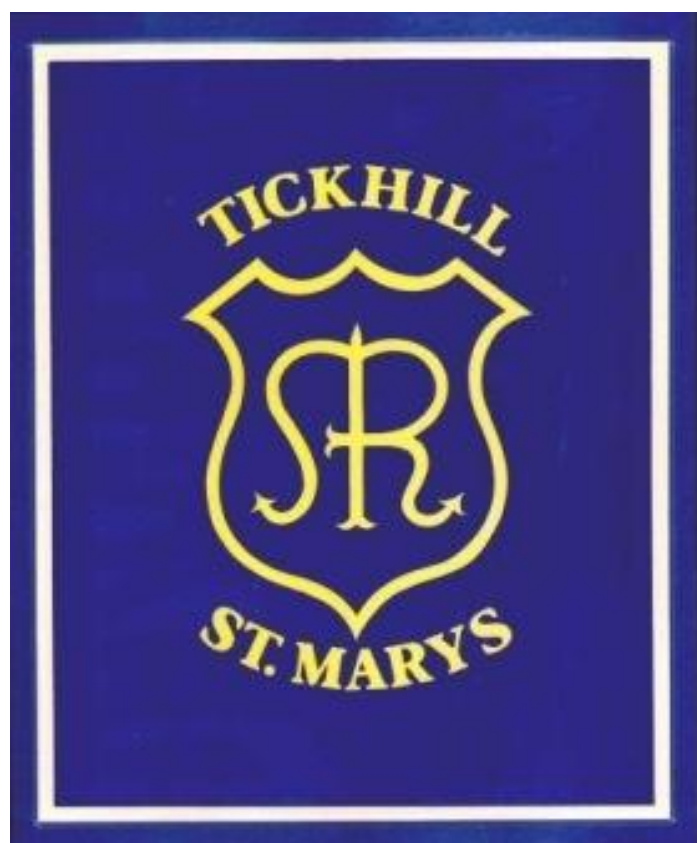


St Mary's C.E. Primary and Nursery School



Spirituality Policy

Growing together, learning together

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and monitor our policies. The Curriculum and Standards Team has this responsibility, though the day to day management of it is devolved to the Head Teacher.

As with all our policies, this was developed following a period of practice and consultation before being presented for Governors' consideration.

JMSanderson

Mission Statement

'Here at St Mary's Church of England Primary School, through our Christian values, we aspire to nurture and educate the whole child: caring for their well-being, celebrating their individual talents and abilities whilst encouraging them to become lifelong learners. It is our aim that children, parents and school staff should work together towards this end.'

Equal Opportunities

At Tickhill St Mary's School we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. We acknowledge the right of every individual to be treated fairly and with respect regardless of appearance, age, race, gender identity, background, creed, attainment, ability or sexual orientation. We aim to fulfil this ideal through our policies and practice.

Christian Ethos

Tickhill St Mary's School is a Church of England School and, as such, we ensure that the Christian ethos is central to all our policies and practice.

Safeguarding Statement

St Mary's Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Data Protection Statement

Tickhill St Mary's takes information governance seriously and for any data protection issues related to the policy please see the relevant privacy notice on the school's website

Introduction

This policy has been developed following guidance from the Diocese of Sheffield, and also from the Model Policy written by Debbie Helme, Strategic Lead for RE and School Christian Character for the Diocese of Gloucester.

Legal Framework: Links to OFSTED and SIAMS expectations

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, November 2019 No. 190017, page 59 & 60, states: Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities but draws

together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils includes developing their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life
- knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them
- use of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

The SIAMS Evaluation Schedule for Schools and Inspectors, September 2021, has one inspection question: "How effective is the school's distinctive Christian vision, established and promoted by leadership at all levels, in enabling pupils and adults to flourish?"

School Statement on Spirituality

To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something beyond words. To make conversations about spirituality more accessible to every member of our school community, Tickhill St. Mary's has chosen to follow ideas developed by the Education Department at the Diocese of Gloucester ("wow", "ow" and "now"), and to embed Godly Play into the life of the school. This language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that everyone 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. Christians would view this as an opportunity to relate to the Divine Creator God. Cracks may be caused when something so good and breath-taking happens that the pot expands and cracks – the wows of life. Cracks may happen when something challenging happens and threatens the comfort of everyday – the ows of life. Cracks can also happen in the stillness and ordinariness of everyday – the nows of life, when a moment of stillness, a pause or prayer creates a crack in the normal, physical everyday.

In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or 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.

Tickhill St. Mary's uses this language and the concepts of "wows", "ows" and "nows". These are used to explore relationships with: - ourselves - others - the wider natural world and beyond - and offering the invitation to relate to God.

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. We support the whole school community to share this responsibility and to develop 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. Consider how the physical environment of the school supports opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection for pupils in your school. We have identified specific areas which contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils: collective worship, the whole curriculum, including RE and the general ethos of the school within daily life.

Spirituality and children with additional needs

Tickhill St. Mary's is proud to provide education for some children with complex additional needs. Children with complex additional needs are as innately spiritual as their nondisabled peers and allowing this to flourish is an important part of our mission. For these young people Godly Play is offered as a one to one, supported by their individual worker. The RE teaching is also adapted for them.

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of St. Mary's. It provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared. Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present (now moments) which are often linked to invitations to pray. Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place for hearing the Christian story. 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 and liturgy and are introduced to different musical traditions. 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 responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark seasonal Christian festivals and celebrations in the calendars of other faiths. In this way, pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. Collective Worship in St. Mary's is invitational, inspirational and inclusive. They look at some of the key spiritual themes of the Bible and how these resonate with their lived experiences, the journey, exile, the desert, struggle, darkness and light and so on.

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 all religions and worldviews, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality and the language of "wows, ows and nows", where appropriate. For further details, please refer to our Religious Education Policy and The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

Our school uses Moral Mazing questions to centre the children's thinking around the whys of what they are learning, and how this will enrich their lives. The language of "wows, ows and nows", and conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from EYFS to Year 6.

Explicit Teaching of Spirituality

Children will receive teaching in how to grow their spirituality and to support their spiritual health through discussions, modelling and activities based in ten areas:

1. Truth
2. Gratitude
3. Feeling empowered to contribute to a better world
4. Love of nature
5. Stillness
6. Allowing time to appreciate
7. Reflection
8. Feel your feelings without shame
9. Manage your feeling positively
10. Don't be afraid to do hard things that make you feel proud

Maths Points to consider:

- The wonder of number patterns
- What cannot be measured? For example, love
- What cannot be accurately counted? For example, the difference an act of kindness makes.

Reading Points to consider:

- How do you frame questions around a text? For example: o What inspired you in this text? o How did a character cope with a challenge in life? o How did the actions of a character surprise you? How do you think you would have responded to that wow or ow moment? o What do you think makes these words so powerful/beautiful/painful?

Writing Points to consider:

- If pupils are invited to write about things that have profound meaning to them, how is this writing valued? How can it be recognised as having value, rather than simply be reduced to an evaluation of SPAG?

DT Points to consider:

- What motivates designers and their decisions? For example, is it a desire to make money or a desire to help and make improvements to daily life for everyone?

Music Points to consider:

- What style of music 'invites you to explore the mystery that dances within your soul' (K. Hall)?
- What styles of music have the opposite effect?
- How does music encourage creativity, delight, and curiosity?

MFL Points to consider:

- What motivates language learning? For example, buying an ice cream on holiday or welcoming and comforting a stranger in our country?
- What does it feel like to genuinely communicate with someone in a new language?

Geography Points to consider:

- The wow of physical geography.
- The ow of discovering different physical regions do not provide the same opportunities.
- What options/opportunities are there to respond and take responsibility in a challenging world?

History Points to consider:

- Which stories tell historical wows?
- Which stories tell historical ows?
- What lessons for future decisions and choices do they provide?

PE Points to consider:

- How do you celebrate a new skill?
- How does it feel to be proud of your whole self?
- What does it feel like to be completely focused on a task or challenge?
 - How do you recognise the delight in movement, connectedness, and creativity?
 - Encourage the awareness of one's own strength and limitations.
 - Recognise/celebrate equality, freedom, respect and trust.

Science Points to consider:

- Delight in discovering how things work.
- Opportunities to linger longer on the wonder!
- What questions cannot be answered by science?

Art Points to consider:

- How does art invite you to explore the mystery that dances within your soul?
- What are the "wows and ows" in the stories behind the artists you study?
- How do you celebrate and respect different responses to art?

PSHCE & RSE Points to consider:

- As you explore topics such as relationships, feelings & attitudes, keeping safe and 'your body' where are the natural links with the "wows, ows and nows"?
- How can the honesty and sensitivity needed to explore these topics gently reflect the language of spirituality already used throughout the school?

All Subjects Points to consider:

- How do you celebrate the achievement and break-through "wows" of success?
- How do you support the "ows" of difficulty and frustrations?
- How do you maximise the everyday moment of concentration and being in the present, creating a sense of calm and completeness?

Spirituality within the Ethos of the Daily Life of the School

In St. Mary's we view spiritual growth as becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality. These opportunities happen throughout each and every day as children deal with delight, disappointment and the chance to be present with themselves. For this reason, every member of the school community, including administrative staff, are familiar with the school's shared language of spirituality and will respond to pupils appropriately.

Throughout the daily life of the school, including lunch times and playtimes, pupils know that their references to “wows, ows and nows” will be heard and taken seriously. They will be encouraged to reflect on these experiences and be comfortable about talking about the golden glue of spirituality. This can be visible in their roles as leaders, in their participation in Friendship Force, the way they are encouraged to Live Life in All Its Fullness, and the way children are encouraged to step outside their comfort zones. Children will all be given access to Godly Play sessions

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Senior Leadership Team and governors monitor the policy every three years, and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff in order to make any changes or recommendations. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing body and are then actioned as appropriate. Governors ensure that this policy is fully implemented and that practice is consistent with the school's Christian vision, in line with the school's monitoring policy and schedule for governors.

Roles and Responsibilities

Recognising there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners in every aspect of our school life, every member of our staff team is committed to support this spiritual growth wherever appropriate.

The RE Leader is responsible for supporting and leading spiritual development in our school, including monitoring opportunities for spiritual growth in collective worship, the whole curriculum (including RE) and the general ethos of the school within daily life, This role also includes RSHCE lead and Emotional Literacy (our RULER approach).

- Ensuring personal knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD and shared good practice
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the shared language of spirituality • Acquiring and organising appropriate resources
- Monitoring the opportunities for spiritual growth through regular observations and learning walks in both formal and informal contexts, discussions with colleagues and pupil voice
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process particularly around Strand 2

Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. ECTs and staff who are new to St. Mary's will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality. This policy is shared on the school's website and is part of the induction pack for new staff and new governors. This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently, as required.

Additional Support Material

Useful questions for the school to consider:

- How does the school's Christian vision provide opportunities to meet the spiritual needs of learners?
- How does an awareness of spirituality permeate school life?
- What is the impact of this for the learner (and staff and the wider community)?
- How are staff inducted and supported so that they have a shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development?

Prayer at Tickhill St. Mary's

Tickhill St. Mary's gives children the skills and experience to pray silently using their own words and feelings. They are taught the simple 'TSP' prayer – the Thank God, Say Sorry for our mistakes, and Please ask Him for something they need.

Prayers to be used by the School:

Mysterious God,

Most of the time we can explain what happens in the world by science

But sometimes we may see a glimpse of something beyond:

The joy of making a new friend,

The excitement of being able to do something today which we couldn't do yesterday,

The delight of warm sun on our faces or splashing in cold puddles.

In these wow moments, when we're aware of something beyond,

Help us to be open to the idea of you, God.

Comforting God,

Most of the time we feel safe and secure

But sometimes life can be difficult and painful and we long for something beyond:

Someone who understands what it's like to be alone,

Or let down by friends,

Or feel like they have nowhere to call home.

In these "ow" moments, help us to be open to something beyond

And brave enough to reach out and pray.

Constant God,

Most of the time we are busy running or learning or playing,

But sometimes it's good simply to be.

Help us, then, to glimpse something beyond the everyday:

When we are still,

When we are present to ourselves,

When there is nothing to distract us.

In these now moments, help us to be open your possibility, God

Help us to pray.

Amen

Spirituality Conversation Starters

Learning from "wow" Experiences:

What I've learnt from this wonderful wow experience...

I think this is amazing because...

The biggest day in my life was...

A person who I think is really good is...

What matters most to me is...

I am most thankful for...

What I've learned from this difficult "ow" experience:

What I've learned about forgiveness is
What I've learned about truth is
Lying is wrong because
No one is perfect because
There would be less trouble if
Mistakes are okay because

What I've learnt from this "now" experience...

What I've learnt about love is...
The world would be a better place if...
I can find peace by...
I think God is like...
One thing I wonder about God is...
I felt God was near me when...
Silence makes you feel...