



Through God We Achieve

OUR VISION AT ST. STEPHEN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

To deliver outstanding education in a caring community, with God at its centre

'Turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding'. Proverbs 2:2

OUR VALUES:

Joy - we provide a happy and stimulating environment, rooted in Christian values.

Excellence - we are a church school committed to the highest standards in everything we do.

Relationship – we work hand-in-hand with St Stephen's Church as well as our parents and carers.

Respect - we enable our children to deepen or realise their own faith and respect the freedom of others in their beliefs.

Nurture – our children are cared for spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

SPIRITUALITY POLICY

Action	Policy to be reviewed as required and at least annually		
	Owner	Date	Completed
Updated	SLT	October 2022	✓
Next Review	SLT	October 2023	
Approved	Governors	December 2022	

At St Stephen's CE Primary School we describe spirituality as **enabling us to become aware of God, one another, the world around us and ourselves.**

Our aim is to: establish the right environment to enable the spiritual development of all pupils through the following objectives;

- Develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value as a child made in the image of God;
- Develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos of this church school as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them;
- Develop an awareness of and respect for other people's beliefs and faiths and the ability to articulate their own;
- Develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others);
- Develop strategies to build good mental health (see our school Behaviour & Emotional Wellbeing Policy);
- Foster self-awareness and encourage pupils to make informed decisions;
- Develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life;
- Begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life;
- Develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth;
- Understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others;
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and imagination;
- Develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion, beauty etc.;
- Develop a capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation.

These objectives will enable the pupils to have a quality of life that encompasses respect, awareness, compassion, curiosity, understanding and relationships that reflect order, reason, balance and integrity within the context of Christian faith.

Teaching and learning

Through teaching and learning, the school pursues the aims and objectives by ensuring:

- The curriculum and all areas of our community life will be driven by the school's Christian vision statement and associated values;
- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life;

- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual opportunities for spiritual development are recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children;
- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this;
- A solid understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of prayer and of the Bible is nurtured and developed;
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, stillness and prayer;
- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies making use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits;
- The provision of opportunities to listen attentively and observe carefully, listening with discernment, valuing what is good and worthwhile and making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas;
- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others;
- That moral development is linked to spiritual development with each class having a Spiritual Identity (Appendix)
- That the outstanding RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faiths and world view perspectives;
- That children are given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world and to develop an understanding of the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected;
- Promotion of strategies for positive mental health.

Approaches

In our school we seek to find ways in which all areas of the curriculum can contribute to children's spiritual development and to highlight opportunities for these in our planning by:

- Seeking to foster spiritual capacities, e.g. imagination, insight and empathy;
- Allowing children the security and opportunity to explore and express feelings and emotions and to celebrate diversity;
- Providing opportunities for prayer including silence and stillness;
- Sharing feelings and experiences that foster hope, joy, reassurance and encouragement;
- Encouraging children to develop relationships based on the school's Christian vision and associated values;
- Enabling children to make the links between the Church and Biblical teachings, the life of the school and the wider community and how these impact on their own understanding of themselves and their place within the world today;
- Providing an environment that promotes space to reflect, think and wonder.

Monitoring and evaluation

Spiritual development cannot be measured and continues throughout our lives. However, opportunities offered to children for spiritual development will be monitored and evaluated in the following ways;

- Observing and listening to children;
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school's Christian vision and values;
- Sharing of classroom work and practice;
- Ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spirituality means in this school by providing them with induction and development training;
- Evidence from pupils' work, e.g. reflective diary, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art;
- Regular inclusion in the SEF;
- CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools.

Appendix

St Stephen's CofE Primary School 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 than 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 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 that God has provided for us and what happened when we did not (Noah and his Ark). Finally the children in Year 1 celebrate how God showed us His love by sending us his son. Their understanding comes through class learning and their performance of the Nativity at Christmas.

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



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. We have faith in God but also in each other, our teachers and above all in ourselves.

Having faith can be really tough and we try to build confidence and self-esteem in our children on a daily basis. The children learn to believe in their own strengths, talents and their ability to achieve; they come to understand that overcoming challenges is something that God gives us the strength and courage to do. The children study Hinduism and learn about the origins of its ideals and values. Within Christianity, they look at the stories of the parables and how through them, Jesus taught us how to achieve through having faith in what God has provided. The children learn to appreciate and value success but also understand how mistakes can lead to 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 it is because of our faith in God and His faith in us that, 'Through God we Achieve'.



Year 3

Wisdom

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

Wisdom is an interesting and thoughtful topic. The children at St Stephen's are taught about life and the knowledge we can gain from it. As well as acquiring knowledge through their classroom learning, the Year 3 classes are taught about the wisdom they need for dealing with life's challenges and how this wisdom is gained from interactions and experiences. The children are encouraged to share their learning with others and to impart the wisdom they have found and to find joy in helping one another to make decisions.

As part of the Year 3 RE curriculum, the children are taught that God gives us the wisdom to know right from wrong. In Christianity, Year 3s learn how our spiritual wisdom comes from the Bible – they look at the wisdom within the 'Book of Proverbs' and begin to understand how this knowledge can prevent us from making poor choices. In Sikhism, they learn that community life is really important and that Sikhs learn from each other and from 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

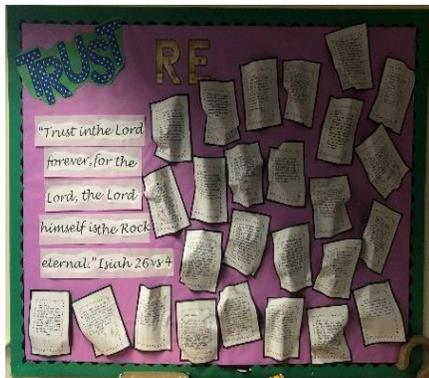
Trust

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

Teaching children about responsibility is a privilege for us at St Stephen's 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 on that responsibility in our school - from doing jobs for teachers, which starts in Reception, to becoming House Captains in Year 6. Everyone needs a friend and someone they can rely on.

Within the curriculum the children learn how Buddhists live their faith through the teachings of Buddha; 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 that we follow God's commands and teachings because we trust in Him to bless us. The RE lessons also focus on Jesus as a role model and what we believe through the sacrament of communion.

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 fruitful changes in the last few decades as children have grown up and helped instil a culture of acceptance and harmony - but there is clearly still a long way to go. As champions of that belief, our Year 5 children focus on **PEACE**.

In RE lessons the children look at some challenging yet thought-provoking topics. In Judaism, they study how the Jewish faith is at the root of Christianity and they look at how Jewish people celebrate key festivals such as 'Shabbat' and 'Passover'. They also look at worship in a synagogue. The children learn about those who choose a monastic life to bring **PEACE** and contemplation into their lives as well as serving others through their calling. Death is a challenging subject for children and the Year 5s study how death is a part of life and how faith in religion can bring peace and understanding at difficult times. With much conflict in the world, both internationally and to a lesser extent at home on the streets of Britain, the Year 5 prayer group members say prayers so that we can be aware of what is happening in the world and pray to God to bring **PEACE** to all these conflicts. Indeed, blessed are the peacemakers.



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 to 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 a future.’



Year 7