



St Oswald's CE Primary School, York



Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future

Let us encourage one another – Hebrews 10.25

SPIRITUALITY STATEMENT

Last Reviewed	October 2024
Next Review date	October 2027
Frequency of review	Every 3 years

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1. Rationale

At St Oswald's CE Primary School, we aim to promote the spiritual development of all of our community, including pupils, staff and more.

Spirituality is a core component to 'living life in all its fullness' as the mind, body and soul needs to be nurtured equally. It relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone and is not dependent on a religious belief. It is also based on the search for ways to answer questions about life and a search for identity.

Spirituality at our school is expressed through a statement rather than a formal policy. We recognise that spirituality is deeply personal, reflective and evolving, and therefore cannot be confined to a set of procedures or rules. Instead, our statement captures our shared values and intentions, providing guidance while allowing space for individual experience, curiosity and growth. This approach reflects our belief that spirituality flourishes through lived experiences, meaningful moments and thoughtful reflection rather than compliance or prescription.

2. Theologically Rooted Vision

'Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future'

Let us encourage one another – Hebrews 10:25

Our theologically rooted vision is the foundations of our school and the policies and practices embodies all that our vision promotes. Spirituality is a core thread that runs through our school and we attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community.

3. Definition of Spirituality

As a staff team, with approval from the governing body, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

At St Oswald's, our definition of spirituality is:

Spirituality is the nourishing of the soul. It is the opportunity to stop, think, reflect and grow into the type of person that you want to be now and in the future.

Spirituality is a very personal experience and is about the opening of hearts and minds. This can be through becoming aware of the awe and wonder within the world, through reflection and learning from ourselves and learning about how we can move forward and make choices to become the best versions of ourselves. It differs from person to person and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith or any religion.

Further research explains:

Spiritual development is the development of an awareness that there is “something more to life than meets the eye, something more than the material, something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to.”

(Terence Copley)

Spirituality is about our relationship with ourselves, our family, friends, those around us, to God and to all of creation’

(Prof Ursula King)

4. Legal Requirements

Section 78 of the Education Act (2002) states:

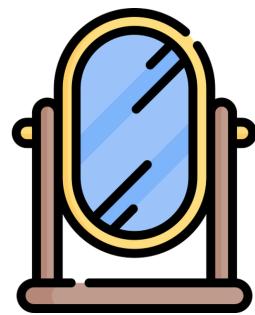
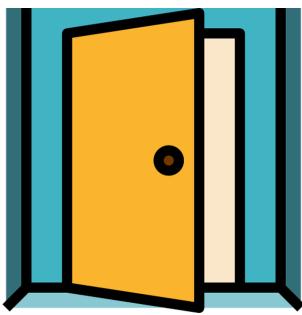
The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- (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.

The SIAMS Schedule (amended September 2021) references spirituality in both the RE and Collective Worship strands but the main focus is part of strand two on Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills. 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

5. Pupil Understanding of Spirituality

As a school, we recognise that a consistent approach to spirituality is the best way to ensure our school communities flourish and develop spirituality throughout their time at St Oswald’s. To support this, we use a simple format with images that encourages children to stop, think, reflect and grow. This is represented by **‘Windows, Mirrors and Doors’**.

		
Windows are looking out onto the world and becoming aware of its wonders. The whole curriculum and life itself are full of opportunities to recognise this sensitively.	Mirrors are for looking into and reflecting, alone and together, to see things more clearly, for thinking and asking important questions, learning from our own and each others’ responses.	Doors are for looking through in order to then act or express this in some way in response; for moving on, making choices and something creative, active and purposeful in response.

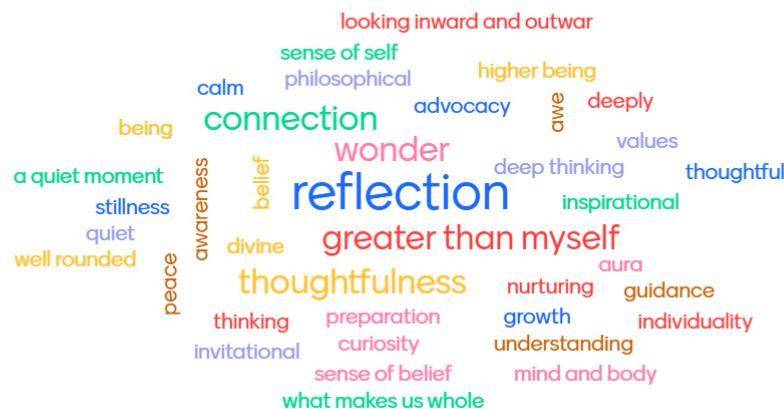
We support children in their spiritual development by:

- Providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- Providing opportunities for spiritual development in Religious Education
- Providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- Capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as they arise
- Providing 'Reflection Spaces' in classrooms, public spaces, outside and more
- Offering pupils opportunities to lead spiritual development moments through the School Worship Team

6. Staff Understanding of Spirituality

Staff Definition of Spirituality

46 responses



The staff team at St Oswald's recognise the importance of taking time to reflect, grow and develop in relation to spirituality. As shared in section 3, we have a shared definition of spirituality that was developed through staff training, input and ideas, as seen in the word cloud above. The staff live out our understanding of spirituality through our school and our theologically rooted vision.

As a school, there is a culture that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff. Spirituality is revisited as an area of consideration within staff meetings and training is offered to those who want to further develop their strength in understanding spiritual development.

7. Governor Understanding of Spirituality

Governor Definition of Spirituality

22 responses



Alongside input from the rest of the school community, the governing body also shared their views and understanding of spirituality, supporting the shared definition of spirituality explained in section 3 of this statement.

The Governing Body embodies the school vision and promotes spiritual development within the school community. They place spirituality and growth high on their agenda and support the school in ensuring spirituality is embedded through school. During Church School working parties, the governors support the development of spirituality in school and often observe moments of reflection within sections of the school day.

8. Related Policies

- Collective Worship
- RHE Policy
- Religious Education Policy
- Behaviour Policy

9. Referenced Reading

- The Church of England Diocese of Norwich (2022) *Spirituality In Schools*. Available at: <https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Spirituality-guidance-for-school-Jan-22.pdf> (Accessed: 08/10/2024)
- The Church of England Education Office (2019) *Spiritual Development: Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom*, Church of England Education Office