual spaces' in classrooms, outside and by using the church building

offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership :

- through leading collective worship,
- during Picture News leadership training
- being part of the Christian Distinctiveness group
- being worship ambassadors
- Chudleigh Pioneers – a group which allows children to develop their spirituality through art, music, poetry and drama

As a staff team:

We have a staff understanding and shared language of spiritual development.

We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.

We revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings and offer training.

Governors play a crucial role in evaluating the impact of spirituality within our school by engaging in activities such as learning walks, capturing pupil voice, and scrutinising pupils' workbooks. During learning walks, governors observe how spiritual development is embedded in classroom practice, displays, and the overall school environment. By speaking directly with pupils, they gain valuable insights into how children understand and experience spirituality in their daily school life, including through reflection, values education, and collective worship. Additionally, looking through pupils' books allows governors to assess how opportunities for spiritual growth are integrated into the curriculum and whether these are meaningful and reflective. Together, these approaches help governors form a well-rounded understanding of the effectiveness of the school's spiritual provision

We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development.

We use 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors,' approach to support our children in their understanding and thinking in spirituality:

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Windows – Looking out onto the world and others' experiences

We provide experiences that help children encounter the lives, cultures, and beliefs of others, helping them understand difference and develop empathy. Examples include:

- Literature, stories, and assemblies that explore a wide range of human experiences;
- Learning about world religions and ethical traditions;
- Encouraging curiosity about nature, justice, and global issues.

Mirrors – Looking inward to reflect on personal thoughts and feelings

We create regular opportunities for children to reflect on their own inner world. This includes:

- Quiet time, mindfulness, or reflection activities;
- Space for expressing emotions through art, music, and writing;
- Discussions about personal values, hopes, and questions.

Doors – Stepping into new experiences and personal growth

We encourage children to act upon what they've seen and felt — opening the door to transformation. This includes:

- Opportunities to show compassion, kindness, and responsibility;
- Encouraging moral courage and ethical decision-making;
- Supporting children as they ask and explore 'big questions'.

We have a variety of Spirituality Spaces: [click here](#)

- We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett / Rebecca Nye).
- We recognise that children will have different 'Spiritual Temperaments' or 'Sacred Pathways', through the work of Gary Thomas (2010) and Myra Perrine (2007). This will influence our planning as we look to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship. As a staff team, we identify opportunities for spiritual development across the curriculum.
- We have identified opportunities for spiritual development and deeper thinking across the curriculum, for all age groups.
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.
- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context and personal worldview.
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, displays and our website.
- We discuss spirituality with our church and the Diocesan Education Team and others who can further support this golden thread.

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community, supporting the development of the whole child beyond the physical and the academic.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior leaders, governors and children will support each other to share their experiences and opportunities for spiritual development through discussions, focused days, scrap books and Spiritual Spaces. This will impact on the opportunities and experiences that are available to children and adults across the school community enabling all to flourish.

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Other related policies:

Collective Worship

Teaching and Learning

Relationships and Behaviour

SMSC

All subject specific curriculum policies

Referenced reading:

Church of England Education Office (CEEO) Spiritual Development – Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (2019)

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