



ASHTON KEYNES
Church of England VC Primary School



SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS

“Enabling life in all its fullness”

“I came that you may have life, life in all its fullness” (John10:10)

Our **Core Christian values** for our school are: *Perseverance, Creativity, Trust and Friendship.*

Ashton Keynes

Spirituality policy

Review Date: September 2026

School statement on Spirituality

Spirituality is an important element of a child's education and fundamental to other areas of learning. It is not just the development of the tangible but also the intangible, the tingling moments that help to shape our ideas, values and belief in ourselves and others.

At Ashton Keynes Primary C of E spirituality is considered an important part of our school community and curriculum. The potential for spirituality and spiritual development is open to everyone and is NOT confined to the development of religious beliefs or conversion to a particular faith. The term applies to something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and / or expressed through everyday language.

Spirituality enables us to look within ourselves, at human relationships, at the wider world and for many people a vision of the divine or the ultimate reality with characteristics of courage, hope, acceptance, strength and love so that we can better face the sufferings, challenges and opportunities of human life in all its fullness.

How are we describing Spirituality

This language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that every single person is a valued creation, individually and uniquely made by God, like pots made by a potter (Isaiah 64:8). Yet, in life things happen that impact on the physical 'pot' of life and create cracks that provide a glimpse of something 'beyond' the tangible.

Cracks can appear when something so good and breath-taking happens that the pot expands and cracks – we can call these the wows of life.

Cracks may happen when something challenging happens and threatens the comfort of everyday – these can be referred to as the ows of life.

Cracks can also occur in the stillness and ordinariness of everyday – these can be called the nows of life, when a moment of stillness, a pause or prayer creates a crack in the normal, physical every day. In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity.

Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the wows, ows and nows of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with gold and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality.

To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something which often cannot be easily expressed in words. To make conversations about spirituality more accessible to every member of our school community we are using the language and the concepts of wows, ows and nows to describe Spirituality. These are used to explore relationships with:

- Ourselves

Wows

The Wows

These are the awe and wonder moments. The times when you want to breathe in and capture the feeling, holding onto it as long as you can.

Ows

The Ows

These are the things that can go wrong. They can knock the breath out of you.

Nows

The Nows

These are the everyday ordinary times: being able to be present in the moment, thinking of what we have now and how lucky we are to be here, now.

- others
- the wider natural world and beyond
- offering the invitation to relate to God

Aims

Everyone at our school has the chance to shine and be recognised and celebrated for what they do both in and outside classroom. As unique individuals, everybody brings and shares our own talents and skills. All are valued and all are supported. We all strive to be the best version of ourselves and to embrace the challenge in every aspect of our learning.

Our vision is underpinned by our core Christian values and embodied in John 10:10, “That they shall have life, life in all its fullness.” We believe that all children, no matter their circumstances, have a right and deserve to experience all that life offers.

Our shine curriculum enables children to develop their full holistic self through the distinctive seven-year journey in our school. Life in all its fullness means giving the children access to new experiences, challenging them to reach their full potential and support their emotional well-being.

Each child is created in the image of God (Genesis 1) and is uniquely made and loved by God (John 3:16). Each person is part of God’s purposes and God has plans for them. Our school values each and every child, for who they are in God’s eyes; a child of God. Each child is “fearfully and wonderfully made”. (Psalm 139)

Spirituality at Ashton Keynes C of E Primary School stems from our thriving community where everyone is recognised and valued for their worth.

Organisation

The spiritual growth of pupils is not only dependent on learning in RE, opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners are developed in every aspect of our school life.

The whole school community is supported in sharing this responsibility and in developing the shared language of spirituality. Opportunities are available for all to develop spiritually in our supportive and nurturing school inspired by our vision and lived out through our Christian values.

Each school year starts with a Spiritual metaphor for example looking at water, our wonderful world or refugees. All classes spend two weeks using a key text and with Biblical links looking at that metaphor. It is carried out at the beginning of the year with the intention that everybody uses it to explore their future potential, to think about how to build up their class and friends as well as reflecting on the natural world and the lives of others. Biblical stories and quotes are an essential part of the metaphor grounding it the Christian faith.



This metaphor will be touched upon throughout the school year for example the Water Warriors day raising money for Water Aid or FairTrade fortnight linking to how we can make our world better for all.

Each classroom has a designated Spiritual Reflection area where the children are encouraged to use these to reflect on the world around them. We have a dedicated prayer areas both inside and outside that adults and children can use during the school day.



Through our commitment to Global advocacy, which runs as a golden thread through our centre of curriculum, children learn about world issues that affect them and others around the world. It allows them to view the world differently thinking about the lives of others and their own role in finding solutions to global issues.

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is at the heart of our school. It provides golden moments for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, Wows, Ows and Nows, is regularly and explicitly shared.

Collective Worship provides the opportunity for all pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how the positive and negative experiences we experience can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present (now moments) which are often linked to invitations to join in with reflection and prayer.

In daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place to be still and experience a spiritual moment. They are offered an understanding of worship by being invited to participate in, or observe, Christian spiritual practices such as: prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible or Biblical stories and liturgy. As well as this as they are being introduced to different musical traditions which can inspire feelings of awe, sadness and wonder.

Opportunities to reflect on the wows of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise with the ow moments of disappointment or pain. Pupils are given time to consider their own responsibilities to themselves, those around them and further away and to grow in love and service to one another. In this way pupils are given the space to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. Collective Worship in Ashton Keynes C of E Primary School is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

Our strong links with Holy Cross Church contributes greatly to our understanding of spirituality.

Spirituality in Religious Education

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality.

Learning activities in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of different worldviews and religious backgrounds, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality and the language of wows, ows and nows where appropriate.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

Our Christian Vision is the driver for our curriculum design.

For further links to curriculum areas please see the appendix.

Educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills

- To equip the children with the skills to learn academically, vocationally, socially and spiritually and to take responsibility for their learning and actions

What will this look like: Children problem solving, being inquisitive, curious and persevering when things get difficult.

- To provide a stimulating, high quality curriculum which is fully inclusive and enables achievement and enjoyment for all

What will this look like: Children actively engaged, questioning, building friendships with a 'can do' attitude. Children making the most of a wealth of opportunities. Children are prepared to take on new and different challenges learning increasing their abilities and achievements.

Educating for hope and aspiration

- To provide a safe, happy and healthy environment in which children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle with dreams and aspirations for their future

What will this look like: Children who are able to make decisions that positively affect their lives. Children who are able to explain their choices and the positive impact their choices will make.

Educating for community and living well together

- To create a welcoming school community, in which all families are encouraged to play an active role in their child's education

What will this look like: A school community that has respectful, welcoming relationships between pupils, their families and staff. Where the views of parents are sought, feedback is valued and all decisions have children at the heart.

- To encourage all pupils to make a valuable contribution to the school, local and wider communities

What will this look like: Children who are enthusiastic, committed to supporting one another in a variety of ways. Children who are full of ideas about how they can contribute to both the school and the wider community with the confidence to act. Children taking roles in school leadership for example School Council, Worship Council and leading clubs.

Educating for dignity and respect

- To develop respect and consideration for the beliefs, differences and ways of life of everyone involved in the school

What will this look like: Children who have respectful positive relationships with one another treating each other fairly, with compassion and understanding and the ability to enjoy spending time together.

- To enable children to explore and discuss faith and worship, working from a Christian foundation, in the context of a multi-faith society

What will this look like: Children who enjoy finding out about the similarities and differences between their worldviews and the worldviews.

Keys for contributing to spiritual development.

Spiritual Growth needs to be nurtured in children and at Ashton Keynes C of E Primary School our vision is to enable the children to grow into curious, responsible and confident learners enabling them to have life in all its fullness and to reach for the stars. We believe that we enable our children to do this through the carefully planned curriculum and the positive relationships that exist in school. Drawing on the language of wows, ows and nows, conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from Reception to Year 6.

To encourage Spiritual Development, all staff need to demonstrate the following as part of their practice:

- Start from the child's own experience and from what they know or think they know
- Display a positive, encouraging, accepting attitude
- Take what children say seriously and value each individual contribution
- Try to involve everyone
- Encourage children to draw out their own meaning from story, buildings, symbols, paintings, artefacts
- Be clear about intended learning outcomes but allow space for spontaneity
- Listen and show understanding
- Be open and honest
- Encourage and value children's questions
- Respect a child's right not to make a comment
- Encourage children to develop and use all their senses
- Provide children with alternative activities and ways of expression
- Encourage children to value reflective activities and times of silence
- View each child as a person with a special gift to give
- Help children to discover and develop that gift

The key to contributing to children's Spiritual Development is to find activities which encourage them to :

- FEEL the impact of a particular spiritual issue
- REFLECT on the significance of what they are learning
- RECOGNISE any challenges that there may be to their own attitudes and life
- MAKE JUDGEMENTS on the value of the beliefs and attitudes they are encountering
- APPLY new insights in the way they live their own lives

To have a better understanding of how Spirituality skills progress over a child's seven year journey through our school please look at the Spirituality skills progression document.

ENGLISH SPEAKING and LISTENING

- Being allowed to contribute
- Engage in different types of talk for different purposes and audiences
- Be exposed to the ideas of other people
- Experience a democratic classroom where opinions and values of children are valued and rules for the classroom are negotiated
- Gain self – confidence by using the voice in a variety of ways and situations
- Value accent and dialect and have exposure to cultural diversity
- Hear and value other languages
- Hear stories and poetry from a variety of cultures and traditions
- Listen to storytellers and poets

ENGLISHREADING

- Experience the enjoyment of personal reading
- Share beliefs and ideas about a text in discussion
- Read books that explore relationships and identify purpose in life
- Respond to a current situation (death, tragedy, significant events) through chosen texts and story
- Explore through literature and illustrations a range of cultural and social models of life-styles

ENGLISHWRITING

- Have sufficient time for extended, thoughtful writing, including poetry
- Develop vocabulary to enable them to express their innermost feelings and ideas
- Communicate in a variety of ways through the written word
- Engage in collaborative writing to bring greater awareness of their own and others' ideas and skills
- Explore difficult / imaginative subject matters that will stretch and challenge
- Be exposed to a range of stimuli in order to generate creativity in their use of language

MATHEMATICS

- Appreciate the intrinsic beauty of pattern, symmetry, etc.
- Develop self – esteem by taking responsibility for their own learning, discuss and communicate, seek help with misunderstandings
- Work on open – ended tasks which produce a variety of responses and work on real problems that can encourage a consideration of moral aspects of our society – e.g. how much waste paper does the school generate, how do we look after our school environment,
- Experience problem – solving approaches and co-operation, working in groups and meeting situations where there is more than one answer
- Allow understanding to be shared through discussion
- Discuss how mathematics helps us to understand the world around us and within our own lives

SCIENCE

- Experience a sense of wonder and curiosity
- Learn how to care for living things and the environment, practically wherever possible
- Address cultural issues – e.g. destruction of rainforests
- Develop an awareness of the changes of life, the miracle of change – e.g. seasons, growth of plants
- Work co-operatively
- Experience the awesome, the unexpected, the mysterious and the excitement of scientific discovery

ART

- Respond to an idea, a poem, the natural world to express personal feelings and emotions
- Use works of art to explore issues of right and wrong – e.g. war and peace
- Respond to the work of renowned artists, using a variety of media and materials
- Meet the work of artists from different cultural backgrounds
- Meet artists and work with them
- Visit galleries and exhibitions
- Make posters / banners to raise awareness of issues
- Talk about their work and hear other ideas and perceptions about a range of art

MUSIC

- Develop self – esteem and self – worth through personal expression and involvement in social activities
- Experience music directly, practically and creatively through listening, performing, comparing
- Develop a sense of purpose by performing with a group, a sense of responsibility towards fellow performers
- Explore how music can be used to manipulate the emotions in e.g. advertising
- Gain an insight into thoughts and feelings and how to express them
- Empathise with people from all over the world through exploring different musical traditions
- Experience a shared community response to live performance and recorded music
- Experience music through visiting performers and from a variety of world musicians and instruments

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Reflect and experience stillness and silence
- Enquire and ask questions rather than being given only facts
- Experience the uniqueness of special places
- Develop awareness of their feelings and emotions
- Handle religious artefacts with sensitivity and respect
- Help children to understand the concept of forgiveness and the chance for a fresh start
- Teach children to respect other peoples' beliefs and practices

HISTORY

- Explore the concept of “Who am I?” through family and local history
- Know about the history of the local area and how its citizens came to be here
- Explore the meaning, purpose, motivations and feelings of people in the past through role – play, films, visits and discussion
- Experience a variety of imaginative and creative teaching styles and activities which lead to a heightened interest and understanding of the past
- Begin to understand how British culture has been shaped by the classical and Christian heritages and also by pluralism and diversity of British society

GEOGRAPHY

- Experience awe and fascination through visual, active experiences as well as films and documentaries – e.g. volcanoes
- Explore the natural world to consider how people live, connect to their environment and to each other
- Develop empathy and positive attitudes and values towards other people through meeting visitors from other parts of the world, learning through visual aids – e.g. pictures, photographs, videos
- Engage in fieldwork to obtain information from primary resources, develop understanding and ideas of stewardship, responsibility and care for the environment, and develop the ability to work with others, learning skills of negotiation and respecting points of view other than their own
- Challenge stereotypes and promote an understanding that peoples all over the world have common needs and have to meet similar challenges
- Have the chance to understand how societies work on a variety of scales from local to global and begin to understand about the empowerment and exclusion of people
- Handle and use artefacts from a variety of cultures in role-play, food activities, dressing-up etc.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Gain a sense of personal achievement at their own level and a chance to share in the success of others
- Join in activities and exercises which develop trust – paired and group activities
- Recognise their own exhilaration and delight in physical activities
- Reflect and respond after a session about feelings and reactions – what went well or badly