



## Spiritual Development Policy

### Living our Vision

The **FACE** of St Mark's: **F**orgive, **A**spire, **C**ompassion, **E**ngage

*We, at Mark's C of E Junior School, are a community of learners. We show **aspiration** in every aspect of our learning: aiming high to achieve the very best we can and actively encouraging others to do the same. Learning more about ourselves, others and our world is seen as a joy and a huge privilege.*

*Through our learning, we deepen our relationships with one another, showing our Christian Values, and specifically **compassion** and **forgiveness**, in all that we do.*

*We **engage** in our learning as we embrace challenges, learn from and with each other and celebrate the success of others which leads to the mutual flourishing of all.*

### Introduction

At St Mark's C of E Junior School we believe that spirituality is a fundamental part of being human. The word spirit has a range of meanings including spirit, soul, breath, wind and that which gives life and animation to something. The idea that our spirituality gives life to who we are, as individuals, and as a community, is central to our understanding of it.

### Our Understanding of Spirituality

Our Understanding of Spirituality is that of 'Something More'.

Spirituality is the recognition of 'Something More', than the physical world which we experience with our senses. It is being aware of our inner selves, our relationships with each other, the world and all creation, and, for believers, with God. Spirituality is to do with the search for individual identity, with our ability to reflect on and respond to both wonderful and challenging experiences. Spirituality relates to the fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone.

### Recognising and Celebrating Spiritual Development

*through Spiritual Capacities, Spiritual Context and Spiritual Experiences*

### Spiritual Capacities

We actively make time in the life of our school to nurture and encourage spiritual capacities in both children and adults. By identifying these capacities, we believe that it is possible to plan for and recognise growth in both individuals and in the life of our community over time. This enables us to judge whether we are fulfilling our aims.

**Red type notes where the spiritual capacity is taught as part of our Heart Smart Programme, an important and highly valued part of our curriculum.**



**Spiritual Capacities** - The growing ability to:

1. Be self-aware, empathise with the experience of others and begin to appreciate the interconnectedness of all life. Don't Forget to Let the Love in. Self-worth. Learn how to love and value yourself well. Too Much Selfie isn't Healthy- Empathy, Exploring the importance of others and how to love them well.
2. Be guided by our own beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them. Don't Forget to Let the Love in. Self-worth. Learn how to love and value yourself well. RE
3. Find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges. 'No Way Through' isn't True! Grit. Learn how to develop and maintain a growth mindset.
4. Exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder. Outdoor Learning. RE. School visits.
5. Be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent. RE. Worship. Prayer Space, Spiritual Garden, Nature
6. Be comfortable with stillness and silence and able to engage in mindful reflection. Heart Smart audio reflections, Worship, Prayer Space, Class Reflection time, HeadSpace, Wellbeing Journals
7. Ask for forgiveness when mistakes are made and freely forgive others when they are sorry. Don't rub it in, Rub it out! Forgiveness. Learn how to process negative emotions, disappointment and hurt. Fake is a Mistake! Identity. Learn how to be authentically you and how to communicate well. Focus value of Forgiveness. Behaviour & Character Development approach Prayer Space
8. Be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure, as well as success. . 'No Way Through' isn't True! Grit. Learn how to develop and maintain a growth mindset. Focus value of Perseverance & Courage. Worship . Class Reflection Time
9. Demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions. RE, worship, science, Worship
10. Appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life and show generosity towards others. Thankfulness runs throughout Heart Smart. Wellbeing journals. School Prayer. Worship

**Spiritual Context**

*"Spiritual capacities are relevant to all pupils, of any religious tradition or none, and to all areas of the curriculum. They are an important area to explore when considering spiritual growth. However, these capacities can be exercised in various ways in the service of various purposes. We do not encounter them in the abstract. The ways in which we exercise them are bound up with our beliefs, values and commitments."*

David Smith - Making Sense of Spiritual Development.

As a Church of England School, our vision and values are rooted in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. This is the context in which spiritual capacities are fostered and developed.



## **Spiritual Experiences**

### The importance of Reflection

*“There is a danger that spirituality could be trivialised if it is reduced to a welter of nice feelings or gasps of momentary admiration. Spiritual growth will involve reflecting on the significance of an experience for our lives. If there is no such reflection, a feeling remains just a feeling.”*

David Smith – Making Sense of Spiritual Development

At St Mark's, our curriculum is rich and varied, providing many different kinds of **experiences** for children. We give as much time as we can to allow children to **reflect** on those experiences, and to put their learning into action, to be **transformed** by them.

To help support this learning journey we use the Window, Mirror, Door scaffold.

#### **Window – experience/learning about**

The open window represents opportunities to look out at the world, to be aware of the world in new ways and to wonder, to be amazed or to feel sadness, to learn about life in all its fullness.

#### **Mirror – reflection/learning from**

The mirror represents the opportunity and the space to reflect on their experiences, the chance to think and to explore their own insights as well as those of others. In this they are learning from life.

#### **Door – response/learning into action**

The idea of walking through a door into a new place represents the responses that we can make in our lives when we learn, grow and change through reflecting on experience. This is when we choose how to respond, what to do, how we learnt to live by putting into action what we are coming to believe and value.

We plan and provide a range of experiences for children to explore the fullness of life through:

- Termly / weekly curriculum planning
- Daily Collective worship
- Weekly class worship, including time for reflection
- Weekly RE lessons
- Heart Smart PSHE programme
- Picture News
- Wellbeing Journals
- Lunchtime Prayer Space
- Outdoor Learning
- Global Neighbours
- Year 5 and Year 6 Residential visits based in God's outdoors

**St. Mark's C of E Junior School**  
*Growing together, becoming all we are created to be*



**Safeguarding Statement**

St. Mark's C of E Junior School is committed to delivering good outcomes for children and young people by providing a safe, happy and stimulating learning environment that promotes their welfare and helps all children to develop socially and emotionally enabling them to make the most of their life chances.

**Signed:**  (Headteacher)

**Date:** September 2020

**Responsibility:** Ethos Committee

**Review Date:** Autumn 2022