



Austwick CE (VA) Primary School and Nursery

Spirituality Statement

Rationale

Our vision is based on Matthew 5:16, “Let Your Light Shine”. An essential part of this is providing opportunities for all adults and children to develop their own spirituality; to be aware of their sense of self as they, as unique individuals, interact with and reflect on the world and communities of which they are part, enabling all to flourish.

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality concerns a person’s relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or that which is transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements – self, others, transcendence and beauty form the basis of our work with children in developing their individual spirituality. In addition, we recognise the importance of opportunities that also allow adults to grow spiritually and believe that this helps to create a school community in which all stakeholders can, “Let their light shine” and live out our School’s Christian vision.

The four elements and what they consist of:

Self

- Awareness of feelings and ability to reflect, express and grow
- Awareness of our uniqueness, reflecting on who we are and our own sense of worth
- Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are
- Exploration of personal beliefs
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others

- Empathy, understanding, respect and tolerance
- To love and be loved (relationships)
- Making a difference and understanding duty

Transcendence (Beyond)

- Encountering and experiencing God or having a sense of what lies beyond the physical and material
- Ability to formulate and discuss the 'Big Questions' (eg. about life, death, suffering and the nature of God)
- Opportunities for prayer and reflection
- Making sense of the world

Beauty

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder
- Enjoying the miracles of everyday life
- Taking time for what really matters
- Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature and all areas of the curriculum

How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality

- Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This includes daily collective worship, listening to a story and opportunities take time out and be quiet, for instance during break times.
- Provide opportunities for creativity and developing the imagination such as through art, music and maths.
- Singing, dancing and generally enjoying and engaging with music e.g. Listening to a wide range of music at the beginning and end of collective worship, creating school productions and engaging in workshops.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings in all lessons and in the wider life of the school.
- Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. Enable children to relate meaningfully with each other such as opportunities to explore forgiveness and restorative justice and to have time with their 'buddy' partners.
- Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms and appreciate connections with the wider world. This is a central part of our vision (being inspired by nature) and we have many opportunities to engage with this (eg. Annual bluebell walk, Forest School activities, walking the three peaks, learning about nature in Uganda).
- Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process. Children learn about restorative justice as part of their curriculum.
- Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion and to express these in practical ways (e.g. Learning about Christian values in collective worship and the wider life of the school, School Secret Spotters, Stars of the Week, charitable and fundraising events).
- Explore the 'Big Questions' as part of the whole curriculum offer.

- Read often to children and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes reading partners, the development of an engaging and reflective library area to enjoy, whole class end of day story, opportunities to explore Bible stories, the school's ACES club.
- The RE curriculum examines spirituality in faiths and the impact that it has on the lives of believers
- Displays and pictures throughout the school celebrate our uniqueness, how we interact with each other and engage with the world. These provide opportunities for reflection and capture our Now, Ow and Wow moments.
- Visits and visitors provide many opportunities to explore our own spirituality and that of others

Structures to support and develop spirituality

At Austwick School our Vision is central to all that we do. In addition to living by Christian values, we seek to follow our Christian vision:

We are a small, rural school but believe that everybody must be given the opportunity to grow and develop, ready to go out into the world as shining lights. We recognise that we are all special and have unique talents which we nurture to give us the greatest opportunities. We are inspired by the nature around us, and the rich experiences which build our wider aspirations.

We embrace our key Christian values of **respect, love, forgiveness** and **perseverance** which are found in the daily life of our school community and allow us to be the best we can be. Our core values fully encompass how we as a school, embrace our Christian distinctiveness and how our families and pupils live this everyday. Our small rural school provides the nurturing environment for our children to flourish surrounded by the beautiful countryside around us.

This ensures that there are many opportunities for spiritual development in all areas of school life.

In addition, we take time to recognise and reflect on WOW, OW and NOW moments in school.

WOW moments – opportunities to recognise, appreciate and reflect on areas such as achievement, happiness, excitement, awe and wonder and significant life experiences.

OW moments -learning from our mistakes, recognising when we have made a wrong choice, have hurt someone and when we are sad. Acknowledging and reflecting on those difficult events in life.

NOW moments – appreciating being in the moment such as stopping to look at something beautiful in nature, to appreciate kind words or laugh at something that is amusing. Making time for reflection in the moment. Taking opportunities to play in the snow.

Impact: How do we know that this is being effective?

Spiritually developed children and adults love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them and are concerned for humanity and creation. They are open to what lies beyond the material. They are able to express and understand feelings, have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, possess an

active imagination and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills. Above all, they let their light shine in all areas of life!

Date: March 2025

Date for review: March 2027