



Spirituality at Great Horwood Church of England School

Our School Vision

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

Our School Ethos

At Great Horwood Church of England School, the academic, emotional and spiritual well-being of all individuals is at the heart of all that we do; where everyone is valued. We are a safe, welcoming school within the heart of the village community that aims to provide all our children and adults with the learning opportunities to flourish, be healthy, grow in resilience and realise their full potential; being fully equipped and prepared for a successful future.

Inspired by Christian faith and rooted in the teachings, values and spirituality of the Church of England we embrace our core values of love, perseverance and respect where all individuals learn to value themselves and others.

We are committed to setting high standards of achievement within a caring and nurturing learning environment. We aim to provide opportunities for children to develop a curiosity of learning, a thirst for knowledge through play, and an exploration of the world around them.

At Great Horwood Church of England School we have agreed that Spirituality means different things to different people. It differs from person to person, and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith.

At Great Horwood School we have agreed that spirituality is:

something beyond what you can see, the material and physical self. Spirituality is more than just what people experience on a sensory and physical level. Instead, it is a feeling that there is something greater, a quality that touches us all and involves deep feelings inside.

It is a connection to something that is bigger than ourselves. It is a connection with the wonder and energy of life. It connects all people to each other and to the universe itself with love. It is about awe and wonder, asking ultimate questions and being inspired to look beyond ourselves and serve and care for others, the environment and beyond.

In keeping with our school vision *“I am the vine you are the branches”* we recognise the need to be connected to grow and flourish. Through our spiritual experiences we demonstrate how we connect to four elements - ourselves, others, the environment and universe, and transcendence (beyond).

<p>Ourselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of feelings; ability to reflect and express our feelings within and outside the classroom • Awareness of our uniqueness • Happiness for who we are and celebrating the qualities we have • Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are • Exploration of personal faith and a right to express our views through discussions and debates • Development of imagination and creativity through our work and play 	<p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect, tolerance and looking after others (peers and adults) • Empathy and understanding of others feelings, views and opinions • To love and be loved (loving your neighbour) • Making a difference; having a sense of duty, supporting the local community through different projects • An appreciation of past experiences, and cultural heritage
<p>Environment/Universe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a sense of awe and wonder • Enjoying the miracles of everyday life; experiencing the joy of nature and the countryside • Taking time for what really matters, having the time to think, reflect and enjoy the here and now • Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature • An appreciation of differences, different cultures and religions 	<p>Transcendence (Beyond)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ask and strive to answer questions about the meaning of life and human existence. • Encountering/experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material/physical) • Ability to ask and discuss the ‘Big Questions’ (eg about life, death, suffering, nature of God) • Opportunities for prayer; during worship and reflection time; connecting with God • Making sense of the world through our high-quality curriculum

For some at Great Horwood School deepening spirituality may involve religious traditions that centre on the belief of a higher power but for others it may be a holistic belief in an individual connection to others and the world.

We understand that not everyone experiences or expresses spirituality in the same way. Some people may seek spiritual experiences in every aspect of their lives, while others may be more likely to have these feelings under specific conditions or in certain locations. For example, some people may be more likely to have spiritual experiences in churches or other religious temples, while others might have these feelings when they're out enjoying nature.

When we asked children and staff at the school what spirituality meant to them, we had a range of answers, but all expressed a deep feeling or emotion and a connection to themselves, others or the world around them.

Connecting to ourselves:

- I find that music helps me to feel spiritual and helps me to feel mindful (year 6)
- I find that calming music and relaxing in a special place makes me feel spiritual. (year 6)
- I feel connected to my past and culture (year 5)
- I feel spiritual when I am calm, joyful and happy (year 1)
- Being at peace with myself (year 4)
- I think spirituality is when you have a connection inside you – (your spirit)

Connecting with our emotions, feelings and expressing oneself:

- I have the chance to express myself creatively
- I can make my own decisions and express my beliefs
- I can express myself through my music and art (year 4)
- I can be spiritual when I do mindfulness colouring (year 3)
- Love, peace, joyful, empathy, calmness, happy, my inner mindfulness (staff member)

Connecting with others around us and in the world:

- The thing that makes me feel spiritual is my friends because they let me be who I like to be (year 5)
- Being with my friends makes me feel spiritual (year 5)
- I think what makes me feel spiritual is when I spend time with my family and friends and having fun with them (year 5)
- When we show we care and respect others (year 2)

Connecting to the environment and the universe

- Being kind to the world (year 1)
- Taking care of the world and the sea (year 2)
- I feel spiritual when I connect with nature and animals (year 2)
- A feeling of awe and wonder when surrounded by nature (staff member)

Connecting to a religious tradition through prayer and places of worship

- I think reading the Bible, singing Christian songs, praying, eating pancakes in the garden while listening to the birds makes me feel spiritual (year 6)
- Spirituality is when you go to the church and speak to God (year 6)
- Spirituality is like a connecting to something higher like God (year 4)
- I think feeling spiritual can involve reading the Bible, praying or singing hymns (year 6)
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At Great Horwood School we aim to offer a variety of ways that all may experience spirituality and the benefits of a deeper spiritual experience. Children's spiritual development is nurtured through all aspects of our provision. We believe it is important to develop strong relationships using our school Vision and Values as well as the development of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes.

Spirituality runs through our daily lives at Great Horwood Church of England School

We provide high-quality opportunities for pupils and adults to develop their spirituality, including:

- Having a regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting the candles in worship, listening to music, the reflection for the day, use of the reflection areas around school or the prayers said throughout the day.
- Opportunities to explore, express, share and compare feelings and opinions. This is planned into all subjects across our curriculum but it more focused within our worship, RE, and PSHE/RSE lessons. Other structures such as restorative justice, growth mindset, mindfulness and 'I wonder' questions, are used to support this further.
- A high-quality sequential religious education, in which Christianity is central but also provides opportunities for pupils to learn about the teachings of world religions and worldviews and the impact beliefs have on the lives of others.
- Engagement with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- Constantly reaffirming the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.
- Providing opportunities for creativity and using their imagination.
- Singing and listening to music in lessons and as part of our weekly worship.
- The experience of a range of stories, music, art, drama and dance. Reflecting on the situations of others through role play or stories.
- Encouraging each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important process that allows us to heal and grow from our experiences.
- Encouraging everyone to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (eg: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; through prayer spaces)
- Opportunities to explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE curriculum, topics, worship, theme weeks, news.
- Reading often, giving them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible
- Beginning to develop their own system of beliefs, this may or may not include religious beliefs.
- Expressing personal beliefs and compare views with others, sharing feelings and opinions through discussions and stories.
- Opportunities to experience a love of learning through rewarding their enthusiasm and by encouraging exploratory play and learning.
- Opportunities to reflect upon the world around them and show a sense of awe and wonder towards aspects of the natural world or human achievement
- Through displays and reflection areas.
- Inclusive and meaningful Collective worships which encourage personal reflection.
- Opportunities for celebration, stillness, prayer, and song.
- Strong links with the local community and St James Church.
- Opportunities for children to develop their enquiry, analysis, interpretation, evaluation and reflection skills across the curriculum.
- Learning about British values.
- Children being leaders and having responsibilities.
- Opportunities for children to take part in Forest schools' activities and outdoor learning.

Giving children:

A sense of self-worth and the worth of others	Christian values of love, perseverance and respect, Shared celebration and collective worship, curriculum displays, high expectations, self/peer marking, celebrating birthdays, certificates, positive praise, encouraging children to accept when things go wrong and make amends
A sense of others as feeling, thinking people	Relationships, resolving conflicts, mutual respect, caring for each other – ‘Buddies’, circle time, worship, Christian values, staff modelling, global links, understanding of different cultures and religion
A sense of decision making and personal responsibility	Group work, School Council, buddy system, head pupils, self- evaluation, self and peer marking
A sense of life’s joys and achievements	Weekly celebration worship, reader, writer and mathematician of the week, star of the week, newsletter, golden raffle tickets, stickers, class reward systems, golden time, collective worship
A sense of there being more to life than meets the eye	Space makers, reflection areas, stories during collective worship, Christian symbols, visits to St James Church. RE lessons, relationships
A sense of the mystery of life	High quality curriculum, RE, reflection corners, nature area, reflection room/prayer space, visits to sacred places, school visits and residential,
A sense of enquiry and open mindedness	RE lessons, circle times, show and tell, Christian values of tolerance and respect, British values, themed days/weeks
A sense of disappointment and failure, suffering and pain	Understanding of communion, Holy week and the life of Jesus, loss of family members/pets, National and international news, lives of significant figures explored during collective worship, circle time, awareness of and support of charities, visiting local care homes, supporting charities, disasters in the news
A sense of silence and reflection	Collective Worship, space makers, quiet areas, reflection spaces, prayer spaces, remembrance service led by the children, observation of 2 minutes silence, professional development time for staff to reflect on practice, support from behaviour support team
A sense of love for the outdoors	Forest school, Climbing tower and trim trail, trips to Great Horwood Pece, offsite visits, residential trips, school camp out for year 5 & 6, bush craft, den building, nature areas, seasonal visits to Hogshaw farm
A sense of awe and wonder	After school clubs, singing, choir festival, residential and field trips, school fayres, collective worship, visits to sacred places, planetarium and space day
A sense of pattern, sequence and order	Maths, science, music, dance, the arts, Christian year collective worship, school routines, creative curriculum, a school week-timetables, behaviour policy

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.
- Understanding and considering the needs and backgrounds of each individual child.
- Taking part in, and supporting, collective acts of worship.
- Using our school vision and values to be positive role models within 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.
- 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.

Children can do this through:

- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.
- Using our School Vision and Values to help themselves and others to learn.
- Being active learners within lessons to enable them to engage with and develop the skills needed to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- Taking an active part in acts of collective worship.
- Participating in activities which promote the skills allowing them to engage in the reflection of a range of religious beliefs and practices.
- Conducting themselves towards others considerately, in line with the behaviour policy.
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others.

Parents and Governors can help through:

- Adopting a positive attitude to the value of spiritual education.
- Supporting the school's Christian vision, values and ethos.
- Attending and supporting collective worship, assemblies and church services.
- Respecting the views and beliefs of others and demonstrating this to others.

Impact: How do we know this is being effective?

At Great Horwood School we will see the impact of spiritual experience when children and adults:

- Love and accept themselves and enjoy flourishing relationships with each other.
- Take an interest and delight in the world around them and are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God).
- Can express and understand feelings, as well as respect those of others.
- Have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good.
- Can appreciate times of quiet, stillness and personal reflection.
- Can confidently discuss the world in which they live and beyond.
- Possess an active imagination, showing joy in creativity and discovering new skills.
- Can ask and find answers to questions about life.
- Can cope with feelings of stress, anxiety and be more positive, feeling hopeful for the future.
- Have a sense of belonging to a community and feel supported by others.