

# Leyland Methodist Schools Spirituality Policy



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| Chair's Signature: |              |

Leyland Methodist Schools are committed to the safeguarding of our pupils and staff.

### How our Vision and Values Statement Links to our Spirituality Policy

In consultation with pupils, parents, governors, community members and staff our vision and values were generated in 2019 when our two schools federated.

Our vision document <https://leyland-methodist-junior-school.secure-primariesite.net/school-ethos-values/> addresses three distinct areas. They explain: 1. Who we are and why we do what we do; 2. What we are called to do; 3. How we do it. We LOVE, SERVE and CELEBRATE TOGETHER to ensure that everyone within our school community can flourish.

In our school, we believe that God's love surrounds us all. This part of our vision guides our way in setting the highest aspirations for the relationship we enjoy with both God and each other. **This is why we do what we do.** We understand that we are shaping lives for the future. We expect our children to achieve well academically, to become fully rounded human beings, to develop a strong sense of self and walk out into the world confidently, ready to make their mark; to have a positive impact on their own lives and the lives of others. With high aspirations and expectations for ourselves and others, we strive to be the best we can be, not only academically, but also morally, socially and spiritually.

We aim to be sensitive to the needs of others, to give without expecting to receive. We should be active in working to help those in need even if we feel our contribution may only be in the smallest of ways – we still try. In this school, teachings from the Bible intertwined with strong Methodist roots, form the core of what we uphold and teach; we believe it to be evident in the ethos of the school. At the same time, we acknowledge and value the multi-faith nature of our community and society. We embrace the beliefs and differences of others, in line with the wider values beyond our community which is reflected in John Wesley's beliefs to 'do all the good we can'. This guidance is reflected throughout our lives at our Methodist Schools. We are called to serve and this part of our vision is very much about action. **This is what we are called to do.**

We are inspired by the wonderful gifts of God's creation. We aim to truly value and respect the amazing world that has been entrusted to our care with the awe and appreciation this great gift deserves. As we are part of God's creation, it is important that we value the talents that God has given to us and to others. Our talents represent our potential and the Christian faith urges us to make every effort to achieve our potential, not just for our own benefit but also to the benefit of others and our wider world. Expanding on and enhancing the values, our children and families live by. in all areas of school life and the curriculum, we build strongly on the foundations each child enters with, whether that be faith, talent or academic attainment. **This is how we are going to do what we do.**

### What does Spirituality look like at Leyland Methodist Schools?

At LMS, we define spirituality through four key areas and facilitate the development of these through our ambitious and creative curriculum, which is an extension of our vision. Just like a tree, we believe spirituality can grow and develop over time and as we nurture spiritual development or all stakeholders in our school community, we know they will benefit from the fruits of this in the future.

#### Transformation - The door



The image of the door is to encourage us to think about the things that change in life when we go from one place to somewhere else. Think about other people who might be beyond the door. What do we have in common? What is different? What can we embrace? How can we help with global issues?

### Reflection - The mirror



Spirituality is about Reflection. This encourages our school community to spend time reflecting on themselves; their thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings. Space to ask questions about themselves.

### Experience - The window



Spirituality is about Experience. This encourages us to imagine looking out of a window at the world around us. Thinking about what is awe-full (WOW!) and also becoming aware of things in our world/community that are awful (tragedy and discontent).

Giving space to ask questions about the world around us and think about any Curious Questions you might have.

### Encounter - The candle



Spirituality is about Encounters. An awareness of the things we cannot see in life, but we can feel. For many in community this is expressed as an awareness of God and personal faith. It is also about developing imagination.

We believe these four areas of Spirituality are accessible and relevant to all members of school community and can be expressed, grown and further defined in a variety of ways relevant to

personal circumstances, views and beliefs. It supports our vision as a community that is inclusive and welcoming of all, as we build on the firm foundations of shared values to flourish.

### Opportunities for Spiritual Development at LMS

Driven by our vision for children to have the foundations in all aspects of their 'self' (physical, social, moral, spiritual, cultural and emotions) to have successful lives, our broad, ambitious curriculum, alongside the additional activities, resources and experiences we provide, give our pupils lots of opportunities to grow and develop their spirituality in a way that is meaningful to them.

The following are examples of what we do, but not exhaustive.

#### Transformation

- Opportunities are provided to listen attentively and observe carefully, listening with discernment, valuing what is good and worthwhile and making judgements through discussion and exchange of views and ideas
- Use of tools such as Newsround supports pupil awareness of current events and challenges them to consider the realities of other people in the local and global community
- An empowered, pupil led school council who support the school to run events for the issues that are important to them and affect others

#### Reflection

- Support for learning to live with success and failure for themselves and with others; developing Growth Mindset
- Our well balanced and challenging RE curriculum delivers knowledge and understanding of spirituality from a number of world faith and world view perspectives which pupils are then encouraged to compare to their own ideas and beliefs
- Share and promote strategies for positive mental health and well-being for individual circumstances
- Access to an interactive and engaging Reflection Space in each classroom. Curious Questions for children to respond to and also space to ask their own questions. Prompts for each area of Spiritual development and questions to ponder and explore

#### Experience

- Opportunities for spiritual development are actively planned into the curriculum and encouraged in all areas of school life e.g. trips, practical activities, creative expression
- Unplanned and spontaneous spiritual experiences are also recognised, acknowledged and/or celebrated by staff and children;
- Our children are given as many opportunities as possible to explore the wonder of the natural world. We share the Christian belief that creation is a gift from God to be enjoyed, cherished and protected, while supporting pupils to find reasons to cherish the world for their own beliefs and views. This is supported by our Ethos Team, School Council and Eco-Council, who hold the school accountable for its impact on the environment and support new ways to protect our natural world

## Encounter

- Collective worship celebrates the love of God for every individual and provides opportunities for children to respond and reflect on this;
- For those of the Christian faith, a solid understanding of the Christian concept of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; of prayer and of the Bible is nurtured and developed; encourage those of other world faiths and views to develop theirs and share with others
- The school building and outdoor environment provides appropriate spaces for silence, reflection, stillness and prayer;
- The school, church and other sacred places are used across the curriculum, giving children the opportunity to explore their own spirituality; (we ensure as well as accessing our school church that pupils visit a range of different sacred places as part of the curriculum.)
- That children's spiritual capacities such as imagination, empathy and insight are fostered through the creative arts and interactive multi-sensory teaching strategies making use of the outdoor environment and relevant educational visits;
- Access to an interactive and engaging Reflection Space. Religious texts and Curious Questions for children to respond to and also space to ask their own questions. Prompts for each area of spiritual development and questions to ponder and explore.

## Appendix 1- Definitions of Spirituality

The examples below are intended to be a starting point for discussion as 'the school community applies its own understanding of spiritual development so that teachers have the confidence and ability to move beyond planned opportunities to make the most of questions raised by the curiosity of pupils and opportunities that occur spontaneously across the curriculum'. These definitions will be developed over time, where appropriate, in line with the views of the Methodist Church.

These definitions will not be appropriate for everyone but we believe *something in here resonates with everyone*.

- Spirituality is about being a contemplative in action (or enabling reflective practice).
- Delighting in all things, being absorbed in the present moment, not attached to self. Eager to explore boundaries of 'beyond' and 'other', searching for meaning, discovering purpose and being open to more.
- Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone. • Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone. Whilst these questions are not dependent on a religious affiliation or on the prerogative of religions, religion explains and addresses the fundamental questions which affect everyone.
- 'Spirituality is like a bridge. Every bridge does pretty much the same things - gets you from one place to another, sometime over perilous ground, or a river, or great heights. But they do so in different ways. They might be built of rope, wood, bricks, steel or suspension bridges. Like bridges, every spirituality offers you a distinctive passage to God. 'James Martin (caveat: some bridges wobble!)
- Christian spirituality is a life nurtured on the example of Jesus Christ and his care for others

- Our capacity for being – God’s ways of being with us and our ways of being with God.

Spirituality is about freedom and detachment, helping us not being tied down by unimportant things and keep mindful of important things such as God and other people i.e. not ‘things and accomplishments’

Spirituality is the inward journey, a move towards the depths of our being, where, according to the mystics, God is experienced.

Spirituality enables us to become aware of God, one another, the world around us and ourselves.

Spirituality is the nurturing of the inner life of the soul of a child, enabling and embracing their questions, doubts and wonder of existence.

Spirituality is a way of living in relationship with God/a higher being.

### OFSTED and Spirituality

“Spiritual” is not synonymous with “religious”. All areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupils’ spiritual development. Spiritual development relates to fundamental questions about the meaning and purpose of life which affect everyone, and is not dependant on a religious affiliation. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity – with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It is to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live.

Having a higher awareness and deeper awareness and concern for others in the world around us. An increasing awareness of the concept of others. A growing sense of empathy, concern and compassion and an ability to reflect on how their values and principles affect their relationships with others. Spirituality is an appreciation and cherishing of what is good, joyful, truthful and beautiful, and, in relationship with others, of what is generous, creative and loving.

The spirit of a person is seen in acts of courage and perseverance, in dealing with both setbacks and praise, in endeavour and enquiry. Spiritual learners become increasingly aware of the concept of beyond – a growing relationship with the transcendental and the ability to explore experience beyond the everyday. Spiritual learners search for meaning in their very existence and their place in the greater scheme of things.

Living fully with nothing excluded from our hearts. The search for God in response to God’s search for us. **Appendix 2- TREE (Transformation, Reflect, Experience, Encounter)**

|            |                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Transform  | Like going through a door...<br> | Think about other people who might be beyond the door. What do we have in common? What is different? How can we help? What can we embrace? How can we help with global issues? |
| Reflection | Like looking in the mirror...                                                                                       | Spirituality is about Reflection. his encourages our school community to spend time reflecting on themselves;                                                                  |

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|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|            |                                                                 | <p>their thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings. Space to ask questions about themselves.</p> <p>Do you see yourself in the same way others see you?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Experience | <p>Like the window, looking out into the big wide world...</p>  | <p>Spirituality is about Experience. This encourages us to imagine looking out of a window at the world around us. Thinking about what is awe-full (WOW!) and also becoming aware of things in our world/community that are awful (tragedy and discontent). Giving space to ask questions about the world around us and think about any Curious Questions you might have.</p> |
| Encounter  | <p>Like the candle, representing the light of the world</p>   | <p>Spirituality is about Encounters. An awareness of the things we cannot see in life, but we can feel. For many in community this is expressed as an awareness of God and personal faith. It is also about developing imagination.</p>                                                                                                                                       |