

Cawston Church of England Primary Academy

Spirituality Policy

Cawston Church of England Primary Academy

School Vision



At Cawston we are committed to Growing Excellence.
Planting - Nurturing - Flourishing.

Policy Type:	Academy Policy
Approved By:	LGB/Ethos Committee
Approval Date:	
Review Date:	
Person Responsible:	Acting Headteacher

Changes to the policy

Page	Changes	Agreed/Date

Our Vision

Our school is set amidst a rural environment with daily reminders of the cycle of growth all around us. Our vision draws on that cycle of growth and is uses the imagery from one of Jesus' most famous lessons, the Parable of the Sower.

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Planting - Nurturing - Flourishing.**

Jesus says well-nurtured seeds will thrive. Our school is the “good soil”, offering an ideal environment for individuals to grow; building on the diverse gifts and talents we bring to our community.

Based on the parable of the sower - Luke 8.4 - 15

Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to outline the ways in which Cawston Church of England Primary Academy provides opportunities for children to develop their spirituality.

It is our role to recognise the diverse talents and gifts that children and adults bring to our school community and that spirituality exists in everyone. Jesus says well-nurtured seeds will thrive and we want to ensure we support our children to be happy and rounded in all respects, including spirituality, which cannot be taught or measured.

What is Spirituality

Spirituality is like the wind - you cannot see it, but like the leaves on a tree, you can see its movement in someone's life. Spirituality might change someone's understanding and beliefs but ultimately may be thought of as an innate sense of awe and wonder; it is about understanding that there is something more than just 'me'.

John Macquarrie said that spirituality is "to do with becoming a person in the fullest sense" (Paths in Spirituality, 1972) and this holistic view of spirituality is one which we seek to promote and encourage at Cawston. Crucially, the promotion of spirituality should not be confused with developing faith. Faith is a set of beliefs by which you live your life and could be a response to a belief in God. Faith is something you choose whereas spirituality is a fundamental aspect of human experience - it is not separate but integral to who we are and what makes us whole. Spirituality is for everybody regardless of faith.

How does Cawston Primary promote spirituality?

Our school aims to support children in making sense of themselves and the world around them. We aim to help them observe their own responses to different experiences. We believe that experiences, both in and out of school, are important to the development of all pupils.

We will create frameworks that help children to consider big, sometimes overwhelming, concepts such as life, death, identity, war and the environment, but without necessarily offering easy answers. These opportunities will come through the teaching and learning of our whole school curriculum particularly our values, Collective Worship, RE, PSHCE/RSHE, Science, Art, Music and English.

Children will have exposure to spiritual experiences and conversations to know that it exists for everyone, including adults.

Opportunities for spirituality development come when:

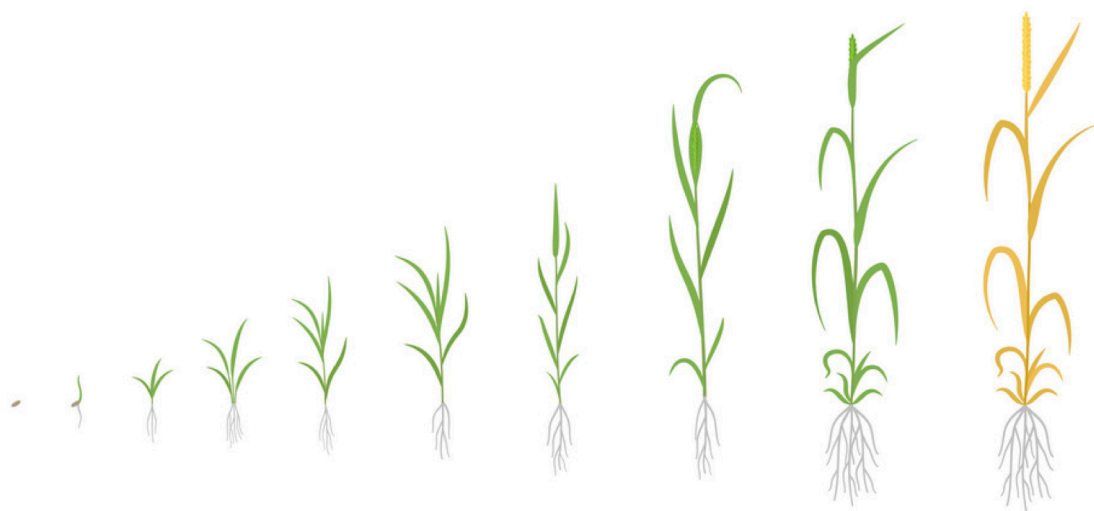
- children are given space to stop, look, listen, think and reflect
- children feel safe to share opinions and think differently from others
- children 'Think imaginatively'

Children need:

- time to be listened to;
- adults that are respectful;
- space to explore, think and discuss;
- opportunities that encourage wonder and surprise;
- to know that there is not always a product or end result;
- to know there is another way.
- time to 'just be' and to experience peace and stillness

Roots, shoots and fruits

The notion of roots, shoots and fruits links strongly to our school vision and explains in a pictorial way how we might develop spirituality within our school.



Roots

Our school is an integral part of its surrounding community, and this wider setting provides the roots and context in which healthy, creative connections can be encouraged. Understanding where we come from is an incredibly important first stage to developing our own spirituality.

Shoots

Spiritual development springs from our individual gifts and talents; we encourage spiritual expression in a range of styles, inspiring respect and tolerance for those different expressions. We aim to avoid narrowness of thought and foster creative exploration, diversity and inclusivity.

Fruits

Spirituality is a lifelong journey and none of us can claim to be the 'finished product'. The fruits of a healthy spiritual life will be different for each person and at different stages of life. Whilst there is undeniably a personal dimension to spirituality, the fruits will be seen through our growth together as a community.

Spirituality through Collective Worship

Collective Worship can often help to develop spirituality through both its substance and its content.

In collective worship, our school uses the structure of “Gathering, Engaging, Responding and Sending”.

To gather the school for collective worship, we use repeated liturgical words which locate the time in the ancient tradition of Christian worship. We engage children through times for thought and reflection, and candle-light is often used as a symbol of Christian worship. Children are offered opportunities to respond within collective worship, and there are often interactive components. Prayers written by the children are used and these articulate thoughts and concepts that are important to them. Familiar words, such as the school prayer (below), are also used to close acts of collective worship to send the children back into their classes.

Activities and opportunities within collective worship will include:

- exposure and appreciation of nature
- following rituals and traditions
- use of prayer or reflection time
- time for silence and stillness
- acts of service that benefit others
- stories that promote thought and imagination (without the need to find a moral)
- Opportunities to sing together
- Opportunities to be involved

The school has its own school prayer which was written for the school, and which has been in use since 2016. The prayer is used often and the children know it well.

School Prayer

Dear God,
We thank you for our school family.
Help us grow together:
In our learning,
In our friendships
and in our faith.
We pray through Jesus Christ
our friend and our saviour. Amen.

Personal expressions of spirituality

In addition to collective expressions of spirituality, we take seriously the need to nurture a personal spiritual life in all members of the school community. We provide a range of opportunities for children to explore spiritual ideas and practices in formally curated ways, and through ad hoc encounters through the school day. The expression of individual spirituality also come through art, play, attitudes, movement and the use of the senses.

Activities and opportunities for the development of personal spirituality include:

- Areas for reflection in classrooms
- Outdoor labyrinth
- Diverse outdoor spaces for reflection and thought
- Class trees in the grounds as places for thought
- Soul space events
- The use of Godly Play in the classroom with its permissive 'wondering' aspect
- Encouraging 'big questions'

Barriers to Development of Spirituality

Whilst we may seek to do much good work to promote spirituality within the school, we must also recognise that unconscious barriers can often exist especially among adults. Development of spirituality can be hindered when:

- adults trivialise something small to them but which is big to a child;
- the 'busyness' of life and not having the time to look and think;
- lack of space for stillness and listening.

By being aware of these potential barriers, staff across Cawston are able to allow children to develop their spirituality throughout their daily lives whilst in the school environment.