



Spirituality at St James

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Learning together with courage
and kindness
'For the good of all' 1 Corinthians 12



Spirituality at St James CE Primary School

St James' definition: **We see spirituality as taking time to think, question and enjoy all that life has to offer beyond the everyday.**

We see spirituality as a vital part of being human. For some spirituality comes very naturally while for others it is something that must be learnt and practised. It benefits everyone to make time in the day to be spiritual, particularly in such a busy World.

Our vision 'For the good of all' from 1 Corinthians 12 comes from the idea of everyone having differences but if we support each other and come together everyone is better off. Developing spirituality is an important part of this vision, so that everyone has a sense of themselves and an understanding of others.

Developing spirituality at St James CE Primary School

- **Collective Worship:** allows for spirituality through singing, stories, prayer and moments of contemplation and reflection. Staff have been trained in the 'Space Maker' practices and these are used throughout the school at appropriate times, including in a weekly Class Collective Worship. As a school we have services in church at several points in the year to allow everyone to come together and experience a spiritual space. With this in mind Collective Worship also takes place outside to experience the beauty of nature.

- **In the classroom:** We use Discovery RE, which we have chosen as our scheme as it is an enquiry based approach that allows for spirituality and self-reflection. Children gain knowledge of a range of religions while considering their own beliefs. Our curriculum has been designed to promote spirituality with the drivers of: curiosity, empathy and adventure. Our pedagogical approach also allows for spiritual development with an emphasis on questioning, thinking and oracy. Our PSHE curriculum, Jigsaw PSHE, reminds us all to be mindful, to pause, and to notice and experience the spiritual in the midst of the activity and busyness of a normal school day – and to recognise the importance, significance and impact of spirituality in our lives. Spontaneous moments of spirituality are encouraged, particularly in subjects such as music, art, geography & science.

- **Around the school:** Our ethos and culture aims to develop the whole child, with spirituality an essential part of this. Our outside space is very special at St James and is used as often as possible. Lunchtime play allows for different ways to develop spirituality from adventure and discovery on the field, to reflection time in our peace garden and creativity in our Cabin. Children know the importance of being kind even to those who we might find challenging. Courageous advocacy is celebrated.

- **Out in the World:** Enrichment including a progression of residential visits aims to encourage and develop independence

Appendices

Please refer to the appendices below to further explore the ideas and concepts relating to spirituality which have helped to inform this policy:

Appendix A – Defining Spirituality

Spirituality can be defined through a series of statements or descriptions:

- Spirituality is our attempt to find meaning and purpose to life.
- Spirituality is seeking to find, meet or experience something that is beyond us and our own physical senses and experiences.
- Spirituality includes our perception of the eternal and the divine.
- Spirituality is an essential part of being human. We all have a need for spirituality that appears to be an innate characteristic of every human civilisation throughout history. (If we ignore the existence of this aspect of who we are, we are denying our children, families and staff, the opportunity to grow spiritually during their time with us, and to integrate all the other elements of their experience of school with this vital part of what makes us human.)

Spirituality includes the biggest questions we might ask:

- Is there a God?
- What happens when I die?
- What is the purpose of life?
- In light of these questions and their answers, how then do I live my life and treat other people?
- Is there such a thing as absolute truth?
- Where does morality come from, and how do I tell right from wrong?
- What do other people believe about God, existence and eternity?
- If there is a God, does God know me and see me?
- What is prayer? & Do prayers ever get answered?
- Why is there suffering and evil in the world?
- Is there any point in being good?
- What is worship, is it important, how do I do it, and why might I want to?

Spirituality is relational and is not only formed by our relationships, families and traditions – thereby creating a sense of identity, meaning and belonging – but also relationship forming in the way we see, meet and connect with other people.

Appendix B – A selection of models of spirituality

David Smiths' 'Four windows into spiritual development' (1999):

- **Spiritual Capacities:** recognition that all human beings are capable of spiritual growth through capacities such as self-awareness, reflection, empathy, imagination and creativity
- **Spiritual Experiences:** ways in which pupils can encounter the spiritual dimension of life
- **Spiritual Understanding:** the need to have developed an understanding to make sense of the spiritual experiences encountered and capacities exercised
- **Spiritual responses:** how this experience and understanding impacts on our lives and shapes the way in which we live our lives.

Liz Mills' 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors and Traffic Lights' model of spirituality (1997):

- **Windows** are for looking out onto the world and becoming aware of its wonders, both the 'wows' and 'ows'; things that are 'awe-full' and make us wonder and be grateful and things that are 'awful' and make us wonder and ask questions. 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 other's 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 doing something creative, active and purposeful in response.
- **Traffic lights** allow us time to stop and look, to wait and think and then to move on.

Andrew Rickett's – Framework for Spirituality

The work of Andrew Rickett, describes four aspects of spirituality: Self, Beauty, Others and Beyond. These are connected through the loving relationships that we develop with ourselves, others, beauty and the beyond, which leads to us being fully human.

Self

Spiritual learners become increasingly aware of the concept of self – the inner person and the way that this shapes an individual's perception of themselves as a unique human being.

Spiritual learners reflect on the relationship that they have with their sense of being a unique person.

Others

Spiritual learners become increasingly aware of the concept of others – a growing empathy, concern and compassion for how to treat others.

Spiritual learners reflect on how their values and principles affect their relationships with others.

Beyond

Spiritual learners become increasingly aware of the concept of the beyond – a growing relationship with the transcendental and the ability to explore experiences beyond the everyday.

Spiritual learners search for meaning in their very existence and their place in the greater scheme of things.

Beauty

Spiritual learners become increasingly aware of the concept of a physical and creative world – a growing relationship with beauty through the ability to respond emotionally to experiences of the wonder of the natural world and the results of human creativity.

Spiritual learners explore their understanding of beauty and the affect this has on their perception of and relationship with the world.