

Spirituality Statement



Our School Vision:

Our vision for the school community is rooted in a deep respect for our human, social, and cultural values, expressed in a caring Christian ethos. We aim to promote high academic standards and a positive attitude to learning, and provide a wide range of experiences and opportunities. In doing so, we encourage all children to be happy and to flourish by giving them the skills they need to become good citizens and discover life in all its fullness (John 10:10).

What is Spirituality?

At Temple Sowerby Primary School, we want all of our children to flourish. In doing so, we recognize the importance of nurturing the whole child, fostering not only their academic, emotional, and social development, but also their spiritual growth. Our aim is to create an environment where children can explore and develop their own sense of spirituality, rooted in curiosity, reflection, and respect for the diversity of beliefs and values within our community and beyond.

It is very difficult to put into words what 'spirituality' actually is, because it is a very personal experience, each experience will be different, and experience of spirituality often changes over the course of a lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having faith or belonging to a particular religion; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith.

As a school, we have defined spirituality as:

Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration and being aware of something 'bigger' outside of ourselves.

We believe spirituality is about:

- **Wonder and Awe:** encouraging a sense of amazement about the world, whether through nature, creativity, or discovery.
- **Self-Reflection:** helping children to be aware of their own inner life of thoughts, feelings and emotions, whilst also helping them to develop relationships with others and building a sense of community.
- **Values and Morality:** through asking ultimate questions and looking beyond ourselves, we aim to inspire children to act with kindness, integrity, and a sense of justice, and to explore their own personal beliefs and values.

Spiritual Development in our Curriculum

Spiritual development is an intrinsic part of our curriculum - opportunities do not occur just within collective worship and RE. There are many other spontaneous opportunities (see Appendix 1) to explore spirituality throughout our curriculum, from exploring stories, poems and the beauty of language in English, to the creativity and self-expression of art, music, drama and dance. However, we also ensure there are a number of planned activities throughout the school year which provide opportunities for spiritual development. Examples include:

Wonder and Awe:

- To promote an appreciation of nature and the world around us, we provide weekly Forest School sessions, both in school and at the local National Trust property Acorn Bank.
- Our gardening and nature clubs run throughout the spring and summer months and have won RHS Gardening and Woodland Trust Platinum awards.
- We have developed links with other local organisations within our community. As well as our weekly visits to Acorn Bank, we regularly visit Simple Farming, near Appleby to learn about nature, whilst links to Eden Rivers Trust and Penrith Beekeepers Association also enhance our curriculum.
- We take pride in the range of opportunities and experiences provided throughout our curriculum - fell-walking in the Eden Valley promotes an appreciation of our local area, whilst visits to the Lake District and our residential allow children to experience both the natural wonder of mountains, lakes and seas, and the diversity and heritage of cities.
- Creativity is valued and promoted, both throughout our curriculum and through our after-school clubs where children have opportunities to work with local artists, musicians, dance and drama coaches. We have developed links with Sunbeams Music Trust who work with SEND children to improve their health and well-being through the creative freedom of music and also work with local artists on community projects. We take part in the Spirited Arts competition, giving children the opportunity to respond creatively to big questions, and are currently working towards the prestigious Artsmark award.

Self-Reflection:

- Our vision is underpinned by six core Christian values (kindness, responsibility, resilience, hope, community and courage). We explore the meanings of these values and their significance through our Collective Worship and link them to the Christian faith by relating them to Bible stories and readings.
- We have a programme of RHSE workshops to promote children's moral and emotional development and help them build positive relationships.
- Weekly Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) sessions and nurture groups help children to develop self-esteem, resilience and a growing awareness of the needs of others.

Values and Morality:

- Collective worship encourages children to ask and respond to big questions and to explore their own beliefs and values
- Our school council provides opportunities for children to facilitate change, whether instigating change in school or through addressing global issues (Cumbria Youth Climate Conference)

- We work closely with Cumbria Development Education Centre and other schools to consider environmental issues (Letters to the Earth, FIDS project)
- Children are encouraged to play an active role and to take action, whether litter picking, contributing to food banks, building links to other schools (Ankoma) as well as identifying charities to support throughout the year.

Windows, Mirrors and Doors

To help everyone in school understand their developing spirituality, we use the 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' model. These symbols and explanation can be seen in our reflection area and are incorporated into our collective worship and teaching.

WINDOWS · MIRRORS · DOORS

LOOK OUT INTO THE WORLD, REFLECT AND 'GO AND DO LIKEWISE'



WINDOWS

What are the important facts?
What is challenging to me about this?
What is inspiring to me about this?



MIRRORS

What is my view on this?
How do I feel about it?
How does my worldview affect my opinion about this?
What can I learn from others about this?



DOORS

What can I learn and take away with me today?
How can I respond to this matter?
Where can I find more information about this?
What can I take in order to 'Go and do likewise'? in the week ahead?

Windows – looking out into the world

- To wonder about life's 'WOWS. Things that are amazing.
- To think about life's 'OWS' that take us by surprise!
- Learning about life in all its fullness.

Mirrors – opportunities to reflect

- Looking inside yourself.
- Consider life's big questions and reach for some possible answers.
- Learning from life by exploring our own insights and those of others.

Doors – opportunities to respond

- Moving onto a new path or situation.
- To do something creative to develop and apply our ideas.
- Learning to live out our beliefs and values.

What is the role of the school community?

All members of the school community have a responsibility for helping to nurture children's spiritual development.

School staff can do this through:

- Establishing and maintaining a partnership between pupils, parents and staff; recognising and respecting the faith background of the children and their families;
- Taking part in, and supporting, collective acts of worship;
- Being good role models in their conduct towards other members of the community;
- Promoting an attitude of respect for other people and for others' views;
- Nurturing consideration for and generosity towards others.
- Drawing on the experiences of pupils and their families during religious education lessons and beyond;
- Recognising and being constantly aware of the needs and backgrounds of each individual pupil;
- Being willing to develop their own knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and the faiths of others;
- Having a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education.

Pupils can do this through:

- Taking an active part in acts of collective worship;
- Participating in activities which promote the skills allowing them to engage in examination of and reflection upon religious belief and practice;
- Conducting themselves towards others considerately, in line with the code of conduct;
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.

Parents can help through:

- Adopting a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education;
- Supporting the school's Christian ethos and acts of community worship such as assemblies and church services;
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.

Appendix 1 - Spirituality across the Curriculum

The following table adapted from the Diocese of Norwich publication *Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural Development: a Christian perspective* provides many examples of how to develop spirituality across different areas of the Curriculum.

Subject	Opportunities
PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By delighting in movement, particularly when pupils are able to show spontaneity. By taking part in activities such as dance, games and gymnastics which help pupils to become more focused, connected and creative . • By being aware of one's own strengths and limitations.
Computing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By wondering at the power of the digital age e.g. use of the internet and social media. • By understanding the advantages and limitations of ICT. • By using the internet as a gateway to big life issues.
Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By allowing for insight, self-expression and the chance to walk in someone else's shoes
Design and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By enjoying and celebrating personal creativity. • By reviewing and evaluating created things.
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By allowing pupils to show their delight and curiosity in creating their own sounds. • By considering how music makes one feel and can 'move us' deeply.
Art and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By providing plenty of rich opportunities for pupils to explore both the spiritual dimension and natural phenomena e.g. Northern Lights. • By exploring different artists' interpretations of a key figure or event and asking what the artist was trying to convey. By allowing pupils to show what they know through their own expression of big ideas about life e.g. morality; ethical issues. • By promoting the process of 'reviewing and evaluating'
PSHE/RSHE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By developing awareness of and responding to others' needs and wants. • By exploring meaning and purpose for individuals and society. • By developing resilience and inner strength. • By valuing self as unique in the image of God. • By cherishing relationships.
RE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By experiencing wonder and joy through learning about and from stories, celebrations, rituals and different expressions of religion and worldviews. • By asking and responding to questions of meaning and purpose. • By considering questions about God and evaluating truth claims. • By exploring spiritual practices such as worship and prayer, and considering the impact of these on believers as well as any relevance to their own life.
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By using Google maps and asking pupils to imagine what it might be like to live in different parts of the world. • By making links with history when exploring the environment and speculating on why the landscape is as it is. • By comparing their lives with pupils living in other countries or other parts of the UK, possibly through a schools linking programme. • See Global Neighbours
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By considering how things would be different if the course of events had been different; for example what difference would it have made if the Normans had not been successful in 1066? • By looking at local history and investigating the reasons why there is a landmark, building or museum. • By speculating about how we mark important events from history and the people who shaped them.
MFL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By exploring the beauty of languages from around the world. • By exploring the way language is constructed.
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By demonstrating openness to the fact that some answers cannot be provided by Science. • By creating opportunities for pupils to ask questions about how living things
Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In responding to a poem, story or text; pupils can be asked 'I wonder what you think happens next?' 'How would you feel if you were the person in the story?' 'Where have you met these ideas before?' • By appreciating the beauty of language.
Maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By making connections between pupils' numeracy skills and real life; for example, pie charts could compare how a child in Africa spends their day with how children in the UK spend their time. • By considering pattern, order, symmetry and scale both man made and in the natural world. • By appreciating the beauty of shape and space.