



Small Beginnings; Endless Possibilities

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."
Matthew 13 31-32

Spirituality and Personal Development Policy

Policy agreed (date):	January 2026
Policy published (including on website) (date):	
Next review (date):	

1. Introduction

1.1 Policy Rationale

This *Spirituality and Personal Development Policy* sets out our school's commitment to fostering the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils in line with statutory requirements, Church school inspection (SIAMS) expectations, the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) 2025, and our own school ethos. Rooted in Christian values and exemplified by the parable of the mustard seed (Mark 4:30–32), this policy embraces the belief that all children, regardless of background or ability, have the potential to grow into flourishing individuals with a meaningful sense of purpose. We aim to cultivate resilience, moral integrity, empathy, and wonder in every child. The school's core values—**compassion**, **curiosity**, and **courage**—inform every aspect of this policy and underpin our holistic approach to education.

2. Vision and Aims

2.1 Vision Statement

Inspired by the parable of the mustard seed, our vision is to nurture the God-given potential within every child. Just as the mustard seed, though the smallest of all seeds, grows into the largest of all garden plants, so too can our pupils grow into individuals who are deeply rooted in spiritual and moral awareness.

We believe that by cultivating compassion, fostering curiosity, and inspiring courage, our pupils can flourish academically, personally, and spiritually.

2.2 Policy Aims

- To promote the spiritual development of all pupils by providing opportunities for questioning, reflection, awe and wonder, and relationship building.
- To embed the school's Christian values of compassion, curiosity, and courage across all areas of school life.
- To ensure that all pupils are equipped with the personal and character development skills needed to contribute positively to society.

- To align the school's approach with statutory guidance from the DfE, SIAMS Evaluation Schedule, EEF findings on character education, and the Ofsted Personal Development judgement.

3. Defining Spirituality and Personal Development

3.1 What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is recognised as a personal and developmental aspect of each child that relates to meaning, purpose, identity, and connection—with self, others, the natural world, and (for those from a faith perspective) with God. It is not confined to religious belief but is nurtured through reflection, creativity, emotional exploration, and ethical discussion.

3.2 Personal Development

Personal development encompasses the nurturing of a child's character, resilience, confidence, and independence. It is about promoting positive behaviour, citizenship, mental health and wellbeing, and preparation for life in modern Britain.

This policy therefore intersects with areas such as:

- SMSC development
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)
- British Values
- Citizenship education
- Mental health and wellbeing strategies

4. Legal and Inspection Frameworks

4.1 DfE Guidance

This policy aligns with:

- **The Department for Education's 2019 'Character education: framework guidance'** — which outlines the importance of developing six character benchmarks: motivation, self-control, empathy, social and emotional skills, civic virtue, and performance virtues.
- **Statutory Requirements for PSHE and RSHE** — particularly the emphasis on resilience, respect and mental wellbeing.
- **Promoting Fundamental British Values through SMSC.**

4.2 Ofsted EIF 2025: Personal Development

Ofsted's 2025 framework identifies *Personal Development* as a key judgement area and includes:

- Character development
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Understanding and acceptance of diversity
- Preparation for future success and responsible citizenship

Evidence sources for this include discussions with pupils, curriculum documentation, enrichment and extracurricular provision, pupil voice, and school ethos.

4.3 SIAMS Framework

Under the **SIAMS Evaluation Schedule (2023)**, spirituality and personal development are assessed through the lens of Christian distinctiveness:

- *"How well the school's Christian vision shapes the culture and develops people"*
- *"How spirituality is enabled to flourish through daily life and curriculum"*

Our school actively supports pupils to explore and deepen their spirituality through collective worship, RE, pastoral care, challenging questions, and space for stillness and wonder.

5. Embedding the Values of Compassion, Curiosity and Courage

5.1 Compassion

- Encouraged through acts of kindness, service, inclusion and empathy.
- Reflected in behaviour policies, restorative practices, and community work.
- Led through collective worship themes and curriculum discussion.

5.2 Curiosity

- Fostered through inquiry-led learning, philosophical questioning (e.g. P4C), and critical thinking.
- Supported by our cross-curricular focus on asking big questions, encountering different worldviews, and openness to unanswerable questions.
- Encouraged via enrichment activities that promote exploration and discovery.

5.3 Courage

- Modelled and celebrated through risk-taking in learning, standing up for what is right, and embracing uncertainty.
- Integrated into leadership opportunities, voice platforms and social justice education.
- Supported through resilience-building strategies as drawn from EEF guidance.

6. Curriculum and Pedagogy

6.1 Curriculum Integration

Spiritual and personal development are not 'subject-based' but are inflected throughout:

- **RE:** Deepening understanding of self and others' faiths through theological and philosophical enquiry.
- **Collective Worship:** A daily opportunity for spiritual reflection and connection, rooted in the school's Christian ethos.
- **Wider Curriculum:** Encouraging spiritual insight and reflection in topics such as awe in science, moral dilemmas in literature, or wonder in art and nature.

6.2 Enrichment and Wider Opportunities

A wide range of extracurricular and enrichment opportunities support personal growth:

- School council and pupil leadership roles.
- Trips, outdoor learning and cultural visits.
- Partnerships with charities, churches, and the local community.

7. Implementation Strategies

7.1 Staff CPD

Staff receive regular training in:

- Delivering high-quality SMSC through the curriculum.
- Embedding character education using EEF research-backed approaches.
- Recognising and nurturing spirituality in everyday teaching.

7.2 Leadership and Governance

Leadership responsibilities include:

- Monitoring impact through pupil voice, learning walks, and curriculum audits.
- Regular review of provision through SLT-led self-evaluation aligned with Ofsted's and SIAMS frameworks.
- Governor oversight of personal development and character education priorities.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

8.1 Data and Impact Measures

We evaluate impact through:

- Pupil surveys and voice on personal growth and wellbeing.
- Behaviour and pastoral records.
- Participation in enrichment and leadership.
- RE and PSHE assessments.

8.2 SIAMS and Ofsted Readiness

The school conducts regular SMSC reviews and spiritual development audits. These are benchmarked against:

- **Ofsted's Personal Development criteria and thematic research (Ofsted Toolkit for 2025).**
- **SIAMS schedule development strands.**

9. Spirituality in Practice: The Parable of the Mustard Seed

We draw inspiration from **Mark 4:30–32**, where the smallest of seeds becomes the greatest of all plants. This parable encapsulates the essence of our work—giving every pupil, no

matter their background or prior attainment, the chance to grow in character and in spirit. The mustard seed symbol reminds us:

- **Compassion** allows fragile seeds to be nurtured with care.
- **Curiosity** ensures growth through questioning and discovery.
- **Courage** empowers pupils to face challenges and weather storms.

10. Policy Evaluation and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by school leaders and governors, with input from staff, pupils and parents. It will ensure the school remains in line with the latest educational research, DfE guidance, and expectations from SIAMS and Ofsted.

11. Appendix

11.1 Key References

- DfE (2019). *Character education: framework guidance*
- Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) – *Approaches for social and emotional learning / resilience / character development*
- Church of England Education Office (2023). *SIAMS Evaluation Schedule*
- Ofsted (2023). *Education Inspection Framework and 2025 Toolkit for Personal Development*
- The Holy Bible (Mark 4:30–32) – The Parable of the Mustard Seed

11.2 Related Policies

- Vision and Values Statement
 - Collective Worship Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - PSHE and RSHE Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Safeguarding and Wellbeing Strategy
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