



The Nar Valley Federation of Church Academies

Spirituality Policy

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| Policy Type: | Academy Policy |
| Approved By: | Local Governing Body |
| Date Approved by LGB: | 17/10/2023 |
| Review Date: | October 2025 |
| Person Responsible: | Head Teacher |

Summary of Changes

The policy has been amended as follows.

| Page Ref. | Section | Amendment | Date of Change |
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General Policy Roles and Accountabilities

The Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) is accountable for all policies across its Academies. All policies, whether relating to an individual Academy or the whole Trust, will be written and implemented in line with our ethos and values as articulated in our prospectus. We are committed to the provision of high-quality education in the context of the Christian values of service, thankfulness and humility where individuals are valued, aspirations are high, hope is nurtured, and talents released.

A Scheme of Delegation for each Academy sets out the responsibilities of the Local Governing Body and Head Teacher. The Head Teacher of each Academy is responsible for the implementation of all policies of the Academy Trust.

All employees of the Academy Trust are subject to the Trust's policies.

Through our Christian Values we are an inclusive federation which strives to we enable all staff and children to: -

'Let your light shine'

Matthew 5:16

We aim to become a community which nurtures individuals to develop a sense of belonging, purpose and self-belief in order for all to flourish and shine.

Our values of respect, responsibility, kindness, courage, hope and forgiveness are clearly illustrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). This powerful message provides a basis to enable our children to flourish and shine as unique individuals.

Spirituality in School - Model Policy

- **Our vision**

"Spirituality is a river - the river and journey of life; as it flows, it carries us to surprises that are yet to unfold"

Our Christian vision is rooted in theology, centred round biblical texts, Matthew Ch. 5 V16, which gives us our motto "Let your light Shine" and Luke Ch. 10 V25-37, the Good Samaritan. Our vision is one of personal excellence, being the best person you can be ('Captain of your own learning) and letting your light shine both in the sense of talent development and modelling our values, but also being a good team member ('Crew member') using those values to support others, exactly as the Good Samaritan did.

We provide opportunities for every individual to thrive, grow and learn, confidently letting their light shine, which means celebrating your strengths and being proud of what you can do, whilst striving to be the best you can be in every situation.

Our values are explored through different parables so that our children build their understanding of how to learn, play and be in school alongside others successfully, contributing to our school and wider community.

Our vision of learning is as a journey along life's river, sailing through smooth and choppy waters, being Captain of your own learning, and responsible for yourself, but also a strong Crew member who helps our boat sail well. Our children are asked to make good Choices for Learning and to ensure that they are always on the boat along with the rest of the team. Our Teams (houses) are named after the boats of captains or voyagers who have embodied our values and striven to let their light shine. We see Courageous Advocacy as being represented by a lighthouse in life's rocks – the sum of living our values and then using those to stand for what is right, what you believe in and supporting others to work together to make change.

Our vision influences the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. We believe that spirituality is a core thread that runs through our school and we attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and well-being of all within our school community.

- **We aim for children and adults, to grow in their ability to:**
 - be guided by their beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them
 - be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community
 - love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges
 - exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder
 - be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
 - be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer
 - be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others
 - be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success
 - demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions

- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards others

(From David Smith's work on Spiritual Capacities)

- **Our working definition of 'spirituality'**

As a staff and governor team, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

Spiritual development is the development of an awareness that there is "something more to life than meets the eye, something more than the material, something more than the obvious, something to wonder at, something to respond to." (Terence Copley)

- **Legal requirements:**

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which: (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The SIAMS Schedule (amended September 2021) references spirituality in both the RE and Collective Worship strands but the main focus is part of strand two on Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills. The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) which requires educating the whole person.

The OFSTED framework 2021 states that pupil's spiritual development is shown by their:

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

- **We support pupils in their spiritual development by:**

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as they arise

- providing 'Sacred Spaces' in classrooms, public spaces, outside, and by using the church building, and through the 'Prayer Spaces in School' website
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership, through leading collective worship and other opportunities
- **As a staff team:**
 - We have a staff understanding of spiritual development.
 - We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.
 - We revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings and offer training.
 - Our governors monitor the impact of our spirituality focus when they attend monitoring at our RE days, once a term, when they look at our planning that has a box for Spirituality for every subject in our curriculum, and through reports from the RE Leader and Executive Head, and by attending our Collective Worship/Services
 - We have staff guidance accessible to continue to support staff in this aspect of our curriculum. *Please see our diocesan webpage on spiritual development if you would like to download the guidance, resources and reading to a staff folder.*
 - We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development through our Induction folder.
 - We use models to support our own thinking in spirituality, such as the 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors, Candle' approach. WE MIGHT USE IN OUT UP..AND THE MOMENT.
 - We have a variety of spiritual spaces both inside and outside the school building.
 - We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett/ Rebecca Nye).

We recognise that children will have different 'Spiritual Temperaments' or 'Sacred Pathways', through the work of Gary Thomas (2010) and Myra Perrine (2007).

This will influence our planning as we look to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship. Staff who are specialist subject leads identify opportunities for spiritual development in their subject, and these are shared with colleagues through planning and the spirituality statements for each subject.

- We use the 'Ricketts Grids' to support our understanding of progression in spiritual development in these four areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond.
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.
- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context.
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website.
- We discuss spirituality with our church and others who can further support this thread through our Ethos group.
- *We have a spiritual space outside in each school that can be used at lunchtimes to help children reflect or for outdoor RE or services. ((natural materials for our cross and pebbles with spiritual reflection on.))*

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community.

- **Other related policies:**

Collective Worship

Teaching and Learning

Relationships and Behaviour SMSC

All subject specific curriculum policies

- **Referenced reading:**

Church of England Education Office (CEEO) Spiritual Development – Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (2019) <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-children/school-effectiveness/re-collective-worship-and-spirituality/spiritual-dev>