

Rushwick CE Primary School



Spirituality Policy

Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Version Approved	Next Review Date
EAW/VP	LAB	October 2026	VI	October 2028

Background

Legal Framework for Spirituality in Schools (England)

Spiritual development is not optional. It is a statutory expectation that all schools must promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC).

1. Education Act 2002 (Section 78) – Statutory Duty

All maintained schools and academies must promote the spiritual development of pupils.

Section 78 requires the curriculum to:

- *Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and*
- *Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.*

This is the core legal requirement underpinning spirituality in education.

2. The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (Revised)

These standards apply to academies, because academies must meet the Independent School Standards.

They require schools to:

- *Encourage pupils to develop self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence (Part 2 – Personal Development of Pupils)*
- *Encourage respect for others*
- *Encourage respect for democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance.*

These directly reference spiritual development, even though the word is not always used – they form the legal baseline for SMSC provision.

3. The 1996 Education Act (Collective Worship Requirement)

All state-funded schools must provide:

- *A daily act of collective worship*
- *Of a “wholly or mainly broadly Christian” character (unless withdrawn by parents or an exemption is granted)*

For Church schools, this aligns with their foundation and ethos.

Collective worship is one of the key statutory places where spirituality can be explored, nurtured, and expressed.

4. School Inspection Handbook & Ofsted Requirements

The school recognises that spiritual development is an important aspect of pupils' personal development and wellbeing. While Ofsted does not inspect or grade “SMSC” as a separate evaluation area, the current Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and School Inspection Toolkit require inspectors to consider how effectively schools support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Under the current framework, **Personal Development and Wellbeing** is one of the principal areas evaluated during a school inspection. Ofsted's expected standard states that:

“A coherent and appropriate programme of personal development extends across the taught curriculum and wider opportunities and experiences. It makes a positive difference to pupils and enables them to develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally.”

The school therefore understands spiritual development as an integral part of its curriculum, wider personal development provision, relationships, ethos and day-to-day life, rather than as a discrete subject or programme.

In particular, the school provides pupils with opportunities to:

- reflect on their own experiences, feelings, values, beliefs and sense of identity;
- develop self-awareness, self-knowledge and a growing understanding of what gives meaning and purpose to their lives;
- explore questions about values, beliefs, meaning, purpose and what it means to be human;
- encounter and develop respect for a range of religious and non-religious beliefs and worldviews;
- appreciate diversity and understand the beliefs, perspectives and experiences of others;
- experience and respond to creativity, beauty, awe and wonder through the arts, music, literature, nature, science and the wider curriculum;
- consider ethical and moral questions and develop the ability to reflect, reason and form their own considered views;

- develop a sense of belonging, connection, responsibility and respect for themselves, others and the wider world;
- participate in experiences that broaden their horizons, develop their interests and contribute positively to their wellbeing and personal growth.

Spiritual development is promoted through the **taught curriculum and wider opportunities and experiences**, including religious education, assemblies and collective worship where applicable, PSHE/RSHE, literature, the arts, music, science, history, outdoor learning, relationships and the wider life of the school.

The school recognises that spiritual development will look different for different pupils and will be appropriate to their age, stage of development, individual circumstances and beliefs. It is not limited to religious belief and is not dependent upon pupils adopting any particular faith or worldview.

The school will therefore be able to demonstrate, through its curriculum, provision and pupils' experiences, how spiritual development contributes to a coherent programme of personal development and wellbeing.

Leaders will evaluate the effectiveness of this provision through curriculum monitoring, pupil voice, discussion with staff and governors, review of wider opportunities and experiences, and consideration of the impact on pupils' personal development and wellbeing. The school will avoid unnecessary tracking or recording of individual pupils' spirituality where this does not add educational value.

This approach reflects the current Ofsted inspection framework and toolkit, under which spiritual development is considered primarily within **Personal Development and Wellbeing**, while also being supported by the quality of the curriculum, teaching, school ethos, inclusion, safeguarding, and leadership and governance.

5. Church of England Education Office Expectations (For CE Schools)

For CE schools, the legal framework is supplemented by:

a. The SIAMS Framework (2023/2024)

SIAMS requires that CE schools provide:

- *A theologically rooted vision*
- *High-quality spiritual development throughout the curriculum*
- *Collective worship that is inclusive, invitational, and inspirational*
- *Opportunities for pupils to experience spirituality through stillness, reflection, prayer or other meaningful experiences*

Spirituality (as defined by the Church of England) must be:

- *Planned*
- *Progressive*
- *Appropriate for all pupils regardless of faith background*

b. The Church of England Vision for Education (2016)

Based around four pillars:

- *Wisdom*
- *Hope*
- *Community*
- *Dignity*

This gives CE schools a framework that legally aligns with their Christian foundation and supports spiritual development.

6. Equality Act 2010

Schools must ensure spiritual education is provided in a way that does not discriminate against pupils based on:

- *religion or belief*
- *race*
- *sex*
- *disability*
- *sexual orientation*
- *or any protected characteristic*

This supports inclusive spirituality, not exclusively religious spirituality.

Our School's Vision

'Ask, Seek, Knock'

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7.

Our Christian Vision

Inspired by the teachings of Jesus and recognising each person as a unique child of God, we work for the common good of everyone, ensuring our door is open for all to flourish. We encourage all to thoughtfully ask, graciously seek and courageously knock, so that together we can make a difference to our Rushwick School family and the wider world.

Our School Values

Respect	We treat all others with respect. Being respectful is reflected in the courtesy with which we speak, act and treat one another. Acting respectfully gives people the dignity they deserve. Respect is behaving in a way which makes life more peaceful and orderly for everyone.
Kindness	We look for ways to help each other, kindness is showing you care about anyone, knowing that everything is part of God's creation. Kindness is being concerned about the welfare of others. Kindness is showing love to someone who is sad or needs your help.
Trust	We tell the truth and can be trusted. Trust is having faith, hope and a positive outlook. It is relying on and believing in someone or something. It is having confidence that the right thing will come about, without trying to control it or make it happen. We know we are never alone and that God is always with us.
Compassion	We understand and care for someone who is in trouble or has made a mistake. It is being kind and forgiving even when others may not be sorry for that they have done. It is caring deeply and wanting to help. It is being considerate and having regard for other people and their feelings. It is also important to show compassion to others and yourself. Compassion is the most meaningful way to show love.
Gratitude	We are thankful for all we are given and all of God's creation. Gratitude is to be thankful for what you have. It is an attitude of gratitude for learning, loving and being. It is also being thankful for the little things which happen around you and within you everyday. It is an openness and willingness to receive each of God's bounties. To be grateful is to have a sense of wonder about the beauty of this world and to welcome all of life as a gift. Gratitude is a path to contentment.
Courage	We understand that showing courage is doing what needs to be done even when it is really hard and scary. Courage is personal bravery in the face of fear. Courage is going ahead even when you feel like giving up or quitting. Courage is needed in trying new things, in facing the truth and in picking yourself up after a mistake ready to try again. It comes from knowing deep down what is right for you and believing in yourself to do it. Courage can come from prayer and the trust that God will help.

Our vision and values are rooted in scripture, particularly Jesus' teaching on Kingdom principles in the Sermon on the Mount. This is a practical lesson on how to live our lives, rooted in Christian Values. At Rushwick, working with and for others, we endeavour for all our community to know how much they are valued by one another and God.

Jesus teaches us to ask, seek and knock and in response, God will open our hearts and minds to receive, to find and the door will be opened to a world of opportunities.

Why Spirituality is important at Rushwick

All human beings are spiritual people. This is the way God has made us. Children are not only no less spiritual than adults, they are often, it appears, more open to their spiritual reality. There is a rich natural spiritual capacity of childhood – spirituality as something ‘already there’ to be cherished. This means learning to view spirituality as something we expect in every child.

Taking spirituality seriously in children helps us to embrace the reality that children are made in God’s image and that they are already spiritually switched on.

Spiritual development at Rushwick is open to every pupil, regardless of religious or non-religious worldview. As a Church of England school, this development takes place within a distinctive Christian context, while respecting and enabling pupils to explore their own beliefs, questions and worldviews.

What is Spirituality?

At Rushwick we understand spirituality as a sense of awe and wonder; a sense that there is someone or something more than ‘just me’; a sense of something indescribable.

Spiritual development is not about becoming more spiritual. It is about realising or becoming more and more aware of one’s natural, innate spirituality. This is sometimes a slow, gradual process, at other times there might be significant stages of realisation. People participate in an ongoing process of spiritual realisation.

In childhood, spirituality is especially about being attracted towards or *responding to a call to relate* to more than ‘just me’ – i.e. to others, to God, to creation or to a deeper inner sense of self. This encounter with transcendence can happen in specific experiences or moments, as well as through imaginative or reflective activity (thoughts and meaning making).

Spirituality and faith

At Rushwick, we recognise that there is a difference between a person’s own faith and their sense of spirituality. A person can develop their spirituality without having a faith in God.

What is Spirituality in childhood?

Children have a more holistic way of seeing things; they don’t analyse as much, so their perception has a more *mystical* quality. Children are especially open and curious, they don’t judge or get suspicious as much, so they have a natural capacity to *wonder*. Children are discovering new things daily; they don’t need to tell themselves to learn, so they are comfortable with the feeling of being granted new understanding, a kind of surprise gift or ‘aha!’.

Children’s emotional life is at least as strong as their intellectual life, they don’t (or can’t) hide from their feelings. As a result, they understand what it’s like to *surrender* to forces that transcend their control. Children easily accept that their words are not adequate to describe their thoughts and feelings so are therefore comfortable with the power of what is indescribable.

How do we develop children’s Spirituality?

Spirituality is like a bird; if you hold it tightly, it chokes; if you hold it loosely, it flies away. Fundamental to spirituality is the absence of force. Rabbi Hugo Gryn

The school provides opportunities for children’s spiritual development within the context of Christian beliefs and values, both within collective worship and during other learning experiences to:

- Explore Christian faith and develop a relationship with God. However, spiritual development is open to every pupil, regardless of religious or non-religious worldview
- Develop an awareness of God’s love and care for them personally
- Develop a sense that there is ‘more than meets the eye’, more than a physical or material existence
- Develop an inner self-confidence and peace
- Develop the capacity for enquiry and open-mindedness
- Experience moments of stillness and quiet and to be in awe of the wonders of nature and the miracle of God’s world
- Reflect on, be in awe of, consider and celebrate the wonders of God’s world and the mysteries of life

Please see *Our Spiritual Diet at Rushwick Handbook* for more detailed information about what this looks like in action.

What does Spirituality look like in children?

Delight in all things
Being absorbed in the present moment
Not too attracted to 'self'
Searching for meaning
Discovering purpose
Wholly absorbed in learning
Eager to explore boundaries of 'beyond'

Organisation & Implementation

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

We support the whole school community to share this responsibility and 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.

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 traditions. Worship is invitational.

Worship Themes focus on:

Big Questions and I wonder moments. There is time for reflection and time to be still in every worship.

Religious Education & Cross Curricular Learning

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 religious and worldviews, linking these people to pupil ideas of spirituality and the language of **wows** where appropriate.

Conversations around 'Wow's and spirituality will be included in classroom teaching when appropriate from Reception to Year 6.

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

This implementation of this policy will be undertaken through quality assurance with Leaders and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff in order to make any changes or recommendations. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing body and are then actioned as appropriate.

LABs ensure that this policy is fully implemented and that practice is consistent with the school's Christian vision, in line with the school's monitoring policy and schedule for LAB.

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 as appropriate.

All members of SLT, and the RE Curriculum lead are 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 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 particularly around Strand 2
- Utilising expertise from outside agencies to support staff's own spiritual development.

This policy is shared on the schools' website and is part of the induction pack for new staff and new LAB.

This policy is reviewed every 2 years, or more frequently as required.