Cowbit St Mary's Church of England Academy

Spirituality Policy

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Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

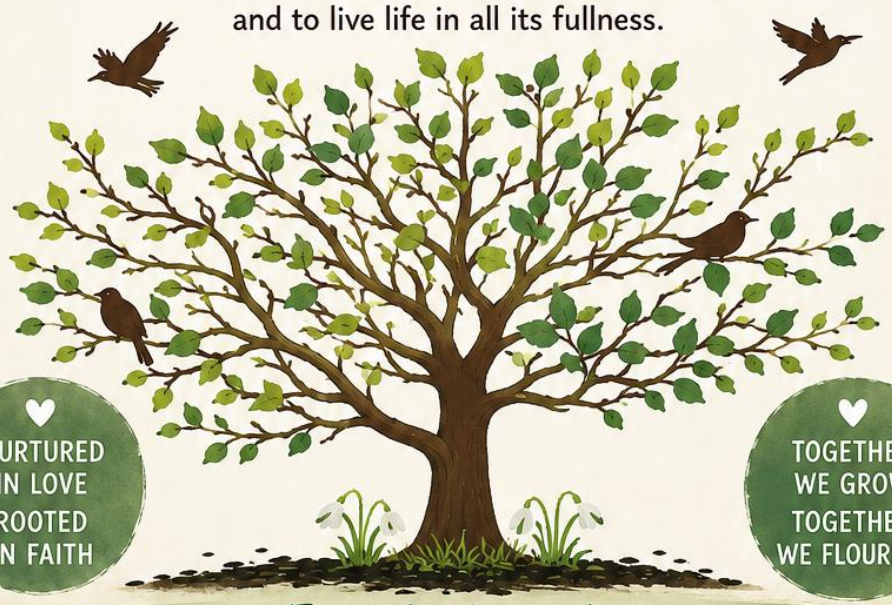
_____ Chair of Governors Date: _____

Growing together in learning, love and faith.

This guides us in what we are doing here
and our daily purpose within our community.

OUR CHRISTIAN VISION

Every member of the Cowbit St Mary's Church of England Academy community is welcomed and nurtured, enabling all to flourish. As children of God, each child will thrive emotionally, **spiritually** and academically through our enriching curriculum providing both **opportunities** and **possibilities**. We empower our whole school **community** to be hopeful about the future and to be drivers of positive change. We are committed to ensuring that each child is as individual as a mustard seed and they are encouraged to grow to their full potential and to live life in all its fullness.



NURTURED IN LOVE
ROOTED IN FAITH

TOGETHER WE GROW
TOGETHER WE FLOURISH

From little seeds great and wonderful things grow and flourish.

Cowbit St Mary's Church of England Academy

Our Values are our roots, which help ground us as we grow.


Respect


Kindness


Responsibility


Forgiveness


Peseverence


Hope

At Cowbit St Mary's, we are **"Growing together in learning, love and faith."** Spiritual development is at the heart of this vision and is an essential part of every child's educational journey. We believe that spirituality helps children recognise that God is beside them every day, guiding, supporting and encouraging them to become the very best version of themselves.

Spirituality is not a separate subject that is taught in isolation. Instead, it is woven through every aspect of school life and nurtured through our enquiry-based curriculum, relationships, collective worship and daily experiences. It helps children to understand who they are, how they feel, how they relate to others and how they belong within God's world. Opportunities for spiritual development are presented or natural arise as children engage with school life, they are encouraged to question, consider, reflect and respond, and consider their own values, beliefs and feelings and those of others, with whom they are working alongside or with.

Our Definition of Spirituality:
Spirituality helps us to do this every day. Spirituality helps us remember that God is beside us every day, guiding us, supporting us and helping us become the very best that we can be.

At Cowbit St Mary's Church of England Academy, Spirituality means:

- **Learning about ourselves (Loving Learning)**
  This helps us grow, just like the little mustard seed in our school vision.
- **Feeling connected to others (Loving each other)**
  We belong to God's family, and we care for each other in our school community.
- **Seeing the awe and wonder in life (Loving life itself)**
  We notice the amazing world God has made and enjoy all the opportunities and possibilities we are given.
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So when we talk about spirituality in our school, we mean:

- *Loving learning*
- *Loving each other*
- *Loving life itself*

These help every child at Cowbit St Mary's to flourish, spread their wings, and grow into something wonderful—just like the mustard seed in our vision.

SPIRITUALITY

helps us grow and flourish, just like the mustard seed.

God is beside us every day, guiding us, supporting us and helping us be the very best that we can be.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed... though it is the smallest of seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants."
Matthew 13:31-32



1 Learning about ourselves

This helps us grow, just like the little mustard seed in our school vision.



2 Feeling connected to others

We belong to God's family, and we care for each other in our school community.



3 Seeing the awe and wonder in life

We notice the amazing world God has made and enjoy all the opportunities and possibilities we are given.



So when we talk about spirituality in our school, we mean...

Loving learning

We are curious.
We try our best.
We grow together.

Loving each other

We are kind.
We look out for each other.
We are one family.

Loving life itself

We are thankful.
We care for God's world.
We embrace every day.

Growing together in learning, love and faith.

At Cowbit St Mary's, spirituality encourages children to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their thoughts, feelings, possibilities and aspirations.
- Build meaningful connections with others through kindness, compassion, respect and love.
- Experience awe and wonder in the world around them, recognising God's presence in creation, people and everyday moments.
- Reflect on life's questions and explore what gives meaning, purpose and hope.
- Grow in curiosity, imagination and enjoyment of learning.

To support this development, we adopt teaching approaches that:

- Value children's questions and give them time and space for reflection, discussion and personal response.
- Encourage children to make connections between their learning, their experiences and their understanding of themselves and the world.
- Inspire curiosity and enquiry through questions such as "Why?", "How?" and "What does this mean for me and others?"
- Create opportunities for children to notice, appreciate and respond to moments of beauty, wonder and reflection.

As part of our school community, children are given opportunities:

- To encourage curiosity, enquiry and exploration through first-hand experiences and opportunities to ask deep questions about themselves, others, the world and God.
- To enable children to make connections between their learning, their own experiences and the beliefs, values and worldviews of others.
- To promote a worldviews approach, helping children to understand that people make sense of the world in different ways through religious and non-religious beliefs, traditions, values and lived experiences.
- To encourage children to explore how beliefs and values influence people's choices, actions, relationships and understanding of life.
- To engage with and experience different aspects of Christian worship, prayer and reflection as part of our distinctive Christian vision.
- Support children who already have religious beliefs to explore and develop these in ways that are personal, relevant and meaningful, while fostering respect and understanding among those of all faiths and none.
- To observe carefully, listen attentively and respond thoughtfully to the experiences, ideas and perspectives of others.
- Inspire creativity and imagination through opportunities to reflect and respond using art, music, literature, drama, film, nature and other forms of expression.
- Help children develop an understanding of human emotions, relationships and identity, considering how these shape both their own lives and the lives of others.
- Engage in respectful dialogue, collaboration and the exchange of different viewpoints, helping children to express their own ideas with confidence while listening carefully to others.

- Have moments of stillness, calm and contemplation that allow children to reflect on their experiences, appreciate God's presence and notice the awe and wonder of the world around them.

At Cowbit St Mary's Church of England Academy, our approach to spirituality is called **ROOTS**. Inspired by our mustard seed vision, ROOTS reflects our belief that spiritual growth, like the growth of a seed, begins with strong foundations. Through **Reflect, Others, Open Our Eyes, Thankfulness and Seek Wonder**, children explore different pathways to spirituality, enabling them to grow in self-awareness, relationships, faith, gratitude and wonder. Just as every mustard seed grows in its own way, we recognise that each child's spiritual journey is unique, and our ROOTS help every child to flourish.

Each of the pathways are explained below:

ROOTS	What it means	Sacred pathway	Examples might include:
R- Reflect	Learning about ourselves, our feelings, beliefs and questions	Contemplative and Ascetic	Awareness of feelings: ability to reflect and express. Awareness of our uniqueness: happiness with who we are. Exploration of personal faith. Development of imagination and creativity.
O- Others	Building relationships, kindness and belonging	Caregiver	Empathy and understanding: respect. To love and be loved (loving your neighbour). Making a difference: duty. Connect with others through friendships, shared interests or feelings. Understand other's worldviews, traditions and backgrounds.
O- Open our eyes	Noticing God's presence and the needs of others	Naturalist and Activist	Encountering / experiencing God (having a sense of what lies beyond the material / physical). Ability to ask and discuss the 'Big Questions'. Opportunities for prayer, connecting with God. Making sense of the world. Recognise that other people may be different to ourselves and live differently.
T- Thankfulness	Appreciating life, God's gifts and everyday blessings	Sensate and Traditionalist	Gratitude for the things we have and the person we are. Gratitude for the world we live in and how to look after it- often experienced through the senses.

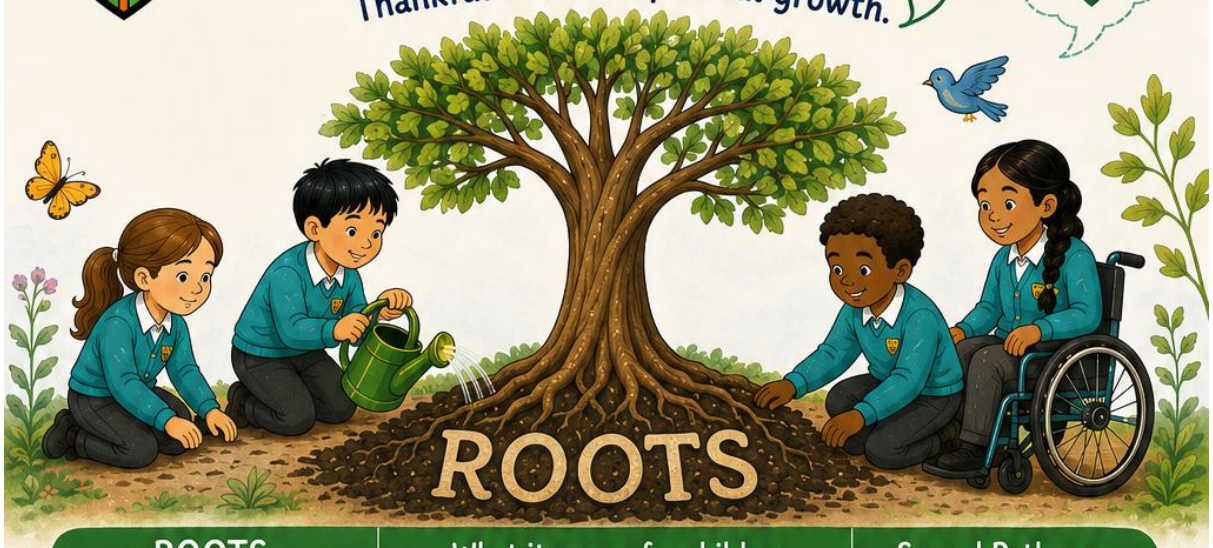
S- Seek awe and wonder in the world	Exploring awe, mystery, beauty and big questions	Enthusiast, Naturalist and Intellectual	Developing a sense of awe and wonder. Enjoying the miracles of everyday life. Taking time for what really matters. Appreciating beauty in art, music, nature, etc.

Adapted from Gary Thomas- Sacred Pathways

We grow spiritually when we use our ROOTS:

Reflect, Others, Open our eyes, Thankfulness and Spiritual growth.

Which ROOTS have we used today?



ROOTS	What it means for children	Sacred Pathway
R – Reflect	Learning about ourselves, our feelings, beliefs and questions.	
O – Others	Building relationships, kindness and belonging.	
O – Open Our Eyes	Noticing God's presence and the needs of others.	
T – Thankfulness	Appreciating life, God's gifts and everyday blessings.	
S – Seek Wonder	Exploring awe, mystery, beauty and big questions.	

Child-Friendly Version

ROOTS help us grow spiritually.

- R – Reflect on who I am.
- O – Others matter to me.
- O – Open my eyes to God's world.
- T – Thank God for life's gifts.
- S – Seek awe and wonder.



Linking to Our Mustard Seed Vision

Just as a mustard seed grows into a strong tree because of its roots, we grow spiritually through our ROOTS.
Different children grow in different ways. Some feel close to God in nature, some through helping others, some through prayer, some through learning and asking questions.
Our ROOTS help all of us grow and flourish.

Growing together in learning, love and faith.

Subject	How spirituality can be developed
English	• Reading and discussing literature that explores moral and ethical dilemmas; writing reflective pieces on personal values and beliefs. • In responding to a poem, story or text; pupils can be asked 'I wonder what you think happens next?' 'How would you feel if you were the person in the story?' 'Where have you met these ideas before?' • By appreciating the beauty of language. • Imagining oneself as someone else. • Escaping into other worlds through literature. • The element of wonder in literature. • The purpose and audience of writing • Hooks for writing that encourage 'wows' - these could be visual texts, artwork, music, nature around us
Maths	• Exploring patterns and connections in mathematics, fostering a sense of wonder and awe at the beauty and order in the universe. • By considering pattern, order, symmetry and scale both man made and in the natural world. • By appreciating the beauty of shape and space. • The wonder of numbers, formulae and equations.
In Physical Education	• Developing a sense of connectedness between mind, body, and spirit; promoting values such as teamwork, respect, and resilience. • By delighting in movement, particularly when pupils are able to show spontaneity. • By taking part in activities such as dance, games and gymnastics which help pupils to become more focused, connected and creative. • By being aware of one's own strengths and limitations.
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 of scientific achievements. • Exploring how scientific understanding can change over time. • Discussing how scientific discoveries start with imagination and forming a question. • Enjoying nature through the different seasons.
R.E.	• People, places, things, books, actions and ideas held by religious believers to be holy. • Ideas of the divine/questions of God. • Forms of worship. • Use of music, art and drama to express beliefs and worldviews. • 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 • Studying different religious and philosophical traditions; exploring questions of meaning, purpose, and morality. • By experiencing wonder and joy through learning about and from stories, celebrations, rituals and different expressions of religion and worldviews. • By asking and responding to questions of meaning and purpose.
Art	• Expressing personal beliefs and values through creative artwork; exploring the spiritual significance of art throughout history. • By providing plenty of rich opportunities for pupils to explore both the spiritual dimension and natural phenomena e.g. natural form, waves, complex pattern in nature. • By exploring different artists' interpretations and asking what the artist was trying to convey. • By allowing pupils to show what they know through their own expression • Space for calm, mindful thinking, reflection • Understand the experiences, emotions, and perspectives of others through looking at and hearing others talk about their art • Opportunities to reflect on how different pieces of art make us feel • Being creative, using our imagination, exploring and seeing where the process takes us, learning more about ourselves as we experiment and explore.
DT	• Discovering how something works. • Appreciating design. • Beauty in design. • Perseverance to solve problems. • Personal achievement. • Learning from others and reflecting on our own successes and identifying what we could do better next time.
History	• Studying different cultures, religions, and belief systems throughout history; reflecting on the human experience and the search for meaning. • By considering how things would be different if the course of events had been different • By looking at local history and investigating the reasons why there is a landmark, celebration or building. • By speculating about how we mark important events from history and the people who shaped them. • Providing opportunities for children to ask and discuss questions about the past. • Teaching of History to involve stories to make a connection and build empathy. • Creating a space for children to relate to historical events to their own lives, rights and identity.
Geography	• Exploring the natural world and our place within it; considering issues of sustainability, stewardship, and interconnectedness.

	• By using Digi maps/ Google maps/ photographs and asking pupils to imagine what it might be like to live in different parts of the world e.g. Brazil or Spain • By making links with history when exploring the environment and speculating on why the landscape is as it is. • By comparing their lives with pupils living in other countries or other parts of the UK • The 'wow' of discovering different physical regions that provide different opportunities from where we live. • Developing fieldwork opportunities/time spent exploring and asking questions about photographs e.g. feeling wonder when they see something in nature, such as the seaside.
Music	• Exploring the emotional and spiritual dimensions of music; experiencing moments of transcendence through performance and composition. • By allowing pupils to show their delight and curiosity in creating their own sounds. • By considering how music makes one feel and can 'move us' deeply. • Appreciating the effect, a performance can have on the audience creating that 'wow' moment of stillness and silence before the applause. • Understanding how music can provide a link with different cultures and allow building relationships of mutual respect and understanding. • Understanding how we can use music to help us improve our well-being and provide an aid to emotional regulation for some people. What type of music makes you feel calm? What type of music makes you feel excited / sad / angry etc. Thinking about what features of the music may contribute to these feelings e.g. tempo / rhythm / key / texture. • Celebrating creativity through the music curriculum there is no wrong in composition experimenting with different sound combinations to find something they feel sounds good. • Appreciating different people have differing preferences for music to listen to and there is no right or wrong.
Computing	• Reflecting on the ethical use of technology; considering the impact of digital interactions on personal and communal well-being. Help children to understand their digital identity and presence. E literacy lessons, online relationships and reputation, self-awareness and responsible digital behaviours. Digital footprint. Fostering a sense of integrity and accountability. • By wondering at the power of the digital age e.g. use of the internet and social media. By understanding the advantages and limitations of IT. Looking at advancements in technology and showing appreciation and respect for the interconnectedness of the world. • Computer systems - networks - making connections to the wider world. Learning about global digital citizenship and understanding the impact of technology on society.

	• Developing collaboration, teamwork and effective communication. • By using the internet as a gateway to big life issues. Asking questions and reflecting: so what? What if? • An opportunity for children to develop their creativity, critical thinking and ethical awareness. Developing creativity - problem solving; fostering self-belief, confidence and resilience through challenge and sense of achievement. Ethical implication of technology (AI and data privacy) • Creation of digital media that explores themes such as belief systems, social justice, and environmental issues. Developing empathy and mutual respect.
PSHE	• Reflecting on personal values, beliefs, and ethical decision-making; developing empathy, compassion, and self-awareness. • By developing awareness of and responding to others' needs and wants. • By exploring meaning and purpose for individuals and society. • By developing resilience and inner strength. • By valuing self as unique in the image of God. • By cherishing relationships. • Being Me in My World - The link between appreciating our place in the world and our communities helps children understand they are part of something bigger. It also helps them consider their connections to others and can enable them to feel closer to them and nature. • Celebrating Difference - Helps the children make the link between the idea that although we are all different we are also all special and connected. Also children can learn how people believe, pray and celebrate in different ways and may even see spirituality in different ways. • Dreams and Goals - Reinforces the spiritual belief that we all have a purpose or path. Spirituality can help us achieve our goals through being hopeful, strong and focused. • Healthy Me - A healthy lifestyle helps us feel strong, happy and calm. We can grow and have more opportunities for spiritual moments. • Relationships - links to spiritual teaching of treating others with respect. We often share spiritual moments with people from close relationships.
Wider enrichment opportunities including SEND provision	• By working in our spiritual garden- finding wildlife, using the senses, planting and taking care of plants and animals. • By planning and cooking with staff and finding the wonder in • making something and sharing it with peers, developing independence and life skills • By giving regular opportunities for highly engaging activities such as Bucket time, sensory story and ELSA sessions. • By enriching the opportunities to look after the whole child through sensory activities, sensory circuits, movement breaks, yoga, fine motor skills such dough disco. • Promoting opportunities for independence and success away from the

	• classroom such as reading in worship, performing in the • nativities. • By creating bespoke learning opportunities with the child at the centre. • focusing on their likes and interests. • Various trips to wonderful places e.g. Residential, Flag Fen, Victorian Workhouse, Tattershall Castle