

St John's CE Primary

Spirituality policy



“Use your God-given gifts to serve others” 1 Peter 4:10

Ratified by governors: July 2025

Mr D Ricketts (Chair of Governors)

Policy to be reviewed: Summer 2028

All different, all equal, all growing together.

Our vision

All different, all equal, all growing together

St John's is a Church of England primary school where every person that walks through the entrance to the school is welcomed, valued and loved. Each person is different; they come with different life experiences, different opinions, different talents and different expectations but in our eyes each one is equally valued and deserves to be given the opportunity to grow academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. The school is committed to serving these needs to enable each person to thrive.

What does spirituality and spiritual development mean at St John's?

We believe that as a church school that we hold a responsibility to create a space for our children, staff and parents to value, nurture and grow the spiritual dimension in their lives. Spirituality is a powerful force which takes us on personal journey of self-discovery and understanding. It shapes who we are, influences our decisions, sets our inner values and determines how we behave and respond to every relationship that we build and every adventure and experience that life gives us.

Spiritual development is when we grow in our understanding of ourselves; we begin to recognise our purpose in life, we develop our values and beliefs, we foster a sense of awe and wonder but also a deeper understanding of what moves us to feel connected to something which may be greater than us.

We want our children and staff to be able to:

- recognise what spirituality is and how it can be expressed
- have a common language when sharing and reflecting on experiences.
- experience a curriculum and enrichment opportunities which allow for spiritual growth
- understand that spirituality flows through all strands of school life and beyond

Spirituality for everyone

The school has a distinct Christian ethos and as such, taking time to develop spirituality means also taking time to develop a relationship with God.

Many of our children hold a deep faith that is not rooted in Christianity and some of our children have no faith. Our motto 'all different, all equal, all growing together' encapsulates the idea that spirituality is for everyone. Spirituality is a way of developing a 'relational consciousness which can refer to self, others, the work and the Other/God.

It is a way to encourage our children to:

- have a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning
- be absorbed in the present moment
- not be too attached to self – show an interest and respect for different people’s feelings and values
- use their imagination and creativity in learning
- be eager to explore boundaries of what lies beyond
- search for meaning
- discover purpose
- be willing to reflect on their experiences

How we will develop spirituality at St John’s

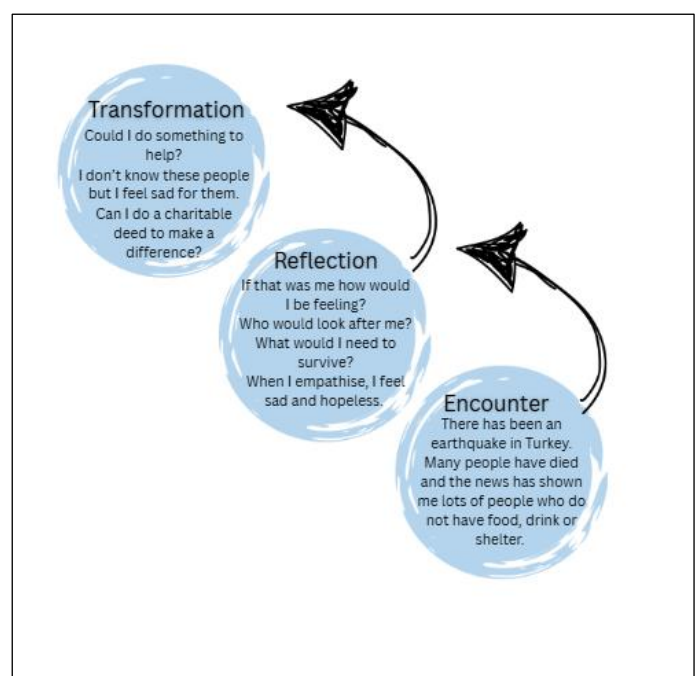
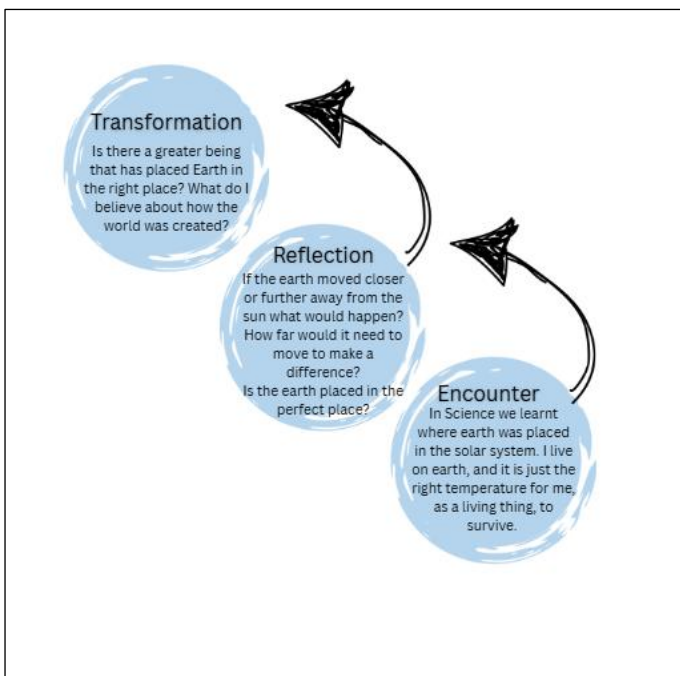
Spirituality is not taught, but is an inherent interwoven part of all aspects of school life and is nurtured and promoted as a natural element of the curriculum. We will encourage children’s spiritual development through the ideas of encounter, reflection and transformation.

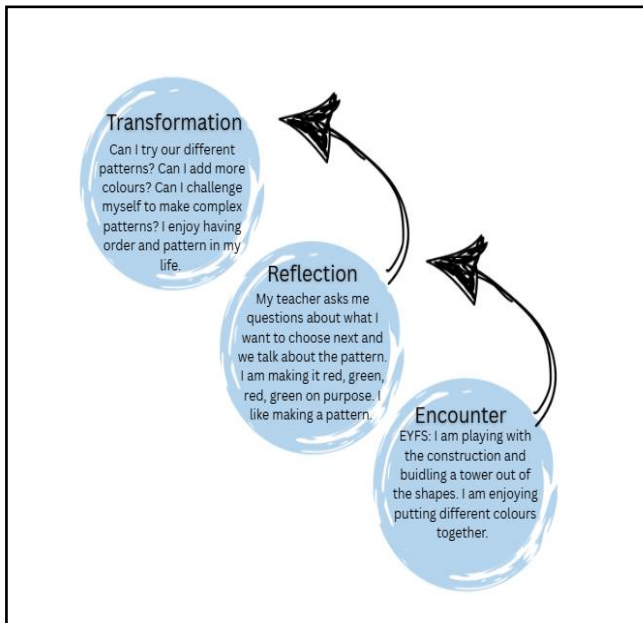
Encounter: learning about life: providing for spiritual development through an exploration of identity and personal values

Reflection: learning from life: understand an inner meaning of self and identity – critical reasoning and big questions

Transformation: learning to love life: responding as a means of expressing an idea of self: developing a personal set of beliefs.

Here are examples to show what this concept may look like in practice:





Opportunities for spiritual development may naturally arise, but are also woven into the curriculum and to wider aspects of the school day.

This may be seen in:

Our values-led curriculum which gives a wide range of opportunities for children to question, consider, reflect and respond, and consider their own values, beliefs and feelings and those of others. It allows children to be creative thinkers, use their imaginations, be inquisitive and to explore and develop what motivates themselves and others.

Our teaching approach which enables children to make connections between aspects of their learning. Teachers encourage children to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference, e.g. asking 'why?', 'how?', and 'where?' as well as 'what?'. We prioritise children working collaboratively with peers to express ideas and opinions taking time to valuing the contribution made by others even if others do not agree.

Our collective worships which allow children to experience silent, calm and tranquil moments which afford time for reflection. There is opportunity to foster an understanding of how values can impact on our lives and what they look like in everyday life. There is also the space to reflect and respond to issues in moments of quiet or inspired through music, drama, art, words or film. It is also a time to share feelings whether they be celebration, excitement, fear, anticipation, happiness, worry or sadness.

Our behaviour curriculum which encourages children to exchange views through restorative conversations, to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they impact on people and how an understanding of them can be helpful.

Staff are encouraged to plan for moments where children can encounter, reflect and transform or to acknowledge when an opportunity may spontaneously present itself. To support staff, here are some of the key ways in which spiritual development is nurtured and promoted as part of St John's curriculum:

<p>English - reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy with authors and the characters, reflecting on similarities and differences • The appreciation the author's use of words – how words can inspire • Emotions and sentiments - finding something which resonates, emotional depth • Imagining oneself as someone else • Escaping into other worlds through literature • How might a book change you? Self-awareness and personal growth 	<p>English - writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-expression of thoughts • Diaries and journals – process and reflect on personal journey • Poetry as a form of spiritual expression • Connecting with own writing – the power of words • Writing which connects with others e.g letters, postcards • Sharing passion and opinions
<p>In Maths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infinity and nothing – the scale and magnitude of number • Pattern and order • Symmetry • Shape and regularity • Truth, certainty and likelihood • The history of maths, the evolution of it • The concept of time 	<p>In Science:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awe and wonder at the world • Gratitude and reverence for nature • Questions of beginning, creation and evolution • Discovering the limits of experimentation • Birth, life, death and renewal • The universe and beyond • Regularity and order in science • The impact of scientific achievements
<p>In Computing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wonder of worldwide instant communication • The speed of the growth of knowledge • The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide 	<p>Design and Technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovering how something works • Appreciating genius • Beauty in design • Perseverance to solve problems • Personal achievement • Learning from others and nature
<p>Geography:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wonder at the diversity of environments and people • Questions about the care of the environment • The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns • World (economic) development • Land formation • Empathy with people from other parts of the world • 	<p>History:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being in touch with past people, things and ideas • Being part of history • Handling artefacts • Influential events and people • The commitment of significant people in history • War and peace. • Interpretation in history • The nature and importance of invention and exploration • Empathy with people from other times in history
<p>Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama and Dance):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of creative artists from a variety of times and places • Artistic creativity • The effects of the arts on emotions and senses • The arts as means of expressing mood • Skill in creation and performance, and particularly in personal reflection upon their own creativity using various art forms • Effects on the emotions and senses • Personal response and preference • Mood • Skill • Pattern 	<p>R.E.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People, places, things, books, actions and ideas held by religious believers to be holy • Ultimate questions of meaning and purpose • Ideas of the divine/questions of God • Forms of worship • Use of music, art and drama to express beliefs • Varieties of beliefs, celebrations and rituals • Ideas of commitment and belonging to groups and institutions • The idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers.
<p>Physical Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a team member • Pushing yourself to the limits • Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement • Emotion in sport • Personal limitation and failure • Appreciation of perfection 	<p>Enrichment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To visit places of beauty, interest and challenge • To admire and wonder at the natural environment and human creative efforts • To work out personal relationships in unusual and challenging situations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sportsmanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To experience community cohesion links at a local, national and global level • To engage in charity based activities • To participate in a wide range of events and activities, involving a range of outside agencies, coaches, etc.
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Assessment

Spirituality will be assessed through how children respond in conversation, the questions they ask of others, the way they live their lives and how they involve themselves in the life of the school community. They will ask the big questions and show critical reasoning (reflection) and make changes to their life/ be surer of their opinions and beliefs (transformation).

Evidence for this will be seen through:

- Learning journals and RE books (in particular through the thinking frames and the reflective lens questions)
- Pupil voice interviews
- Responses on the 'White board of wisdom' following Collective Worship
- Behaviour around school and how children interact with others
- Feedback from community events/ trips/ visitors or special events

Review

This policy statement was revised following the new SIAMS framework (2023), and the 2019 Guidance from the Church of England 'Spiritual Development: Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom.' It was discussed at the curriculum committee and adopted by the Full Governing Body in the Summer Term 2025. The effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed at Curriculum Committee in Summer 2028.