



St Mary's C of E (VA) Primary School

Working together
in an inclusive Christian environment
to allow every pupil to shine brighter and brighter.

St Mary's is an inclusive school where we believe that all people are of equal value, irrespective of their ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, ability or sexual identity. We recognise and respect differences.

Spirituality Policy

This policy is GDPR compliant.

Date of issue: February 2026

Last reviewed/adopted: February 2026 (FGB)

Next review date: Spring 2028

Signed: _____

Date: _____

1. Introduction

At St Mary's, spirituality is not an add-on but a core element of who we are. We believe that spirituality is an innate part of every human being and essential for flourishing. It underpins our school vision, curriculum, worship, and wider ethos.

This policy sets out how we nurture and develop the spiritual lives of all members of our school community using the *Up, Down, Left, Right* model and the *Windows, Mirrors, and Doors* framework, ensuring spirituality is experienced, explored, and expressed across school life.

2. Our Vision

Working together in an inclusive Christian environment to allow every pupil to “Shine Brighter and Brighter.”

(Proverbs 4:18)

At St Mary's, our Christian vision inspires us to nurture the whole child—intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Our commitment to inclusion, community, and growth drives all we do, and spirituality is at the heart of our school's purpose: to enable every child to live fully and flourish.

Our Aims

Underpinned by Christian love and faith, we strive:

- To develop confident children who know success
- To direct our talents towards excellence in all we do
- To nourish mutual respect, in partnership with parents and carers, church and local community

3. Our Values and Spiritual Growth

Our six core values—**Respect, Courage, Love, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Joy**—are central to our spiritual life. They guide how we relate to ourselves, to others, to the world, and to God. Through reflection and celebration, these values become a lived expression of our spirituality.

We explore and reflect on them regularly in **Collective Worship** and RE, encouraging children to ask questions like:

- *What does it mean to forgive from the heart?*
- *Where do I find courage?*
- *How can love change a situation?*

Each term, our **“Living Our Values Awards”** celebrate pupils who have lived these values out loud. These become moments of spiritual reflection and inspiration for our whole school family.

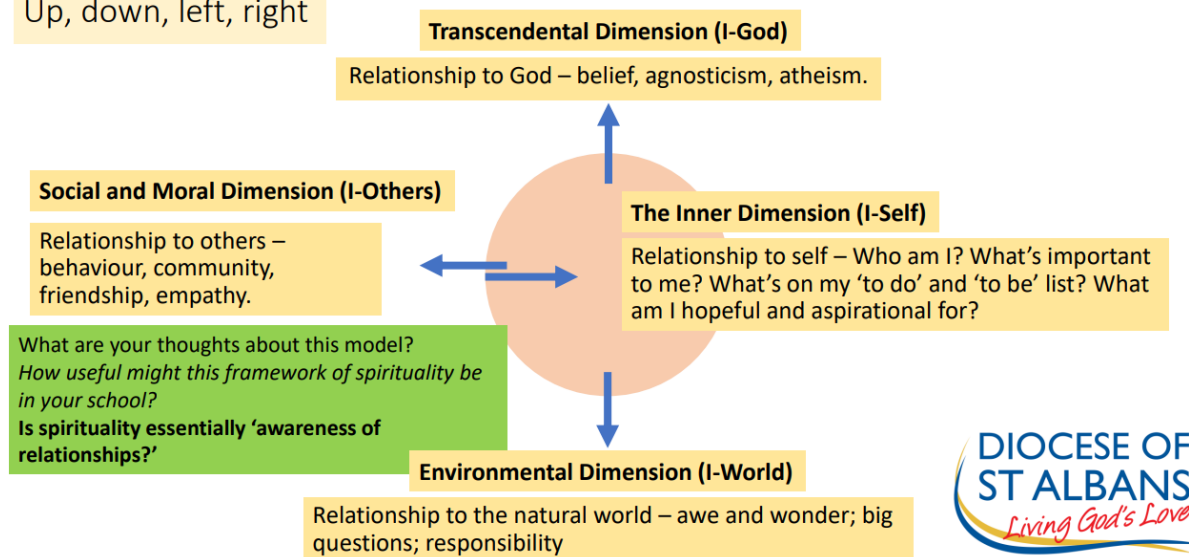
4. Defining Spirituality

We adopt Rebecca Nye's model of spirituality as *relational consciousness*—an awareness of our relationships with:

- **Up – God / Transcendence:** engaging with awe, mystery, worship, and prayer
- **Down – The World:** recognising beauty, responsibility, and stewardship
- **Left – Others:** developing empathy, compassion, and community
- **Right – Self:** reflecting on identity, purpose, and emotions

A common framework: Rebecca Nye's 'relational consciousness'

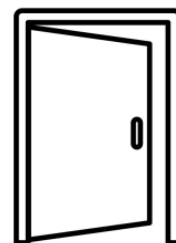
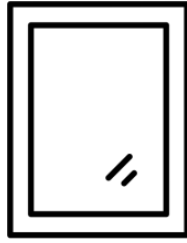
Up, down, left, right



This model is paired with the **Windows, Mirrors, Doors** framework:

- **Windows** – Looking out with awe and curiosity
- **Mirrors** – Looking inward through reflection
- **Doors** – Stepping forward to respond and grow

Windows, Mirrors, Doors



5. Collective Worship and Spiritual Flourishing

Collective Worship is a central and cherished part of daily life at St Mary's. It brings our whole school community together to pause, reflect, and grow in our understanding of ourselves, others, the world, and God. Worship is invitational and inclusive, offering all pupils the opportunity to engage in spiritual reflection, regardless of their faith background.

Purpose and Focus

The primary aims of Collective Worship are to:

- Explore and deepen understanding of Christian values, teachings, and stories
- Reflect on life's big questions, personal beliefs, and moral choices
- Create space for stillness, awe, thankfulness, and prayer
- Build a sense of community, unity, and shared purpose
- Inspire pupils to live out their values in daily life

Themes and Tools

Our worship themes are closely aligned with:

- The Church calendar and biblical stories
- Our school's core values: **Respect, Courage, Love, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Joy**
- Global and local events, festivals, and moments for collective reflection
- Pupil voice, curiosity, and real-life experiences

We use a variety of tools and approaches to enrich worship:

- Storytelling, including Bible stories and moral fables
- Music and singing to express celebration, reverence, or reflection
- Silence and stillness to enable personal contemplation
- Art, visuals, drama, and metaphor to reach all spiritual styles

- The **“TSP” prayer model** – *Thank You, Sorry, Please* – to guide reflection and prayer
- Big Questions to stimulate curiosity and encourage meaningful dialogue

Participation and Leadership

Pupils are actively involved in Collective Worship:

- Our **Collective Worship Team** helps plan and lead worship
- Children write and read prayers, lead reflections, and support in creating spiritual displays
- Staff, church leaders, governors, and visitors contribute regularly to ensure diverse voices and perspectives
- Families are invited to share in significant worship events and celebrations

Collective Worship at St Mary’s is a daily opportunity to grow spiritually, explore faith, and shine together in a nurturing Christian community.

6. Spirituality in Religious Education

Our **RE curriculum** provides a structured space for spiritual exploration. Grounded in the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus and supported by **Understanding Christianity** and **The Emmanuel Project**, our curriculum encourages all pupils to engage with big questions about belief, identity, morality, and the meaning of life.

Children explore:

- **Christianity (two-thirds of curriculum)**
- **Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, and non-religious worldviews**

Across Key Stages, children:

- Reflect on spiritual and moral choices
- Develop empathy for people of all faiths and none
- Ask ultimate questions with respect and curiosity
- Experience silence, prayer, story, ritual, and symbolism
- Reflect upon their own worldview

RE enables pupils to explore the *Up, Down, Left, and Right* dimensions of their own and others’ spiritual lives.

7. Spiritual Development Across the Curriculum

Spirituality is woven into the fabric of our curriculum through five **Curriculum Drivers**:

- **Ambition for All** – Each child is encouraged to reflect on their gifts, strengths, and aspirations

- **World Citizens** – Pupils learn about others’ lives, cultures, and beliefs, fostering empathy and moral responsibility
- **Respectful Communicators** – Children are taught to listen deeply, speak thoughtfully, and reflect respectfully
- **Resilient Individuals** – Children explore how to learn from failure, manage emotions, and reflect inwardly
- **Environmental Advocates** – We foster awe, wonder, and stewardship for creation

Spiritual moments arise across all subjects:

- In *Science*, when exploring the vastness of space or the intricacy of ecosystems
- In *English*, when engaging with characters’ struggles and ethical dilemmas
- In *Art* and *Music*, through beauty, creativity, and emotional expression
- In *Geography* and *History*, as we consider human purpose, conflict, and connection

8. Relationships, Behaviour and Spirituality

At St Mary’s, we believe that **spiritual development and positive relationships are deeply interconnected**. The way we treat one another, the language we use, the empathy we show, and the dignity we uphold all contribute to the formation of a spiritually rich and emotionally safe school environment. Spirituality is not only nurtured in quiet reflection, but also through our daily interactions, choices, and relationships.

Our **Relationship and Positive Behaviour Policy**, grounded in the **Therapeutic Thinking Hertfordshire (Steps)** approach, reinforces this vision. It recognises that behaviour is a form of communication and that positive behaviour is cultivated through connection, compassion, and consistency. These principles align directly with our Christian ethos and commitment to spiritual flourishing.

Spiritual Principles in Our Behaviour Approach:

- **We recognise that every child is a spiritual being, inherently deserving of dignity and worth -** We treat every member of our community with unconditional positive regard, affirming their capacity for growth, transformation, and kindness.
- **Behaviour communicates an emotional or spiritual need:** When behaviour challenges arise, we look beyond the act to understand the *why*, offering support and reflection rather than judgment.
- **Valued behaviour is spiritual behaviour:** Acts of courage, forgiveness, respect, kindness, joy, and love are not only recognised but celebrated through our rewards system, “Living Our Values Awards,” and daily interactions.
- **Restoration is spiritual work:** Our emphasis on restorative conversations, empathy, and responsibility helps children develop a moral and spiritual awareness of their impact on others and encourages them to make things right.

Promoting Spirituality Through Relationships:

- **Daily routines** such as “check-in, check-up, check-out” allow adults to notice children emotionally and spiritually, ensuring they feel seen and valued.
- **Reflection spaces and restorative practices** help children pause, understand their feelings, and begin the journey of personal growth.
- **Language matters:** We use emotionally intelligent, spiritually respectful language—seeking to *be curious, not furious*—when guiding children through conflict or dysregulation.
- **Repair and Restore** time offers children meaningful opportunities to learn from their experiences and develop deeper self-awareness, empathy, and integrity.

Core Values in Action:

Our school values—**Respect, Courage, Love, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Joy**—are both *the foundation of our behavioural expectations* and *expressions of spiritual maturity*. These values are modelled, discussed, and embedded across school life. They shape:

- How adults and children communicate
- How conflicts are resolved
- How accountability and grace are held in balance
- How the dignity of each person is protected

In this way, our behaviour policy is not merely about managing conduct but about **nurturing character**, promoting *moral imagination*, and guiding every pupil towards becoming the best version of themselves—*shining brighter and brighter* in all that they do.

9. Responding to Spiritual Styles

We recognise children encounter spirituality differently. Our planning is shaped by four **spiritual styles**:

- **Word** – Through language, story, and scripture
- **Emotion** – Through music, drama, and relationships
- **Symbol** – Through metaphor, nature, and quiet
- **Action** – Through justice, care, and service

All pupils are supported to access, express, and develop their spirituality in ways that are meaningful to them.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher and SLT:** Ensure spiritual growth is a strategic and lived priority
- **RE and Worship Leaders:** Guide, develop, and evaluate spiritual opportunities
- **Staff:** Create spiritual space in the classroom and curriculum

- **Governors:** Monitor the impact of spiritual provision (e.g., through the Ethos Committee, learning walks, pupil voice)

11. Monitoring and Review

We use a range of tools to evaluate the impact of our spiritual provision:

- Learning walks and observations
- Feedback from Collective Worship and RE
- Pupil reflections and voice
- Displays and journals
- SIAMS evaluation criteria

This policy is reviewed biennially by SLT, governors, and pupil representatives.

12. Conclusion

At St Mary's, we are committed to helping each child **shine brighter and brighter**—spiritually, emotionally, academically, and socially. Through nurturing the spiritual life of our community, we help children become compassionate, reflective, joyful individuals who are equipped to flourish in life and faith.