

# St. Martin's Church of England (Aided) Primary School



**St. Martin's**  
C. of E. Primary School  
*Serve one another in love*  
Galatians 5v13

## Spirituality Policy

*'Serve one another in love'*  
*Galatians 5v13*

"St. Martin's School isn't just a school, it's a family. Firmly rooted in the Christian faith, the St. Martin's family will share the love of Christ with our diverse school community – all unique and special, made in God's image, with everyone welcomed and included."

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## Principles, values and philosophies

### Christian Distinctiveness at St Martin's

The underpinning principle of this Spirituality policy is that the provision of education within our school meets the needs of all children within our diverse school community – all are unique and special, made in God's image, with everyone welcomed and included.

### Introduction

At St. Martin's C of E (VA) Primary School, we recognise that developing the spirituality of our pupils and adults is a fundamental aspect of enabling pupils and adults to flourish. Developing spirituality is of high importance to us so that the whole community is engaged in a journey of discovery, involving awe and wonder.

Spiritual development differs from person to person and is a very personal experience. For this reason, it is difficult to put into words. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith. For Christians in church, spirituality is about developing a deeper understanding of and connection with God. Through this we are able to respond to the loving nature of God as revealed through the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A school is not a church, but it is a collection of people who come from a variety of backgrounds for the purpose of education. Family backgrounds may be very different and spiritual development must take account of the varied circumstances of staff and pupils.

Therefore, in light of this and in light of our school's distinctively Christian vision, at St. Martin's we define 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.'

### Aims

Through establishing the right learning environment in which spiritual development can be fostered, we aim to support pupils and adults to:

- develop an appreciation of their uniqueness and value
- develop an understanding of the distinctive ethos at St. Martin's, as well as the context, language and symbolism of the Christian faith
- develop knowledge and understanding of the school's core Christian values and the Biblical teaching that underpins them
- develop an awareness of, and respect for, other people's beliefs and faiths, and the ability to articulate their own
- develop an appreciation of what it means to be a part of a community (e.g. using their gifts and abilities in the service of others)
- develop strategies to build good mental health
- foster self-awareness and the ability to make informed decisions

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- develop the skills and language required to enable them to reflect upon the big questions and mysteries of life
- begin to understand and make sense of their own feelings and emotions around certain encounters and events that occur in their life
- develop an awareness that experiences of disappointment, failure and loss may be occasions for spiritual growth
- understand the value of difference and diversity through involvement with others
- develop a love of curiosity, creativity and imagination
- develop the ability to reflect upon experiences of awe, compassion and beauty
- develop a capacity to value the natural world, a sense of awe and wonder and a commitment to care for creation.

These aims and objectives will enable pupils and adults to have a quality of life that encompasses respect, awareness, compassion, curiosity, understanding and relationships that reflect order, reason, balance and integrity within the context of Christian faith.

### Organisation

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

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

Every classroom has a Reflection Area for quiet, contemplative thoughts. There are also reflection places around school and outside.

We have identified specific areas which contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils: collective worship, the whole curriculum, including RE and the general ethos of the school within daily life.

### Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of St. Martin's. It provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared.

Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present which are often linked to invitations to pray.

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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 musical traditions.

Opportunities to reflect on the wonder and awe of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise of the moments of disappointment or pain. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark seasonal Christian festivals and celebrations in the calendars of other faiths. In this way, pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. Collective Worship in St. Martin's is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

### **Spirituality in Religious Education**

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality.

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 religions and worldviews, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality.

### **Spirituality within the Curriculum**

Conversations around spirituality are included in classroom teaching from EYFS to Year 6. Outlined below are some ways in which spiritual development is nurtured and promoted as part of the curriculum:

#### English

Points to consider:

- Empathy with authors and the characters in stories and plays
- The appreciation of the beauty in language
- Emotions and sentiments in writing and speech
- Heroes and heroines in literature
- Imagining oneself as someone else
- Escaping into other worlds through literature
- The element of wonder in literature
- The values of great works.

#### Maths

Points to consider:

- Infinity and nothing
- Pattern and order

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- Shape and regularity
- Truth, certainty and likelihood
- The universality of mathematics over time and space
- The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations.

## Science

Points to consider:

- Wonder as the basis of science
- Questions of beginning, creation and evolution
- Birth, life, death and renewal
- The universe and beyond
- Discovering the limits of experimentation
- Regularity and order in science
- Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists
- The impact of scientific achievements.

## Geography

Points to consider:

- Wonder at the diversity of environments and people
- Land formation
- Questions about the care of the environment
- World (economic) development
- Empathy with people from other parts of the world
- The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns.

## History

Points to consider:

- Being part of history
- Handling artefacts
- Influential events and people
- The commitment of significant people in history
- The nature and importance of invention and exploration.
- Empathy with people from other times in history.

## Creative Arts (Art and Design, Music, Drama and Dance)

Points to consider:

- The work of creative artists from a variety of times and places
- Beauty, truth and goodness
- Expressing, interpreting and exploring deep feelings and profound beliefs
- Artistic creativity
- The effects of the arts on emotions and senses
- Skill in creation and performance
- Personal response and preference.

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## Design and Technology

Points to consider:

- Discovering how something works
- Appreciating genius
- Beauty in design
- Perseverance to solve problems
- Personal achievement
- Learning from others and nature.

## Computing

Points to consider:

- The wonder of worldwide instant communication
- The speed of the growth of knowledge
- The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide.

## Physical Education

Points to consider:

- Being a team member
- Pushing yourself to the limit
- Extremes of skill, endurance and achievements
- Emotion in sport
- Personal limitation and failure
- Appreciation of perfection
- Sportsmanship.

## PSHCE and RSE

Points to consider:

- Relationships with others, feelings and attitudes, keeping safe
- Ideas of honesty and sensitivity needed for gentle reflection.

In addition...

Pupils have opportunities to:

- visit places of beauty, interest and challenge
- admire and wonder at the natural environment and human creative efforts
- work out personal relationships in unusual and challenging situations
- experience community cohesion links at a local, national and global level
- engage in activities that promote courageous advocacy
- participate in a wide range of events and activities, involving a range of outside agencies, coaches, etc.

When planning for spiritual development we focus on 3 areas- Windows, Mirrors and Doors.

WINDOWS: Encounter – the learning about life

We give children opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways, to wonder about life's awe and wonder which are the things that are amazing and the things that are not as positive.

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MIRRORS: Reflection- the learning from life

We provide children with time for reflection. We give children opportunities to reflect on their experiences, to look inward and consider the big questions of life. In this they are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others. Give emotional, physical and auditory space.

DOORS: Transformation – the learning to live by putting into action what they believe

We give children opportunities to respond to all of this; to do something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

## **Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation**

The governing body review the policy in partnership with Senior 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.

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.

## **Staff Development and Training**

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams.

ECTs and staff who are new to St. Martin's will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality.

This policy is shared on the school's website and will be reviewed by the Governing Body on a 3-yearly basis.