



# **Spirituality template policy for Schools and Academies**

**August 2025**

*This document has been created to support Schools and/or Academies in writing their own spirituality policy. This document is only intended as a guide; Schools and Academies are encouraged to ensure that a spirituality policy they create reflects the vision and context of their school or Academy.*

### Links to OFSTED and SIAMS expectations

All schools have a legal obligation to create opportunities for the spiritual development of pupils within their schools' communities, under the OFSTED School inspection framework. This requirement comes under personal development, specifically of 'social, moral, spiritual and cultural' (SMSC) development.

Section 344 of The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, September 2024, states that the provision for the spiritual development of pupils includes developing their:

- ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and 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 of imagination and creativity in their learning
- willingness to reflect on their experiences

Church of England Schools also have a legal requirement to create opportunities for the spiritual development of pupils within their school communities, under The SIAMS framework for Schools and Inspectors, September 2024, which includes the following inspection questions:

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

*Within this inspection question, schools are asked to consider how spiritual development is an intrinsic part of the curriculum.*

**IQ3** How is daily Collective Worship enabling pupils and adults to flourish spiritually?

### The school's understanding of spirituality

Understanding of spirituality within **(insert name of school)** starts with an acknowledgement of our school context and our theologically rooted Christian vision. We also consider the Anglican foundation of our school and consider the Biblical response to spirituality.

**Galatians 5:22-23:** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness".

**John 15:1-5** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing".

**Matthew 6:25:** "Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

These Bible passages offer a helpful starting point in unpacking what spirituality can mean. In the passages above it shows that for Christians, spirituality is about remaining close to God and that developing spirituality is something more than what can be seen and has an impact on a person's character. However, it must be acknowledged that Church of England Schools are inclusive communities that welcome people of all faiths and none. Spirituality is also something that is deeply personal and can differ greatly between individuals. It is something that may be easily felt but not so easy to define or articulate. However, for a school to develop spirituality in the ways outlined by the OFSTED and SIAMS inspection expectations above, **(insert name of school)** has decided to adopt a shared understanding and language of expression of spirituality so that it is more accessible to every member of our school community. The language of expression of spirituality within **(insert name of school)** has been developed with support of the Leicester Diocesan board of Education, consultation with key stakeholders within our school community and by reviewing the Church of England's publication on [Spiritual development \(October 2019\)](#).

**(Insert name of school)** understands spiritual development as relating to four concepts:

- ourselves
- others
- Nature / beauty of the wider world
- and offering the invitation to relate to God or something beyond ourselves

**(Insert School name)** has decided to use the following language of expression to talk about the four concepts above.

*Please note, the concepts outlined below are suggested ways (based on research) that your school can describe an approach of exploring the four main areas of spirituality – self, others, world and beyond. The ideas below are not exhaustive, and it may be that your school comes up with another way to express spirituality based on the context of your school and your theologically rooted Christian vision.*

- **Ows, wows and nows**

This concept was created by the Diocese of Gloucester and is based on the Japanese Art form of [Kintsugi](#), which is the idea that old and broken pottery can be brought back to life with Gold. This can act as a powerful metaphor for life in that it acknowledges the ups and downs of life and that strength and beauty can be formed from brokenness. The 'Ows' offer a way for pupils to communicate struggles or difficulties, the 'wows' are about celebratory and positive moments of life and the 'nows' offer opportunities to be still, present, reflect and be mindful of the current moment.

- **Looking in, looking out, looking up**

This refers to a concept by Charles Horton Cooley, an American sociologist, who developed the "looking-glass self" theory in his 1902 book, *Human Nature and the Social Order*. The concept has been developed for spiritual development in schools by [Rev Paul Rusby](#) and training was provided for schools in Leicester Diocese at the 2024 Headteacher Conference. The 'looking in' element of spirituality refers to the opportunities within school that pupils can reflect on themselves, their own beliefs

and identity. 'Looking out' refers to learning about people around them in their school and local communities but also learning about and reflecting on the wider world. 'Looking up' offers the opportunity to think about things beyond the physical senses and gives the invitational opportunity to reflect on God.

- **Windows, mirrors and doors**

This concept was outlined by Liz Mills in the '[Interpretations of spirituality](#)' publication by the Church of England (October 2019). This creates a concrete way of exploring the four main areas of spirituality with pupils. The visual of a 'window' creates opportunities for pupils to look out at the world, other people around us, just as we would look out of a window. We can learn and reflect on what we observe around us. A 'mirror moment' gives opportunity to reflect on self (just as you look at yourself in a mirror) and prompts pupils to think about their own thoughts, beliefs and ideas. The 'door' gives pupils an opportunity to think about their impact on the world and what could be done or thought further about in response to the 'window' and 'mirror' moments. As the 2019 publication above states, 'door moments' give an opportunity for:

*"moving on, making choices, and doing something creative, active and purposeful in response. This can simply be done through a change in attitude or behaviour or thinking. It can also be expressed powerfully through music or art or drama or dance and through some form of social action or specific acts of giving".*

*Please not that the exploration of 'beyond' could be realised through any of the 'window', 'mirror' or 'door' moments above.*

- **Love and belonging**

This concept was outlined by Andrew Ricketts in the '[Interpretations of spirituality](#)' publication by the Church of England (October 2019). Andrew describes that the four main areas of spirituality often make sense to pupils by telling stories and hearing the stories of others. How much time do we take in school to authentically get to know one another and each other's stories? Therefore, spirituality can be described as building relationships and that the concept of love is what connects the four areas of spirituality together. Where in school can pupils relate in a meaningful way to self, others, the beauty of the world around them and something beyond themselves?

- **Relational awareness**

Rebecca Nye in her 2009 book 'Children's Spirituality: What it is and why it matters', suggests that spirituality can be defined as relational awareness or relational consciousness. That means awareness of the relationship with: 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), Divine (relating to the transcendental and understanding experiences and meaning outside the 'everyday').

- **Connection**

This concept offers simple language to explore the four areas of spirituality – self, others, world and beyond. Spirituality is seen as connecting to self, others, the world and a sense of something beyond ourselves throughout school life.

*It might be that your school can come up with a visual to help pupils understand the idea of spirituality as connection. This could be a jigsaw puzzle, Lego bricks or the*

*idea of a lightbulb – a plug and socket connecting to create light. In the same way that these things connect, your school community strives to connect with self, others, the world and beyond, in order to give opportunities for spiritual development.*

*Ensure you have decided as a school community which of the above you will utilise within your school community and delete as appropriate. You are also encouraged to outline here how your schools theologically rooted Christian vision links to spiritual development within your school.*

## **Organisation**

The responsibility of spiritual development in **(insert school name)** is shared across the whole school community. The oversight of spirituality within **(insert school name)** sits with **(state member/s of staff name/s)**. They support the development of spirituality within **(insert school name)**, by ensuring that all new staff are aware of our school's shared understanding of spirituality, ensuring they are up to date with information and training on spirituality from Leicester Diocesan Board of Education, the Church of England and the department for Education. They also create opportunities for staff to share ideas and best practice as well as have an oversight of monitoring and evaluation of spiritual development and contribute to the SIAMS self-evaluation process, particularly around Inspection question 2 and 3.

As a school, we acknowledge the importance of planned and unplanned opportunities for spiritual development within school and encourage our staff to identify areas within the curriculum that spirituality can be realised, as well as to take advantage of moments that may occur in school ad hoc. The areas listed below is where staff have planned for spiritual development and unplanned moments may occur in the leaning in of stories or ideas that pupils want to share, an appreciation of 'awe and wonder' moments that may occur in and outside of school and/or 'ow', 'wow' and 'now' moments.

- Collective Worship
- Religious Education
- Personal development / PSHE
- Opportunities across all curriculum areas

*It is important the your school has considered planned and unplanned opportunities for spirituality as a staff team and have amended the above as appropriate. You may also wish to consider how the physical environment of the school supports opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection for pupils in your school. For example, displays / prayer spaces / reflection areas and/or prayer or reflection boxes.*

### Planned opportunities for spiritual development

- **Spirituality in Collective Worship**

Daily Collective Worship is the beating heart of **(insert name of school)**. It provides the opportunity for our school community to come together to hear the Christian story, learn about Christian festivals, celebrations of other faiths and to share experiences, beliefs and ideas. The shared spiritual language of **(insert the language you have decided upon)** is referred to explicitly within Collective Worship. The information below states how **(insert name of school)** develops spirituality and enables spiritual flourishing within Collective Worship across the four main areas of spirituality.

**Self** – Pupils and staff are given meaningful opportunities to reflect on their own beliefs and ideas in response to the distinctively Christian message or concept that is offered. They are given opportunities to share these ideas and express their unique identities through a range of mediums such as reading, acting, singing and dancing.

**Others** – Pupils and staff are encouraged to discuss their ideas and beliefs with one another and listen to the views of others that are shared within Collective Worship.

**World** – Pupils and staff are presented with a Christian worldview as well as other religious worldviews at appropriate times in the year and other local and world events that occur throughout the academic year.

**Beyond** – Pupils have the invitational opportunity to relate to God through prayer, singing and reflection.

*Schools are encouraged to reflect on the above and amend as needed for your individual school context.*

- **Spirituality in Religious Education**

The Church of England's [Statement of Entitlement](#) (2019) outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality. The information below states how **(insert name of school)** develops spirituality within Religious Education across the four main areas of spirituality.

**Self** – personal knowledge within RE is a student's individual understanding of religions and non-religious worldviews, shaped by their own life experiences, values, and beliefs. Pupils are given opportunities to become aware and reflect upon their own assumptions, viewpoints and positions on different topics within RE.

**Others** – Pupils have opportunities to share their own views and listen to the viewpoint of others within the classroom.

**World** – Pupils are presented with knowledge of religious and non-religious worldviews as well as diversity that exists within the religious and non-religious worldviews.

**Beyond** – Pupils have the invitational opportunity to relate to God and learn about the concept of God through the religious and non-religious worldviews that are studied.

*Schools are encouraged to reflect on their own RE policy and curriculum and amend the above as needed for your individual school context.*

- **Spirituality within personal development / PSHE**

*Schools are encouraged to think about their own individual personal development programmes here and how there can be planned opportunities to develop spirituality in relation to self, others, world and beyond within their curriculum. Schools are encouraged to think about where there are meaningful opportunities for pupils to share their own views, hear from others and learn about different perspectives to ideas that are studied.*

- **Spirituality within the Curriculum**

The Leicester Diocesan Board of Education has outlined ways that all curriculum areas can develop spirituality across the four main areas of self, others, world and beyond. This document can be seen [HERE](#) and we use this as a basis for how we develop spirituality across the curriculum at (insert school name).

*Please not that you only have access to the above document if you are part of the partnership agreement. The ideas below may help you if you are not part of the partnership agreement and all schools are encouraged to think about how this information applies to their individual school context.*

**Self** – Within all curriculum areas, teachers plan in meaningful opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own views of the content that is being learnt. This could be in the form of big questions, reflection opportunities and time after topics to think about what they enjoyed and didn't enjoy, as opposed to only thinking about what they understood.

**Others** – Within all curriculum areas, teachers have implemented the school's oracy curriculum and gives frequent, planned and meaningful opportunities for pupils to share their own views and listen to the viewpoint of others within the classroom.

**World** – Within all curriculum areas, teachers have thought about how pupils are learning about the world around them – local, national and global, and how they are encouraged to think about what they have learnt from different perspectives and traditions.

**Beyond** – Within all curriculum areas, pupils will have the opportunity to be still, reflect and the invitational opportunity to give struggles to God if and where appropriate. For example, this may be by making use of a class spiritual or reflective space.

*Schools are encouraged to think about and outline how your schools theologically rooted Christian vision is a driver for the curriculum design in your school and the impact this has on pupils' spiritual growth. Schools are also encouraged to build in time across curriculum areas for all staff to think about how they can apply the information above to their specific curriculum areas.*



### Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

The development of spirituality is monitored and evaluated routinely as part of the school's self-evaluation process. This is done in the following ways:

- Reviewing how Collective Worship enables spiritual flourishing by observing different examples of Collective Worship in school
- Conducting pupil/staff/parent voice on spiritual development within school
- Reviewing the use and impact of spiritual / prayer / reflective spaces in school
- Meeting with the CW and RE lead as well as leads from other curriculum areas to discuss opportunities for spirituality across the curriculum.
- Learning walks on a frequent basis to see if planned opportunities for spirituality are being lived out across the curriculum.

The **(Chrisitan distinctiveness / Ethos Committee/ name of appropriate committee)** review the policy **(insert regularity of policy review)** in partnership with Senior/ Middle Leaders and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff to make any changes or recommendations. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing body and are then actioned as appropriate.

*Schools are encouraged to reflect on their own monitoring and evaluation processes and amend the above as appropriate. Schools are encouraged to review the monitoring and evaluation document on the Leicester DBE's website to help support your school with monitoring and evaluation.*

Governors 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 governors.

This policy is shared on the school's website and is part of the induction pack for new staff and new governors.

This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently, as required.

### **Approval/review by governing body**

**Headteacher signed:**

**Date:**

**Chair of Governors signed:**

**Date:**

**Date of next review:**

**Date:**



