

St Laurence Church of England Junior Academy - Spirituality Statement

Our vision statement states that we 'offer a supportive, inclusive, nurturing and inspiring learning environment where each member is known by God, loved and empowered to reach their full potential'. A key part of that belief is to nurture children's spiritual awareness and develop each child's spiritual character.

What is Spirituality?

'Spirituality is the deep human longing to experience the transcendent in our ordinary life it's the expectation to experience the extraordinary in the ordinary, the miraculous in the mundane, and the sacred camouflaged in the profane.'

Pittman McGhee taken from Dare to Lead by Brené Brown.

Spirituality concerns a person's awareness and relationship with themselves, with others, with God (or the transcendent), and with nature and the environment. These four elements form the basis of our work with children in developing a strong sense of spirituality.

The four elements of spirituality consist of:

Self (Looking in)

- Awareness of feelings and our uniqueness
- Gratitude for things we have and who we are
- Exploration of personal faith
- Development of imagination and creativity

Others (Looking out)

- Empathy, understanding, tolerance and respect.
- To love and be loved. Loving yourself and others.
- Making a difference to others.

Transcendence (Looking beyond/up)

- Experiencing God (what lies beyond the material/physical)
- Ability to discuss the 'Big Questions' (life, death, suffering, nature of God).
- Opportunities of prayer and connecting with God.
- Making sense of the world.

The world – beauty and creation (Looking Down)

- Developing a sense of awe and wonder.
- Enjoying miracles of everyday life.
- Appreciating music, art, nature.
- Taking time for what matters.

Structures to support and develop spirituality

Our spiritual foundation is based on our Christian values and vision. Therefore everything we do is done in the light of our spiritual foundations. We raise spiritual awareness through:

- Example – we model our behavior, conversations and the way we treat each other.
- Teaching – Spirituality can specifically be seen in RE and PSHE but opportunities are planned across the curriculum in all subjects and where appropriate we will take opportunity to reflect on how our learning impacts our place in the world and how we should respond.
- Collective Worship – we have a planned programme for Collective Worship across the school which maps out themes and values across the year. We offer space for prayer and reflection throughout the school day.
- Our relationship with the church – as a school we have a good relationship with our local church and together we seek to encourage the children to discuss and reflect, allowing the children the opportunity to open themselves to God.

How do we develop a strong sense of spirituality?

Self (Looking in)

- PSHE lessons.
- Show and tell – allowing the children to share their uniqueness and interests.
- Emotional check ins – zones of regulation.
- Exploring other religions and faiths – giving children a chance to share their own beliefs.
- Restorative justice.
- Providing opportunities for creativity and imagination.

Others (Looking out)

- Fresh start policy- giving everyone a fresh start.
- Making everyone in the school community feel welcome and equal.
- Our school values, vision and motto - Believe, Achieve, Aspire.
- Using the Zones of Regulation to help our children share and regulate their emotions.
- Growing our own forest/forest school.
- Eco Warriors and School Council.
- Valuing play opportunities.

Transcendence (Looking beyond/up)

- Prayer spaces in classrooms
- Use of outdoor spaces – Peace Garden, outdoor classroom.
- Explore Big Questions – through our curriculum and shared school spaces.
- Weekly prayer book – shared in Collective Worship.
- I wonder questioning.

The world – beauty and creation (Looking Down)

- Planting in and around the school.
- Residential trips and visits.
- Forest school.
- Eco Warriors.
- Outside festivals.