

Spirituality Guidance

Our Vision

As a Church of England school we are proud that our vision, **‘A space to learn and grow – working together in the knowledge and love of God to flourish in all that we do.’** is rooted in the theology of the Church of England Vision for Education and the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. The Weald is a Church of England Primary School, in The Good Shepherd Trust, where pupils and staff act out their faith in their daily lives, with Jesus as their example.

Introduction

To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something which is beyond words. The 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 ous 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 every day.

Aims

Our school vision is ‘A space to learn and grow – working together in the knowledge and love of God to flourish in all that we do’.

Our vision and values develop each child by supporting them to:

- Develop a sense of self-worth, stemming from the recognition that they are created in the image of God.
- Develop a sense of being, in relationship with others, and a growing understanding of what it means to belong to a community.
- Be involved with others in the wider world and an appreciation of difference and diversity.
- Respond to the distinctive ethos of a Church school and the content, language and symbolism of the Christian faith as a way of understanding our meaning and purpose in life.
- Develop a willingness to explore Christian beliefs and values through a knowledge of Bible stories and Christian teaching in order that these might become a firm foundation for life.
- Reflect upon experiences of awe and wonder, compassion for others and the beauty around us.
- Realise that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss can be occasions for spiritual growth and development.
- Value the natural world and a commitment to care for creation.
- Develop a willingness to explore the ultimate questions and mysteries of life.



Spirituality Across the Curriculum

When planning for and discussing spiritual development The Weald uses the language of wows, ows and nows and the concepts of: Windows, Mirrors and Doors.

These are used to explore relationships with:

- ourselves
- others
- the wider natural world and beyond
- and offering the invitation to relate to God



Windows – Learning about life

We give children opportunities to become *aware* of the world in new ways; to **wonder** about life's '**Wows**' (things that are amazing and unexplainable as to why they evoke such a response) and '**Ows**' (things that upset us and cause us to be uncertain). In this, our pupils are learning *about* life in all its fullness.



Mirrors – Learning from life

We give children opportunities to **reflect** on their experiences; to look inward, to consider some of the big questions of life. In this, they are learning *from* life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.



Doors – Learning to live life

We give children opportunity to **respond** to all of this; to **do** something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this they are learning to **live** by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

The spiritual growth of pupils is not only dependent on learning in RE, opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of pupils are developed in every aspect of our school life at The Weald. 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.

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 in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of The Weald. It provides the opportunity for our school community to come together, 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 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 are introduced.

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, sadness 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 members of our school community 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 at The Weald is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

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 our 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. Pupils are provided with 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 The Weald's Religious Education Policy and The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

Drawing on the language of 'wows', 'ows' and 'nows', conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate. Spiritual opportunities are weaved through our enquiry curriculum and wellbeing Story project curriculum. Enquiries with the 'giving' theme (How are lives saved? How can science help the vulnerable? How can we switch off? What is the difference between surviving and being healthy?) have particular spiritual and giving back to the community opportunities.

Spirituality within the Ethos of the Daily Life of the School

At The Weald, 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 pupils and staff deal with delight, disappointment and the chance to be present with themselves. 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 talking about them.

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 subject leader for RE and the Senior Leaders are both 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:

- Ensuring personal knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD and shared good practice.
- Providing and sourcing training for staff as necessary.
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the shared language of spirituality.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Review

Alongside the senior leaders, the local clergy and LGC review the policy biannually, in partnership and consider any views expressed by parents, pupils and staff in order to make any changes or recommendations.

Related Documents

- RE Policy
- Relationships Policy