

St Stephen's Spiritual Identity Demonstrated Through Teaching in RE.

Through God We Achieve

As we stand by the ethos of our school, each class has a spiritual identity that is linked to our faith as a Church of England school and that encourages the children in their walk through school-life with God. All of these identities are linked and all contribute to our ethos that 'Through God We Achieve'. During the day, lessons, expectations and activities encourage the children to reflect on their spiritual world and to acknowledge that they are a gift from God. Each class has been allocated a verse from the Bible that reflects the nature of this gift and which is used to promote the children's learning during the term.

As a school we believe that with God at the centre of our lives, we will be successful both as a school and as individuals.

Reception

Joy

Psalm 33 vs 3 – Sing to him a new song, play skilfully and shout for joy.

No word suits our wonderful reception children better than **JOY**. All children are a blessing from God, but nowhere is it more obvious that in the joy that our little ones can bring. Reception children have a view of life that we can all learn from. It is fresh, untainted and honest. It is wonderful watching them show their love of learning in the joy they radiate. The first question the children in Year 6 children ask their teacher is 'Who will my reception buddy be?' They always look forward to sharing playtime and reading stories with the youngest and newest additions to the school.

The children in reception focus on that which brings happiness to their lives. They do this through classroom learning, playing and exploring the world that God has given us. As part of the curriculum they look at: the world around us and our part in looking after it; the wonders of Christmas and Easter; and what Jesus means to us as Christians.



Year 1

Love

1 John 4 vs 16 – And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God, and God in them.

Love is an interesting word! Sometimes we overuse it and sometimes we don't use it enough. At St Stephen's we believe that God has given us so much to love and our Year 1 children are learning to love and appreciate life around them – their friends, their teachers and their school.

In class, the children learn the importance of spreading good will in the world. They are starting to understand how we should treat each other to show love and respect. In studying the Ten Commandments and the Five Pillars of Islam the children learn about the guidelines given to us in our faith and that of others to ensure we live in a way that honours God. The children learn about how we look after the world provided for us and what happened in one of the stories in the bible (Noah and the Ark) when we did not. Finally it is also a big year for the children in Year one as they celebrate how God loved us by sending his son for us through their learning in class and through putting on a nativity.

We can see the **LOVE** of God in our Year 1s and know how special they are to St Stephens.



Year 2

Faith

1 Corinthians 16 vs 13 – Be on your guard stand firm in faith , be courageous be strong.

Having **FAITH** is a gift from God, not just faith in him but also faith in each other, our teachers and above all in ourselves.

Having faith can be really tough and we try to help build the confidence and self-esteem in our children on a daily basis. Year 2 can be a really interesting year for a seven year old. The children learn to believe in their own strengths, talents and ability to achieve, that overcoming challenges is something that God gives us the strength and the courage to do. The children learn how those who are Hindu practise their faith and where their ideals and values come from. In Christianity, the children look at the stories of the parables and how Jesus taught us through them what people

achieved through their faith in what God had provided for them. The children appreciate and value success and how mistakes can lead to our spiritual learning and greater **FAITH**.

This is why our ethos means so much to us. The Year 2 children – and indeed the whole school- know that by our faith in God and his in us ‘Through God we Achieve’!



Year 3

Wisdom

Proverbs 2 vs 6 – For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Wisdom can be an interesting and thoughtful topic. The children in school are taught about life and the knowledge we can gain. As well as being taught knowledge through their classroom learning, the children are also taught about wisdom in dealing with life's challenges through their interactions and experiences. In Year 3 the children are particularly encouraged to share their learning with others and in how to take it to the next steps. We want them to be excited about sharing new experiences and the joy of learning with each other.

Throughout the Year 3 RE curriculum the children are taught that God gives us the wisdom to know right from wrong, but also that he loves the fact there is so much to enjoy and learn about the world we live in. In Christianity Year 3's learn how our spiritual wisdom comes from the bible and how it came to be. The children look at the wisdom within the 'Book of Proverbs' and how they can help us from making poor choices. In Sikhism, they learn how community life is really important and how they learn from each other and the wisdom of their elders.

We love sharing wisdom and the children in Year 3 are encouraged to do so and to bring new understanding within their classroom. Long may it continue!



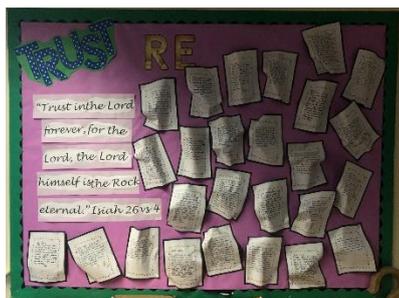
Year 4

Trust

Isiah 26 vs 4 – Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself is the Rock eternal

Teaching children responsibility is a God given privilege to us at St Stephens and one that we take great care in doing. Our Year 4 children's spiritual word is **TRUST**. There are lots of opportunities for the children to take that on in our school all through the year groups from doing jobs for teachers to becoming house captains in Year 6. The children in Year 4 have one of the most important tasks of all. Everyone needs a friend and someone they can rely on. Our year 4s are our friendship monitors. They take it in turns to wear their sashes of trust and friendship and look out for any children who just need a friend to play with and have fun. Children are also on hand to organise and tidy sports equipment cupboards and music equipment.

Within the curriculum the children learn how Buddhists live their faith through the teachings of Buddha and the focus of the 'Noble Truths' and their belief in the path to enlightenment. Within our Christian faith, Year 4 looks at the Sermon on the Mount with a particular focus on the beatitudes and the message on how we trust in God to bless us as we follow his commands and teachings. The RE lessons also concentrates on the role model of Jesus and what we believe through the sacrament of communion and what it means to be Christian for famous people and the lives they lead. Having **TRUST** in others is a wonderful blessing and our Year 4s certainly deserve that respect.



Year 5

Peace

Matthew 5 vs 9 – Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.

We live in uncertain times and we look to our next generation to bring change to the world. There have been some excellent changes in the last decades as our children grow up and help install cultures of acceptance and harmony in our world, but there is clearly a long way to go. As champions of that belief, our Year 5 children focus on **PEACE**. They too have positions of trust in our school, with children from our two classes volunteering to be peace monitors and mediators. Year 5 children wear sashes of purple that represent peace and are on hand in the playground to mediate between any playground mix ups and misunderstandings. Some children also act as ‘agony aunts’ within our school magazine.

In their RE lessons the children look at some challenging –yet thought provoking topics. In Judaism, they study how the Jewish faith are the roots for Christianity and they look at how they celebrate key festivals and events such as ‘Shabbat’ and ‘Passover’ and they look at worship in a synagogue. The children also look at why individuals choose monastic life to bring **PEACE** and contemplation in their lives as well as serving others through their calling. Death is a challenging subject to children and the Year 5s study how death is a part of life and how faith in an individual’s religion can bring peace and understanding. With much conflict in the world both internationally and in small scale at home in the streets of Britain, the Year 5 prayer group members bring requests of prayer to our school prayer group so we can be aware of what is happening and to pray to God to bring **PEACE** in these conflicts. Blessed are the peacemakers indeed.



Year 6

Hope

Jeremiah 29 vs 11 – “For I know the plans I have for you, “ declares the Lord, “ plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”.

Never is a word more apt for Year 6 than the word **HOPE**. Primary school is coming to an end and the promise of the future is looming. Choosing a high school, passing SATS and preparing for the transition can be mentally and emotionally tough and as teachers we work hard to make sure the children are ready to adapt to this next exciting chapter in their lives. Year 6 is hard work but it is also full of opportunities to learn, develop and excel. There are a number of exciting trips (two of which are residential), house captain elections, debating competitions, numerous sporting opportunities and a talent fair where the children are asked to showcase their entrepreneurial talent.

At the beginning of the year the children write a letter to themselves highlighting their hopes and aspirations for the year. In July they receive these letters to remind themselves of their achievements and so they can assess how their dreams have changed in the course of the year.

In RE, the children learn about **HOPE** and how it can uplift and bring peace to many people in the community. We look at how people from all faiths work for charities and within the public sector and local communities to highlight needs and then work to find solutions and provide help. The children compare various denominations in the Christian faith and are asked to discuss how religious festivals (such as Christmas and Diwali) can be protected from commercialism.

It is our **HOPE** that Year 6 has a final year that they will remember and that they leave with the understanding of the passage in the Bible which says, ‘God has plans for us, to give us a hope and future.’

