

# The Ark Federation

## Spirituality Policy

**Approval Date: June 2026**

**Date Adopted by GB: July 26**

**Review Date: 2028**

**Person Responsible: Mr. Freeman**

## Tracked Changes (in blue)

Page	Section	Changes September 2023
5	Legal Requirements	Updated policy in line with SIAMS Framework September 2023 and Ofsted Handbook September 2023
6	Other Related Policies	Reviewed to reflect current practice in schools
	Appendix One	Added to add school's vocabulary spine for Spirituality
	Appendix Two	Added ways and words we use to articulate Spirituality
	Appendix Three	Added Spirituality across the curriculum

## Spirituality in School

## **Our Vision**

Each school within the Ark Federation has created their own theologically rooted vision. These vision statements form the bedrock of each school and feed directly into the needs of their communities.

Stemming from each vision statement, the schools have selected values and aims that will be used to guide how they work with the children in their care.

To view the statements for each school, please click on the links below:

[Peterhouse Primary Academy Vision and Values](#)

[Moorlands Primary Academy Vision and Values](#)

### **When talking about Spirituality, we aim for children, and adults, to grow in their ability to:**

- be guided by their beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them
- be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community
- love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges
- exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder
- be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
- be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer
- be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others
- be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success
- demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions
- appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards others

(From David Smith's work on Spiritual Capacities)

### **Our working definition of 'spirituality'**

As a staff and governor team, we have agreed on a definition of spiritual development in our school community to support us as we talk about spirituality.

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*‘Spirituality is the capacity to notice wonder and mystery, reflect on what matters, and feel connected to others, the world and something beyond ourselves.’*

### **Legal requirements:**

Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 states:

The curriculum for a maintained school or maintained nursery school satisfies the requirements of this section if it is a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which: (a) promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and (b) prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The new SIAMS Inspection Framework (September 2023) threads spirituality and spiritual development throughout each of the Inspection Questions (IQS). It features as the impact of collective worship – adults and pupils flourish spiritually, but also expects that spiritual development is planned within the taught and wider curriculum offer of the school. It continues to make those strong links between vision and spirituality. Expecting a school's theologically rooted Christian vision to shape what spirituality may look like in a school and provide direction for how it is planned and developed.

Spirituality and spiritual development are best placed and most impactful in school when it is not just left to chance. Relying on ad hoc spiritual encounters in the daily life of the school and thus the pupils and adults within it, will limit development over time. It does not fully support the Church of England's vision for education (2016) where the core desire is to enable everyone to 'live life in all its fullness' (John 10.10).

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook (September 2023) states inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development alongside the school's provision for moral, social and cultural education. That this is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities, but draws together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement.

Paragraph 322. 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

**We support pupils in their spiritual development by:**

- providing opportunities for spiritual development in collective worship
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in RE
- providing opportunities for spiritual development in the wider curriculum
- capturing opportunities for awe and wonder as they arise
- providing quiet spaces in school, where children can take the time to think and reflect
- offering pupils opportunities to develop their own spiritual leadership, through leading collective worship and other opportunities

**As a staff team:**

- We have a staff understanding of spiritual development which has been developed through staff training.
- We have a culture within our school that recognises the importance of spirituality to individuals, both children and staff.
- We have an agreed language of spirituality which is threaded throughout the curriculum (appendix 1)
- Our governors monitor the impact of our spirituality focus.
- We have staff guidance accessible to continue to support staff in this aspect of our curriculum.
- We ensure new staff are aware of our school policy on spiritual development.
- We use models to support our own thinking in spirituality, such as the 'Windows, Mirrors, Doors' approach. (appendix 2)
- We have a variety of spiritual spaces both inside and outside the school building.
- We are aware of spiritual development shown across four key areas of Self, Others, World and Beyond.
- We recognise that children will have different 'Spiritual Temperaments' or 'Sacred Pathways, through the work of Gary Thomas (2010) and Myra Perrine (2007). This will influence our planning as we look to nurture spirituality across the curriculum, not just in RE and Collective Worship. (appendix 3)
- We actively use the language we have agreed on with staff to nurture an awareness of spirituality and its importance to well-being and development with the children.

- We aim to help each pupil to develop a spiritual understanding in terms of their own cultural context.
- We share with parents, whenever possible, the outcomes of our focus on spiritual development through newsletters, social media, displays and our website.
- We discuss spirituality with our church and others who can further support this thread.

Our awareness and understanding of spiritual development will enrich what we offer to the children and to all in our school community.

**Other related policies:**

Collective Worship  
Religious Education  
Teaching and Learning  
Behaviour

**Referenced reading:**

Church of England Education Office (CEEO) Spiritual Development – Interpretations of Spiritual Development in the Classroom (2019)

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/supporting-children/school-effectiveness/re-collective-worship-and-spirituality/spiritual-development/>

# Appendix 1

## Spirituality Vocabulary Spine

### EYFS (and above)

me	joy	thankful
others	peace	beautiful
think	hope	ourselves
kindness	listen	'windows'
love	wonder	'mirrors'
care	feelings	'doors'

### Key Stage 1 (and above)

reflect	compassion	mystery
inspire	view / outlook	curiosity
nurture	aspire	awe
heal	seek	connection
forgive	truth	belonging
celebrate	change	response

### Key Stage 2 (and above)

humility	transform	purpose
contemplate	spiritual	identity
meditate	philosophical	enlighten
rejoice	profound	embrace

## Appendix 2

Spirituality in Church schools is about relationships with...



Self

IN



Others

OUT



Transcendental

UP



IN

Mirrors allow us to reflect upon ourselves, to look inside, to consider our own views and those of others.



OUT

We use windows to look out, to seek something new from a safe place.



UP

Doors allow us to walk through to experience something new, to find a new path, to respond in a new way.

## Appendix 3

# Spirituality Across the Curriculum

## Our Spirituality Framework

We use four key areas to support spiritual development:

### Self

- Who am I?
- What makes me unique?
- How do I understand my thoughts, feelings and beliefs?

### Others

- How do I relate to other people?
- How can I show kindness, compassion and forgiveness?
- What can I learn from different people and perspectives?

### World

- What inspires awe and wonder?
- How can I care for the world around me?
- What beauty can I notice and appreciate?

### Beyond

- What are life's big questions?
- What lies beyond what we can see and understand?
- How do people express faith, belief and spirituality?

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## EYFS

Children develop spirituality through:

- Play and exploration
- Storytelling and imagination
- Encounters with nature
- Creative experiences
- Music and movement
- Building relationships
- Wondering questions
- Quiet reflection and stillness
- Opportunities to express feelings and emotions

Self | Others | World

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## English

Children develop spirituality through stories, poetry and discussion. They explore characters' feelings, choices and relationships, developing empathy and understanding. Literature encourages children to reflect on their own identity and experiences whilst appreciating the beauty and power of language.

Examples:

- Exploring characters' emotions
- Responding to powerful texts
- Writing creatively
- Discussing moral dilemmas

Self | Others | Beyond

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## Mathematics

Children develop spirituality through curiosity, perseverance and discovering patterns within the world. Mathematics helps pupils appreciate order, logic and beauty while building resilience through problem-solving.

Examples:

- Exploring patterns and sequences
- Solving challenging problems
- Working collaboratively
- Appreciating symmetry and design

Self | World

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## Science

Science inspires awe and wonder about the natural world and the universe. Pupils ask questions, investigate and reflect upon what they discover while developing a sense of responsibility towards living things and the environment.

Examples:

- Observing life cycles
- Exploring space and the universe
- Investigating the human body
- Caring for living things

World | Beyond

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## Religious Education

RE provides rich opportunities to explore faith, belief and meaning. Children encounter different religions and worldviews while considering life's big questions and reflecting upon their own beliefs and values.

Examples:

- Exploring worship and prayer

- Discussing philosophical questions
- Visiting places of worship
- Reflecting on faith and belief

Self | Others | Beyond

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## Art and Design

Art encourages pupils to notice beauty, express themselves creatively and respond to the world around them. Through creating and appreciating artwork, children develop imagination, reflection and a sense of wonder.

Examples:

- Responding to great artists
- Creating personal artwork
- Appreciating beauty
- Exploring different perspectives

Self | World

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## Design Technology

Through designing, making and evaluating, children develop creativity and resilience. They learn to appreciate how design can improve lives and respond to human needs.

Examples:

- Solving practical problems
- Evaluating designs
- Creating purposeful products
- Learning from mistakes

Self | Others | World

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## Music

Music provides opportunities for expression, reflection and shared experience. Children experience joy, wonder and belonging through listening, performing and creating music together.

Examples:

- Singing together
- Listening reflectively
- Performing for others
- Exploring different musical traditions

Self | Others | Beyond

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## Physical Education

PE develops perseverance, self-discipline and teamwork. Pupils learn respect, fairness and resilience whilst also experiencing the joy of movement and appreciation of the outdoors.

Examples:

- Team games
- Outdoor learning
- Yoga and mindfulness
- Personal challenge

Self | Others | World

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## Languages

Learning another language helps children appreciate diversity and develop an understanding of different cultures and ways of life.

Examples:

- Exploring cultural traditions
- Learning about different countries
- Celebrating diversity

Others | World

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## History

History encourages pupils to reflect on human experiences, choices and consequences. Children develop empathy by considering the lives of people from the past and reflecting on issues of justice, courage and change.

Examples:

- Exploring significant individuals
- Considering fairness and injustice
- Reflecting on historical choices
- Understanding different perspectives

Self | Others | Beyond

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## Geography

Geography inspires curiosity about the world and encourages pupils to appreciate both human and physical environments. Children consider their place within a wider global community.

Examples:

- Exploring diverse places
- Studying environmental issues
- Appreciating natural beauty
- Comparing different ways of life

Others | World

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## Life Skills / PSHE

Children develop self-awareness, resilience, empathy and emotional literacy. They learn how to build positive relationships and contribute to their community.

Examples:

- Discussing feelings
- Developing resilience
- Understanding relationships
- Making responsible choices

Self | Others

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## Computing

Children learn to use technology safely, responsibly and creatively. They reflect on how technology affects themselves, others and the wider world.

Examples:

- Online safety
- Digital responsibility
- Creating digital content
- Considering the impact of technology
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Self | Others | World

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