

GREAT CHESTERFORD C. OF E. PRIMARY ACADEMY



Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively.

Ecclesiastes 4:9

Spirituality Policy
March 2026

'Together we are great'

Introduction

School Vision

'Together we are great'

We are working hard to become a world class church school, which is the natural choice for parents in the community.

We believe that this can best be achieved by:

- Striving for excellence in all our actions.
- Challenging ourselves with high expectations to provide the best education for all.
- Supporting each other to realise our potential.
- Creating a stimulating and happy environment within our school.
- Enjoying our time together.
- Celebrating our successes together.
- Promoting positive behaviour and a healthy lifestyle within our caring Christian community.

Our vision, drives and supports the ethos of our school and the policies and practices within it. At Great Chesterford C. of E. Primary Academy, we believe that spirituality is the golden thread that runs through our school. We attach great importance to it for both children's development and for the growth and wellbeing of all within our school community. Spiritual development is supported through our collective worship, the curriculum, the school environment and how we interact with ourselves, others, the world and God or a divine being through stillness, creativity, curiosity and big questions.

We aim for children and adults to grow in their ability to:

- be guided by their beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them
- be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community
- love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges
- exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder
- be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
- be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer
- be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and forgive others
- be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success
- demonstrate curiosity and open-mindedness when exploring life's big questions
- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards others

(From David Smith's work on Spiritual Capacities)

Our working definition of 'spirituality and our approach with pupils

As a staff and governor team, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

'Spirituality is the connection you have with yourself, others, the wider world, and beyond'.

Self (being a unique person and understanding self-perception) Others (how empathy, concern, compassion and other values and principles affect relationships) World and Beauty (perceiving and relating to the physical and creative world through responses to nature and art) Beyond (relating to the transcendental and understanding experiences and meaning outside the 'everyday').

We use the language of: windows, mirrors and doors, a metaphor originally developed by Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop.

Windows – 'Looking Out' becoming aware of the world in new ways and all its awe and wonder

Mirrors – 'Looking In' thinking deeply about what is important to us and what we believe

Doors – 'Moving Through' responding and taking action because of what we have seen, making positive choices and following your heart

Legal Requirements

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly – based curriculum which: a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural. Mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

To fulfil their legal obligations under section 48 of the 2005 Education Act, SIAMS inspections make judgements on SMSC education in Church of England and Methodist schools.

The SIAMS Framework (2024) references spirituality, implicitly and explicitly in two of the inspector questions:

IQ2: How does the curriculum reflect the school's theologically rooted Christian vision?

b) How is spiritual development an intrinsic part of the curriculum?

IQ3: How is daily collective worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

- a) How do the theologically rooted Christian vision and the Anglican /Methodist foundation of the school shape worship and spirituality in the school?
- b) How do partnerships with the DBE and/or MAST, and partnerships with parish/local church/es enhance this?
- c) In what ways is the worship life of the school inclusive, invitational and inspirational?

- d) In the context of the school as a Church school, what do pupils and adults understand to be the meaning of spirituality? How does this enhance and enrich collective worship and individual's spiritual development?
- e) How does the trust contribute to and enhance the school's worship and spiritual life?

The Church of England Vision for Education has a core desire for 'Life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) which requires education the whole person.

The OFSTED framework 2024 states that provision for pupil's spiritual education includes developing their:

- Ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and their perspective on life.
- Knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings, and values.
- sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others, and the world around them.
- use imagination and creativity in their learning.
- willingness to reflect on their experiences.

Evidence may be gathered by Ofsted inspectors from anywhere relevant to ensure that schools are promoting SMSC, mental and physical development of pupils at the schools; and prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities of later life.

We support pupils in their spiritual development by:

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as planned moments and as they arise
- providing reflection spaces in classrooms, public spaces, outside, and by using the church building and through the 'Prayer Spaces in School' website
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership through leading collective worship, Environment, Values and Community and Charity committees of the School Council, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Friendship Group activities, theme weeks such as 'Spirituality Week (June 2025) 'I have a Voice Week'(November 2025),

As a staff team:

- we have a staff understanding and shared language of spiritual development
- we have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff
- we revisit spirituality as an area for consideration in our staff meetings and offer training
- our governors monitor the impact of our spirituality focus through committee meetings, learning walks, governor agenda item, discussions with children, observing collective worship,
- we ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development
- we use models, language to support our own thinking in spirituality ie. Own approach here
- we have reflection areas both inside and outside the school building e.g in classrooms, in the shared corridor, the prayer shed

- we are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, Beauty and Beyond (Andrew Rickett/ David Smith/ Rebecca Nye)
- we recognise that children will experience of different 'Spiritual Capacities', (David Smith. This will influence our planning as we look to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship. We encourage staff, who are subject leads, to identify opportunities for spiritual development in their subject and share them with colleagues.
- We have identified opportunities for spiritual development and deeper thinking across the curriculum, for all age groups
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to wellbeing and development with the children
- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context and personal worldview
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website
- We discuss spirituality with our church and Diocesan Education team and others who can further support our golden thread
- Posters/charter/ school specific visual reminders in school environment

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community, supporting the development of the whole child beyond the physical and the academic.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Senior leaders, governors and children will support pupils and adults to share their experiences and opportunities for spiritual development through:

- Observing and listening to pupils
- Regular discussion at staff and governor meetings alongside the school's Christian vision and values
- Sharing of classroom work and practice
- Ensuring that staff have a clear understanding of what spiritual development means in this school by providing them with induction and development training
- Evidence from pupil's work e.g. reflective diary, RE books, SMSC work, creative writing, art
- Regular inclusion in the SEF e.g. discussions, CPD opportunities and sharing examples of good practice with other schools
- Seeking to evaluate, formally and informally with pupils and adults' activities with a particular focus on spirituality and spiritual development e.g. collective Worship
- Reflection spaces

Provision for spiritual development is monitored by Natalie Starbuck Deputy Headteacher/ Spirituality Lead through monitoring of medium-term plans, scrutiny of work, surveys learning walks

This will impact on the opportunities and experiences that are available to children and adults across the school community enabling all to flourish.

Evaluation, Review and Revision

This policy was written in March 2026. It will be reviewed in two years' time or before if it is felt appropriate. It was drawn up in consultation with, and reflects the consensus of the headteacher, members of the teaching staff and members of the Governing Body.

Signed: Head teacher	Date: March 2026
Signed: On behalf of the Governing Body	Date: March 2026
Next Review Date: March 2029	

Other related policies:

Collective Worship

Teaching and Learning

SMSC

All subject specific policies

Reference reading:

Church of England Education Office (CEEO) Spiritual development – interpretation of Spiritual Development in the Classroom 2019

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/2019-spiritual-development-interpretations-of-spiritual-developments-in-the-classroom.pdf>