

Vision and Values

At St Michael's we strive to develop and inspire courageous, respectful and resilient learners encouraging them to serve with kindness and tolerance guided by our Christian values so that they can flourish, living 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10).

Our core Christian values are: Service, Kindness, Perseverance, Courage, Respect and Joyfulness

Our Mission:

- By promoting our value **service**, we encourage pupils to consider their local and national neighbours.
- Our Value **kindness** is pivotal to our harmonious school. We teach pupils how to manage their own relationships with kindness.
- By teaching pupils about **courage**, we teach them to do the right thing, not the easy thing.
- By promoting **perseverance** through the curriculum, children learn to keep going and not give up in times of challenge.
- We remind pupils that we can always be **joyful** in the knowledge that God is with us and in the joyfulness in the wonder of creation.
- We promote an inclusive culture whereby pupils **respect** the freedom of choice and hold each other in high regard.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to:

- To identify the importance of spiritual development to our school and its wider community
- Summarise the school's provision for spiritual development
- Identify ways in which we ensure that opportunities for spiritual growth are fully inclusive

What is it and why is it important?

Spiritual growth and development is as unique as each individual, although there is no one true definition, at St Michael's we consider it to be the extent to which we build relationships with ourselves, others, transcendence and nature.

At St Michael's we recognise and respect that there is no single expression of spirituality. Whereas faith may be seen as the foundation of an individual's spirituality, spiritual development is not dependent on faith. Consequently,

opportunities for spiritual growth are found across the school day and not just through collective worship.

We strongly believe that at all points of the school day and beyond there are opportunities to develop spiritually encountering life's OWs and WOWs. In providing opportunities for spiritual growth we promote:

- A sense of awe and wonder driven by healthy curiosity
- A sense of transcendence
- An imaginative approach to the world
- A reflective attitude to the natural world
- A sense of transience and change
- A sense of pattern, sequence and order
- A spirit of enquiry and open-mindedness
- An awareness that life involves moral choices, good and bad
- An awareness of paradox and unease
- A sense of life's joys and achievements
- A sense of meaning, purpose and direction
- An awareness of suffering, pain, decay and loss
- An awareness of community, its demands, values, rituals and celebrations
- An increasing ability to empathise with others
- The capacity to empathise and respond to religious activities such as worship, prayer, communion, pilgrimage
- The capacity to be still
- The capacity to be aware of one's own inner life and to reflect
- The capacity to be aware of one's own uniqueness, of the worth of one's self and of one's identity
- A sense of the sacred, the holy, God
- A sense of the Trinity - God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- An increasing awareness of God in one's own life and in the life of others
- The increasing ability to question one's beliefs and actions, and those of others, in a search for meaning
- The ability to communicate responses and feelings with increasing confidence and self-esteem

How we promote and nurture spiritual development

We respect that all individuals express and develop their spirituality in a way that is unique to them and therefore, it is important that we provide opportunities for spiritual growth in many forms. When considering our provision, we have regard for the wider research surrounding spiritual development.

As church school, we hold a daily act of worship where pupils can reflect and respond to the word of God. Worship in all its forms also offers pupils the opportunity for stillness, reflection on common values and celebration of achievements and successes.

Classroom prayer and reflection spaces offer a focal point for reflection, prayer and stillness for pupils and staff. In addition, reflection spaces are used around school as a call to action for pupils providing opportunities to ask questions about injustice or to take action for their own wellbeing.

Across the curriculum pupils have the opportunity to engage in Philosophy for Children (P4C) and the associated BIG questions are also sent home for children to consider with their wider network.

The spiritual garden provides a space for children to enjoy and appreciate the variety of God's creations, developing their curiosity and respect and providing a canvas for their own thoughts and questions.

Children engage regularly in the writing, saying and reading of prayers and are taught to understand the purpose and structure of prayer.

Singing is also a key feature both of worship and the school day itself. Pupils express their faith through song and also engage in singing as a joyful act for different purposes.

Across the curriculum, we promote spiritual development in a variety of ways having regard for the 9 spiritual pathways: Naturalists, Senates, Traditionalists, Ascetics, Activists, Caregivers, Enthusiasts, Intellectuals and Contemplatives

In Religious Education we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Explore the beliefs of those from different faiths and those with non-religious worldviews
- Ask and answer BIG questions
- Understand the role of worship in different faiths and how this compares with their own experiences
- Explore the many ways in which people from different faiths express their beliefs
- Appreciate the value of belonging to a faith

- Explore questions without an answer
- Explore how those with non-religious world views mark occasions in life

In Literacy we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Develop empathetic relationships with the characters and authors of a variety of texts
- Develop personal preferences of literature
- Disagree well through debate and speaking and listening
- Express themselves creatively responding to physical and emotional stimuli
- Explore loss, tragedy and trauma through stories
- Explore imaginary worlds, awe and wonder through literature

In Maths, we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Learn about the concept of nothing
- Explore pattern, order and relationships
- Explore probability, certainty and likelihood
- Understand Maths as an international language
- Enjoy the wonder of numbers, systems and formulae

In Science we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Ask and answer questions born from their curiosity or observations
- Develop an understanding of the life cycle of humans and other living things exploring death as a part of this
- Debate the origins of life
- Appreciate the vastness of the universe and the context of earth within it

In Computing we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Understand the wonder that is the internet and its capabilities
- Develop strategies to guard themselves against the darker side of the internet
- Develop skills enabling them to communicate with people worldwide

In Geography we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Explore diversity of the environments, climates and people around the world
- Explore sacred places and land across the world
- Learn about challenges impacting on the natural environment and the impact that they have on the global issues
- To develop empathy for people who live in challenging circumstances across the globe
- Develop their understanding of belonging by learning about their local area
- Appreciate the natural wonder of the variety of physical features around the world including but not limited to volcanoes, rivers, rainforests, deserts, oceans and polar regions

In History we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Connect with the past, and appreciate the events and individuals who have shaped the world we live in today
- Learn about influential people through history
- Discover the role that conflict has played on the world in the past
- Appreciate change over time and the importance of invention and exploration
- Develop empathy with people who lived in different periods of history

In Physical Education we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Engage as part of a team to achieve a common goal
- Explore their personal limits
- Experience achievement and disappointment
- Understand the perseverance required to master a new skill
- Develop tolerance of those on opposing teams or with different views about how things should be done

In Design and Technology we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Discover how things work

- Appreciate the beauty in design
- Demonstrate perseverance
- Consider the needs of others as a target audience
- Express opinions about products including reflecting critically on their own work

In the Creative arts (art/dance/drama) we promote spiritual development by providing opportunities for pupils to:

- Evaluate and appreciate the works of a variety of artists
- Express feelings evoked by music dance or other expressions of art
- Express themselves creatively
- Understanding that the arts impact people in different ways
- Show tolerance of the preferences of others

Across the school day, we promote spiritual development in a variety of ways including:

- **Acts of courageous advocacy** including regular food bank collections; support boxes for the elderly and less fortunate; engagement in charity fundraising days; clothes bank collection for the Salvation Army; annual poppy appeal for the Royal British Legion, Palm oil campaigns, plastic pollution awareness raising
- **Engagement in national moments of reflection** including Remembrance Day and Remembrance Sunday; Marie Curie day of reflection following the COVID-19 pandemic, world refugee day
- **Engagement with local community projects** including the local Poppy installation, Prayers for the local community shared at the front of school for passers-by, singing at local care homes at Christmas time, contributing to art displays for vaccination centres, train station and care homes
- **Engagement with parents** promoting families to share instances where pupils have demonstrated the school values outside of school via a dedicated mailbox, P4C home learning opportunities
- **Engagement with high quality texts** providing pupils with starting points for conversations around sensitive topics through stories and children's newspapers
- **Engagement in a variety of PSHE activities** including the use of Trickbox to support pupils in managing their own emotions and feelings promoting positive mental health

- **Engagement with the church community** including visiting church for collective worship, Messy Harvest and Messy Easter, Eucharist services

Inclusion

Spiritual development is not limited to those who follow the Christian faith. Across the school day, opportunity to engage in activity which promotes spiritual development is not limited to worship or RE teaching and therefore, children of all faiths have equal opportunity to grow spiritually.

Where pupils are withdrawn from acts of working and RE, school will liaise with parents regarding wider opportunities to access reflection areas around school.

Version Control:

Version number	Date	Changes	By
1	Feb 2021	New Policy	Z Cahalan
2	Sep 2024	Added section around P4C	Z Cahalan

Policy adopted by Governing Body on: 17.9.24 Signed: _____ (Chair)

Due for review: Sept 2027