



Shoscombe

Church School

Inspiring Everyone to Shine

How we nurture spirituality at Shoscombe School

Rationale

'For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have a full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed' (John Bradford).

Our vision statement states that we '*Inspire everyone to shine*'. A key part of that belief is to nurture children's spiritual awareness and develop each child's spiritual character.

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality concerns a person's relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or the transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements: self; others; transcendence and beauty form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

It is also vital that all of the adults in our school actively pursue the development of their own spirituality for their own wellbeing, so that they can effectively support and help our children and each other.

The four elements - what these consist of:

Self

- Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express
- Awareness of our uniqueness; happiness with who we are
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- Empathy and understanding; respect, tolerance
- To love and be loved (loving your neighbour)
- Making a difference; duty

Transcendence (Beyond)

- Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (eg about life, death, suffering, nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God
- Making sense of the world

Beauty

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature

Aims

To develop in each child:

- A sense of self-worth stemming from the recognition that they are created in the image of God
- A sense of being in relationship with others and a growing understanding of what it means to belong to a community
- An involvement with others in the wider world and an appreciation of difference and diversity
- A response to the distinctive ethos of a Church school and the content, language and symbolism of the Christian faith as a way of understanding our meaning and purpose in life
- A willingness to explore Christian beliefs and values through knowledge of Bible stories and Christian teaching in order that these might become a firm foundation for life
- The ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc
- The ability to realise that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss can be occasions for spiritual growth and development
- A capacity to value the natural world and a commitment to care for creation
- A willingness to explore the ultimate questions and mysteries of life

We will achieve this by:

- Having regular time in the day for quiet and reflection (i.e. Listening to a story, lighting a candle)
- Providing many opportunities through the curriculum for creativity and imagination
- Valuing play opportunities
- Singing often, especially with others
- Ensuring regular time for prayer (including being thankful; saying sorry)
- Providing frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings. We use the Jigsaw structure to support this across the school
- Constantly reaffirming the importance of relationships; how we talk to and relate to each other
- Providing opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world
- Encouraging each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry; recognising this as an important healing and redemptive process
- Encouraging children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (eg: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after pets)
- Exploring the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme
- Reading often to children, giving them opportunities to discuss and reflect on both secular and religious texts
- Planning a programme for daily Collective Worship which maps out themes across the year, based on our school values
- Placing displays and pictures around the school continually celebrating and encouraging reflection and spirituality
- Maintaining a Spirituality Garden which offers a dedicated space to reflect on the four elements
- Providing enrichment through external visits and inviting visitors to our school

The Indicators of Effective Spiritual Development

Pupils who are developing spiritually are likely to be developing some or all of the following characteristics:

- a set of values, principles and beliefs, which may or may not be religious, which inform their perspective on life and their patterns of behaviour
- an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs
- an ability to understand the idea of community and to see themselves in relation to a variety of communities
- a respect for themselves and for others
- a sense of empathy with others, concern and compassion
- an understanding of feelings and emotions; a growing ability to articulate them effectively
- an increasing ability to reflect and learn from this reflection
- an ability to show courage and persistence in defence of their aims, values, principles and beliefs
- an appreciation of the intangible – for example, beauty, truth, love, goodness, order – as well as for mystery, paradox and ambiguity
- an interest and delight in the world around them
- open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God)
- a sense of joy and wonder in discovering new skills
- a respect for insight as well as for knowledge and reason

Monitoring and Evaluation

Opportunities offered to children for Spiritual Development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways:

- Monitoring of lesson plans and teaching and learning by co-ordinator/senior management/head teacher/governors
- Audit of policies and schemes of work
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings
- Sharing of classroom work and practice
- Evidence from pupils' work
- Regular inclusion in SEF

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