



Barton Church of England VA Primary School



How well does the school support all pupils in their spiritual development, enabling all pupils to flourish?

Children who are part of a school community formed around Barton School's vision will discover an education that embraces excellence and academic rigour within the wider framework of spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development and enables them to flourish. Nigel Genders CEO C of E Education Office, Ely

Spirituality needs to be seen as applying to something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with relationships to other people and for believers, with God. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity - with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It is to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live. SCAA 1995

Introduction: Our school vision and spirituality

Based on our scripture verse from Matthew 7: 12 and sharing a core set of Christian values, our school vision is to educate and inspire every pupil in our school to become creative and independent thinkers, evidencing a love for learning and a thirst for knowledge. As a community of pupils, staff, parents and the wider village, we recognise that we all need to work together to help and support each other to flourish.

We aspire to promote the skills needed to persevere with learning challenges and the curiosity to enquire further. Our Christian ethos and school values focus on developing children's moral, spiritual, social and cultural understanding so that they can achieve their full potential. These are woven, like a golden thread, into every aspect of school life.



With God's help, our Christian vision binds us together from the moment of arrival at our school, until the day of departure. All members of the Barton School community are bathed in and supported by our Christian ethos: implicitly in our core values and personal relationships; explicitly in the Religious and Worldviews Education, Collective Worship, PSHE and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development opportunities specifically and our whole curriculum more widely. Our vision is supported by the parable of The Sower (Matthew 13 Vs 1-23) which supports us to make good choices so that we can grow and flourish in our learning and in our relationships.

We believe our vision resonates strongly with the Diocese's call, expressed in the quote at the top of this policy, demanding academic excellence in a framework of spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development.

Our approach to spirituality

At Barton C of E school, we believe that it is very important to provide all children with a range of opportunities to help them develop spiritually. We understand that spiritual development may not be synonymous with Religious and Worldviews Education and Collective Worship and can be explored through many different curriculum areas. These are summarised in more detail below. We focus on the idea of 4 aspects of spirituality: self, others, world and beauty and beyond, united under the Christian value of 'Love', which is at the heart of our values cross.

We also plan opportunities to consider 'big questions' about life, using the concept of windows to help us consider the wider world, mirrors to reflect on our inner world and doors to encapsulate our intention to be active and courageous in the changes we make to our words and actions.

We believe children's spirituality is a delicate flower that all too often struggles to survive. It needs the special tender loving care that we, as educators, are in a position to offer. It might not be for us to see the fruits of our labours but that is the nature of life-long learning and education. We must value children's spirituality for where it is now, as we share their world. We must also look to the future, for unless the roots are strong, there will be nothing for those who take over the responsibility from us to go on nurturing them.



“Spirituality needs gentle and positive nurturing and encouragement if it is to grow within us and within our schools.” David Holmes

Why is spirituality important?

Developing spirituality in our pupils, mirrors our belief that, to flourish, we must acknowledge each person in their entirety, providing opportunities to be still and reflect, to explore big questions concerning the meaning and nature of human life, their inner world, their external relationships and their understanding of what may be beyond, including religious faith and belief. Opportunities for children to address their spiritual needs and reflections are planned explicitly and forms an essential element of our curriculum planning and delivery.

How do we aim to develop our children’s spirituality?

The following opportunities are available, as an integral part of the school’s practice, in order to facilitate the development of spirituality:

- The exploration of values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they impact on peoples’ lives.
- Where children already have religious beliefs, to support and develop these beliefs in ways which are personal and relevant to them as an integral part of the school’s practice.
- To engage in enquiry and exploration as part of experiential, first hand learning.
- To look attentively and observe carefully.
- To use the gifts of creativity and imagination.
- To listen with discernment.
- To reflect and respond to issues in moments of quiet or inspired through music, art, text, film or artefacts.
- To explore and develop what animates themselves and others.
- To understand human feelings and emotions, the way they impact on people and how an understanding of them can be helpful.
- To value what is good and worthwhile and to make value judgments through discussion and exchange of views.
- To work collaboratively with peers, valuing the contribution made by others.



- To respect all, as modelled by staff in their relationships with others.
- To be quiet and reflect on life and the world and develop an awareness of God.
- To work and live in harmony with others in the school and wider community.
- To have confidence to express ideas, views and opinions, even if others do not agree.
- To be strong in their own beliefs and to have the courage to justify themselves when required.

How does our curriculum achieve our spiritual development aims?

Outlined below are some of the main ways in which spiritual development is nurtured and promoted in our curriculum at Barton CofE (VA) Primary School:

In Physical Education:

- Being a team member.
- Pushing yourself to the limits.
- Extremes of skill, endurance and achievement.
- Emotion in sport.
- Personal limitation and failure.
- Sportsmanship.

In Design and Technology:

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

In English:

- Empathy with authors and the characters in stories and plays.
- The appreciation of 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.
- Editing, reviewing, improving our own work

In Maths:

- Infinity and nothing.
- Pattern and shape and order around them.
- Truth, certainty and likelihood.
- The universality of mathematics over time and space.
- Maths is reflected in nature and life.
- The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations.

In Science:

- Wonder as the basis of science.
- Questions of beginning, creation and evolution.
- Discovering the limits of experimentation.
- Birth, life, death and renewal.
- The universe and beyond.
- Regularity and order in science.
- Beliefs in science and the faith of scientists.
- The impact on life and the world of scientific achievements.
- The idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers.

In Computing:

- The wonder of worldwide instant communication.
- The speed of the growth of knowledge.
- The accessibility of knowledge and contact with other people worldwide.
- The question –how it all works and we cannot see it!



In the Creative Arts (Art, Music, Drama and Dance):

- 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.
- The arts as means of expressing mood.
- Skill in creation and performance, and particularly in personal reflection upon their own creativity using various art forms.
- Personal response and preference.

In Geography:

- Wonder at the diversity of environments and people.
- Questions about the care of the environment.
- The beliefs behind particular causes and campaigns.
- Land formation –rivers, mountains, volcanoes.
- Empathy with people from other parts of the world.

In History:

- Being in touch with past people, things and ideas.
- Being part of history.
- Handling artefacts.
- Influential events and people.
- The commitment of significant people in history.
- War and peace.
- Interpretation in history.
- Empathy with people from other times in history.

In Religious and Worldviews Education:

- People, places, things, books, actions and ideas held by religious believers to be holy.
- Ultimate questions of meaning and purpose.
- Ideas of the divine/questions of God.



- Different forms of worship and the emotions created.
- Use of music, art and drama to express beliefs.
- Varieties of beliefs, celebrations and rituals.
- Ideas of commitment and belonging to groups and institutions.
- The idea of mystery and questions with no clear answers.

RWE Enrichment Days

Throughout each academic year, we plan extra activities to explore different aspects of spirituality, such as the grandeur of the universe (Virtual reality Space Workshop), or our place in our community and our responsibility to the natural world (focus - 'Here We Are' by Oliver Jeffers). Other examples include, a whole school trip to Ely Cathedral and Stained Glass Window Museum, the symbolism of Bread and Creation through Harvest and FaradayKids science and religion workshops.

In Collective Worship:

- Opportunities for reflection and response are planned into worship.
- Stillness.
- Personal and collective beliefs are respected.
- Sharing and celebrating common beliefs.
- Celebrating success.
- Sharing happiness, sorrow, hurt, excitement, anticipation, fear, etc.
- Common activities such as singing, listening, laughing, praying, reflecting on a theme.
- Remembering and celebrating the lives of people of spiritual significance.
- Emphasising common purpose and values.
- Experiencing and sharing emotions.

Residential Trips

In upper Key Stage 2, we provide the opportunity for children to develop their sense of self, their place in the world and their familial and friendship relationships through adventure-based camping and residential trips.



Courageous Advocacy

We provide opportunities to become involved in active change initiatives as part of our obligation to be courageous advocates. For example, we have planted trees as part of our exploration of deforestation and paper waste. We cooked a range of FairTrade treats as part of a project on food growing and waste management. Our Young Leaders School Council has an integral development role in our 'Living Barton Values' initiative.

In addition, as part of the curriculum, our children have opportunities:

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

In order to facilitate spiritual development the organisation of the school and the environment for learning are such that:

- Everyone involved in the life of the school is valued and seen to be valued.
- Policies and practices are clearly seen to reflect the worth of individuals.
- Behaviour and people management policies and practices are collectively arrived at and discussed regularly.
- All adults recognise the need to set good examples of mutual respect and considerate behaviour.
- The quality and nature of the learning environment and displays reflect the value placed on pupils and staff.
- Aesthetic awareness is encouraged.
- The atmosphere of the school welcomes differences in beliefs and values, and invites everyone to belong.
- The achievements, successes and efforts of everyone are recognised and celebrated.



Useful Links

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/2019-spiritual-development-interpretations-of-spiritual-developments-in-the-classroom.pdf>

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/attachments/download.asp?file=767&type=pdf>

<http://www.spiritualchild.co.uk/spirituality.html>

<https://www.rootsontheweb.com/worship-and-learning-support/spiritual-styles/spiritual-styles-part-1-different-ways-of-knowing-god>

https://www.going4growth.com/growth_in_faith_and_worship/spirituality/spiritual-styles

<https://www.imaginer.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Recognising-Spiritual-Development-in-a-Primary-School-Context.pdf>

<https://www.lincolndiocesaneducation.com/attachments/download.asp?file=630&type=pdf>

<https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Spirituality-guidance-for-school-Jan-22.pdf>