

Bentley Heath C E Primary School



Spirituality Policy

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School Statement on Spirituality

To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something which is beyond words. To make conversations about spirituality more accessible to every member of our school community, Bentley Heath CE Primary School has chosen to follow ideas developed by the Education Department at the Diocese of Gloucester.

This 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 **ows** 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 everyday.

In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the **wows**, **ows** and **nows** of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with gold and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality.

Bentley Heath CE Primary School uses this language and the concepts of **wows**, **ows** and **nows**. These are used to explore relationships with:

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

Aims

School's Christian Vision:

At Bentley Heath we want all in our community to be shaped by Jesus' command to:

"Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

This love guides all of the work that we do but is not the only inspiration that we take from the Bible:

Who are we?

"We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand." (Isaiah 64:8)

We believe that everyone is **made in the image and likeness of God** for a purpose. Everyone is welcome here. At Bentley Heath, we see ourselves as a **big family**. This means we look after one another, celebrate successes together and join in each other's joy and sadness. We seek to nurture all members of our community and value our uniqueness, **celebrating diversity and treasuring difference** including the individual talents and skills we have to offer. We also cherish our strong links with the **community** around us, and particularly with the churches of St Philip's Dorridge and St James' Bentley Heath.

Why are we here?

"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

As in the Great Commission, we want our children to have the opportunity to encounter God's presence in the big and the small things. Our aspiration for all members of the Bentley Heath family is that they would have the confidence to **go out into the world and make a difference** knowing that God is with them. We want our pupils and staff to **flourish** as part of our community, demonstrating love and compassion to themselves and others, **reaching their potential** in all areas of life. We are passionate for children to explore and develop their own **spirituality** and know that they are loved unconditionally by God in order to **be courageous advocates** and stand up for what they believe in.

How then do we live?

"Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12)

At Bentley Heath we strive to have a culture where we "love one another" and treat each other well. As a community we have a strong sense of justice and recognise our responsibility for others, providing compassion and encouragement so all can flourish both spiritually and academically. Our school values help us to live out our vision - valuing everyone, helping those less fortunate, forgiving one another, and appreciating beauty and nature. We have identified six core values that we believe are central to the work of our Christian educational community.

❖ **PERSEVERANCE** – keep on going, even when it's difficult.

“Let us run with determination the race that lies before us. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end.” (Hebrews 12: 1, 2)

❖ **PEACE** – at ease with yourself, others, and the world.

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:27)

❖ **COMPASSION** – reaching out and making a difference for others.

“Do for others what you want them to do for you.” (Matthew 7:12)

❖ **FORGIVENESS** – giving and receiving opportunities to start again.

“If you forgive people who sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Matthew 6:14)

❖ **CREATIVITY** – loving creation and expressing yourself as God made you.

“Let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.” (Romans 12:6)

❖ **HOPE** – God is faithful. Our future is in His hands.

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13)

Developing spirituality in our school is driven by this vision and enables us to celebrate together in the 'wows', be present in the 'nows' and support one another in the 'ows' that life has to offer. We want our children, through their spirituality, to be advocates for others, celebrate diversity and develop a real sense of who they are so they can flourish.

Organisation

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

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 Bentley Heath CE Primary School. It provides the opportunity for our school community to 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 and a place 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 and are introduced to different musical traditions.

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 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 school members 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 in Bentley Heath CE Primary School 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 this 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. They provide 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.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

Spirituality and spiritual development might be thought of as the 'golden thread' which runs through our curriculum. It is not standalone and is intrinsic to everything we do at Bentley Heath. We understand spirituality as the way in which we nurture our 'inner life'. To help us with this, we understand spiritual moments as the 'wows' (moments of awe and wonder), 'ows' (life's blows and tough times) and 'nows' (being aware and present in the moment).

Drawing on the language of **wows**, **ows** and **nows**, conversations around spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from Reception to Year 6

Maths

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our Maths curriculum, such as:

- Scale - how big objects/numbers can be e.g. how many stars in the sky?
- Fibonacci sequence
- Fascination of infinite/endless possibilities through open ended investigations, a curiosity about how far things can go
- Shape in the real world and nature
- Symmetry, including in nature
- Reflection, use of mirrors
- Sense of wonder in the exactness of maths
- Wonder of rules in maths – e.g. angles in a triangle add up to 180 degrees, no matter what
- Sense of joy through making predictions in maths and testing them
- History of maths, where numbers started – the first numbers established
- The awe and inspiration where a fact/calculation is understood
- Working through a problem/puzzle can create calming feelings, pursuit of a challenge, can be therapeutic
- Early years - understanding value of numbers, link to outdoor play
- Time – link to God's creation, what happens in a day/week?
- Curiosity of time, is there such a thing as the present moment? Idea of transcendence

English

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our English curriculum, such as:

- Self-expression of thoughts, feelings and emotions
- Asking questions about the text that is inspiring the writing
- Diaries and journaling as a means of communicating emotions
- Empathy with characters - thinking beyond self
- Poetry as a form of spiritual expression
- Appreciation of own writing skills and the writing talents of others
- Connecting with a piece of writing – evokes an emotional response
- Connecting with people – postcards, letters, sonnets
- Performance in preparation for and as a result of writing – immersion, consideration of audience e.g. performance poetry, drama, role play etc.
- Allows us to share passions, opinions and to take action through words e.g. debate

We make space to consider:

- I wonder how I am like and different from these characters?
- What inspired you in the text?
- I wonder how you would cope with a challenge in your life?
- I wonder how you would have responded to a similar situation in your life?
- I wonder when you have felt...?
- I wonder if you would react the same way as... in the book?
- How would you imagine living in (setting of the book)?
- I wonder how you would see yourself in this story?
- I wonder how this book inspires you to take action?
- I wonder how this book changes you?
- How has the authors use of language and vocabulary inspired you?
- What word fascinated you in the text? How are you going to use this? How does this make you feel?
- Which part of the illustration resonates with you?
- What has warmed/healed your heart in this book?
- What has surprised you?

Design and Technology

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our D & T curriculum, such as:

- Design Technology encourages pupils to be reflective, creative and to exercise their imagination.
- It encourages them to be inspired and use their insight as they develop ideas.
- Pupils reflect on their own and others' ideas and wonder about the purpose of human technological achievement.
- Design Technology encourages pupils to appreciate and reflect upon the aesthetic nature of materials and design.
- Pupils reflect on the aesthetic relationship between building designs and the natural world.
- Pupils' think creatively and show innovation can be inspirational.
- Pupils reflect on the positive impact that creating can have on their self-confidence and the confidence of others.
- Pupils are in awe of the gift of food and the wonder of where our food comes from.
- Pupils develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery when studying the natural world or human achievement.
- Pupils are encouraged to creatively express innermost thoughts and feelings and to reflect and learn from reflection, for example, asking 'why?', 'how?' and 'where?'
- Pupils take part in the discovery of the use of different materials.

Music

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our Music curriculum, such as:

- Expression of spirituality through movement to music
- Respond to how music makes us feel in an imaginative way
- Explore how different instruments sound
- Be absorbed in the moment
- Find the delight and joy in music and sound
- Communicate through sounds

- Reflect on pieces of music and how it can make people feel (understanding other viewpoints)
- Be mindful and still when listening to music or sound
- Hear and reflect on the sounds of nature

French

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our French curriculum, such as:

- How can speaking a different language give us opportunities to explore our identity?
- Exploring different cultures and traditions
- Grappling with new language 'rules' and persevering with this
- What motivates language learning? For example, buying an ice cream on holiday or welcoming and comforting a stranger in our country?
- What does it feel like to genuinely communicate with someone in a new language?

Geography

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our Geography curriculum, such as:

- Where can you promote a sense of wonder and fascination with the physical and human world?
- Children should experience moments of stillness in their local environment
- Pause for reflection in relation to natural disasters which allows people to express their response
- Respect and understand other communities that may be different from our own
- could explore their own feelings about the people, culture, place and environments that they are learning about
- Understanding that all life is linked together and create the processes that make the only known inhabited planet
- Knowing and believing the endless possibilities that they could make a difference upon this world
- The value of stewardship – how can you make a difference in the world?
- Pupils reflect on the long- and short-term impact noting the rights and wrong linking to the value of justice

History

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our History curriculum, such as:

- Reflect on our time in life now
- Recognise something wider than ourselves now and in the past e.g. how does...make you feel?
- Explore significant individuals and wonder how they might influence the person you want to become
- Think critically and find meaning in the past by asking big questions
- Use imagination to appreciate the experiences of others (reflect on how this is the same and different)
- Become immersed in the past

- Consider how peoples' values have changed overtime
- Appreciate how religious beliefs have evolved over time and changed the course of history
- Connect with sensitive issues or beliefs from the past (in a positive or negative way)
- Allow an emotional response to history
- Pause and reflect

Physical Education

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our P.E curriculum, such as:

- Children learn how to take care of their body and mind through exercise.
- Children are involved in sports such as Yoga which promote positive mental health and awareness of self.
- Physical expression of spirituality through dance, movement etc.
- Awareness of own talents and delighting in the talents of others.
- Connection with nature through sport – outdoor opportunities e.g. water-sports etc.
- Opportunities to reflect on own strengths and appreciate contributions to the wider team – connecting with people!
- Importance of communication – clear instructions, support, encouragement.
- Sense of achievement.
- Time for reflection e.g. solo running etc.
- Pushing your own limits to achieve your personal best and improve.
- Noticing impact of sport on your body – feel your heartbeat, listen to your breathing
- Emotions when watching sport in motion ... football match, a ballet, gymnastic performance, ice-skating

Science

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our Science curriculum, such as:

- Appreciating nature and learning about the world and their environment by being in nature. Accessing our variety of outdoor spaces.
- Valuing and seeking beauty from the minute details to the biggest phenomenon.
- Learning to look after your body and nurturing it with exercise and healthy eating.
- Develop excitement and awe about natural phenomena.
- To delight in how your body works and that each part has been made with a specific purpose.
- Encouraging children to ask why questions and develop their own lines of enquiry.
- To wrestle with the contradictions between science and faith.
- Developing confidence to draw conclusions and viewpoints, knowing that these may be revisited later on in life which may impact decision making in life.

Art

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our Art & Design curriculum, such as:

- Spark curiosity and nourish both the head and the heart.
- Through studying art work and themes within it, develop sense of connection to self, others, world and God.

- Be introduced to works of great artists and experience wonder and awe at the achievements of these works of art.
- Experience great admiration and respect for their own work and that of peers which could be used to bring hope to others.
- Pupils gain a respect for the spiritual journey of creation which involves resilience and endurance.
- Children should experience moments of stillness in order to gain an appreciation for the hope and joy and delight in the beauty of artwork.
- To be exposed to variety of samples of art and to consider art as a medium of self-expression.
- Be given opportunities to respond to deeper meanings of art and create art which could raise awareness of issues of social justice.
- Develop curiosity and fascination about a piece of art and be able to express through questioning: Why has the artist chosen this theme? what is a response? Why this media?
- Encourage everyone to 'keep their eyes open' and sow the seeds of spirituality.
- Pause for reflection in relation to difficult themes within artwork which allows people to express their response to challenging circumstances and build a resilient hope

Computing

There are many opportunities to explore our spirituality within our Computing curriculum, such as:

- Exploring moral dilemmas? E.g. Do you like being served by a robot?
- Is anything impossible?
- How does technology change the world?
- Could you imagine the advances of technology in the future?
- What is reality?
- How could I view/travel the world through technology?
- Does technology bring us closer together or divide us?
- How does technology make me feel?
- How does technology nourish you?
- I wonder if technology changes how I think?
- I wonder how technology shapes my opinions, my actions and my choices?
- How does your relationship with technology differ to others?
- I wonder how technology serves others, our planet and ourselves?
- Can technology bring us closer to God?
- How does technology impact on our communities?
- How does technology promote inclusivity?
- How does technology serve the underserved?
- How does technology help us to be creative?

Spirituality within the Ethos of the Daily Life of the School

In Bentley Heath CE Primary School 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 children deal with delight, disappointment and the chance to be present with themselves.

For this reason, every member of the school community are familiar with the school's shared language of spirituality and will respond to pupils appropriately.

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 about talking about the **golden glue of spirituality**.

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 Headteacher, alongside the Christian Distinctiveness Lead and with support of the Vicar, is 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: (amend as appropriate)

- Ensuring personal knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD and shared good practice
- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the shared language of spirituality
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources, managing a budget when necessary
- Monitoring the opportunities for spiritual growth through regular observations and learning walks in both formal and informal contexts, discussions with colleagues and pupil voice
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process