



Spirituality Statement - Newton Solney CofE (VA) Infant School



'For a human being, especially a child or young person, to have a full quality of life, spirituality in all its aspects must be nurtured and affirmed'
(John Bradford).

Our vision statement states:

Newton Solney C of E (VA) Infant School is a friendly, caring and happy family, where children learn in a creative environment to reach their full potential within the love of Jesus.

'I can do all things through God, who gives me strength.'

Philippians 4:13

Introduction

Newton Solney CofE (VA) Infant School proudly believes in supporting the growth and development of the whole person for all those for whom we have a responsibility. This therefore includes staff (at all levels), children and where appropriate/possible their families. When we talk about the whole person, we are referring to the physical, mental, emotional, personal and spiritual aspects of who they are. In this document we aim to set out how we will try and support the spiritual development of each individual in our care. We have deliberately avoided the term policy as we acknowledge that each person is different, especially when it comes to how we understand and relate to spirituality, this is therefore a statement to help guide us in our support of each other in this area.

What is our shared understanding of spirituality?

Spirituality in its widest sense speaks about something internal, the human spirit or soul, as opposed to the external material or physical things.

For us as a C of E school it is more than that, it is about an awareness of ourselves as created by God, in relationship with God, other people and the world around us. This does not mean we expect people to share our Christian faith or believe that this statement is not relevant to those of other faiths or none, but it is the foundation we build upon and therefore support others from.

For Newton Solney as a C of E school, Spirituality is about recognising our place in this world and our connection with it, with one another and with God and exploring how that is reflected in our daily lives. As God is omnipresent, we reflect that our connection to spirituality is given an opportunity to be reflected throughout the entire school environment and school day.

Spirituality is not about indoctrination or learning facts but about understanding ourselves in this world. For the Christian it is about understanding themselves as being created in God's image and how that informs and leads them through life in this world.

Building blocks

It is an impossible task within a document such as this to describe and explain all that Spirituality means to us and how we support and encourage its exploration and development as a school. This document therefore does not set out to do that, but instead to establish some building blocks that when placed upon our Christian foundation, enable us to begin a journey of spirituality for each of us.

How we aim to develop a strong sense of spirituality

- Have regular time in the day for quiet and reflection. This might be listening to a story, lighting a candle in Collective Worship, going for a walk or activities such as cloud gazing at Forest School.
- Provide many opportunities for creativity and using the imagination.
- Valuing play opportunities.
- Singing often, especially with others.
- Ensuring regular time for prayer. This can take many forms, but should include being thankful, saying sorry and asking for help. Allow children the opportunity to open themselves to God.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to explore, express and share feelings.
- Constantly reaffirm the importance of relationships. How we talk to and relate with each other is fundamental.
- Provide opportunities to express awe and wonder, appreciate beauty in all its forms, and appreciate the connections and unity in the world. We allow children to lead in their awe and wonder, regardless of their personal and learning additional needs, in a respectful way.
- Encourage each other to admit mistakes and to say sorry. Recognising and owning up to faults is an important healing and redemptive process.
- Encourage children to show kindness, caring and compassion, and to express these in practical ways. (eg: how we treat each other every day; charitable works; looking after pets).
- Explore the 'Big Questions' – particularly through our RE programme.
- Read often to children, and give them opportunities to discuss and reflect. This includes both secular and religious texts, in particular the Bible.
- All staff model behaviour and encourage Christian values. We develop inclusivity through showing the children it is safe and happy to explore spirituality.

Structures to support and develop spirituality.

- A three-year cycle of plans is in place for Collective Worship.
- The Collective Worship themes are shared with parents, on the class summaries, at the beginning of each term. Parents may wish to discuss the key themes at home.
- There is a daily act of Collective Worship taking different forms, and involving the children.
- Displays and reflective areas around the school continually celebrate and encourage reflection and spirituality.
- Our RE curriculum is inspiring and motivating.
- Visits and visitors support our work.
- Awe inspiring Forest School sessions are delivered regularly.
- Support by our lovely and present Reverend and church.
- Supported and guided by our passionate and encouraging Governing body.
- Regular staff and governor meetings allowing continuous review.
- Family Time meetings planned termly to provide an opportunity for families to share thoughts.
- Time in school to listen to the children share their thoughts.
- Fun celebrations throughout the year which allow all to share in the joy celebrating Christian Values through song, dance, art, worship and prayer.
- Weekly celebration awards Worship.

- Flying High links with home. Families celebrating the achievements of children out of school and sharing these within the school family.

Impact: how do we know this is being effective?

Spiritually developed children love and accept themselves and enjoy good relationships with each other. They take an interest and delight in the world around them; they are open to what lies beyond the material (this may manifest itself in faith/belief in God). They are able to express and understand feelings, they have a strong moral sense and a love of what is good. They are able to enjoy quiet and stillness, they possess an active imagination, and show joy in creativity and discovering new skills.