What Spirituality means at St Mary's C of E Primary School .

Our four connected areas of spiritual development

- **Self** – recognising the light within ourselves
- **Others** – recognising and valuing the light in others
- **World and beauty** – noticing the light in creation and the world around us
- **Beyond** – exploring the light beyond what we know

Our Christian vision, 'Let your light shine… as you grow', rooted in Matthew 5:16, shapes the way we understand spiritual development at St Mary's. We want every child to grow in awareness of themselves, of others, of the world around them and of the questions and experiences that reach beyond the everyday.

For us, 'letting your light shine' begins with recognising that every person has worth, gifts and potential. Spiritual development helps pupils to notice these qualities in themselves and in others, to grow in confidence and self-understanding, and to reflect on the kind of person they are becoming.

We want pupils to experience awe and wonder, to notice beauty and possibility, and also to develop empathy through learning about challenge, difference and injustice in the world. Through collective worship, RE and opportunities across the wider curriculum, pupils are given time and space to think deeply, reflect on their experiences and consider their beliefs, values, hopes and aspirations.

As pupils grow, we want them to ask questions, explore ideas, listen to different perspectives and express their thoughts and convictions in ways that are meaningful to them. In doing so, they begin to understand how their own 'light' can be used positively in their relationships, choices and contribution to the wider world.

Our Christian values of perseverance, truthfulness, friendship, respect, trust and compassion help pupils to live this out. They provide a shared language for reflection and growth, helping children to consider how they respond to challenge, how they treat others and how they can use their gifts for the good of those around them.

Spiritual development is closely connected to our vision: helping every child to grow, recognise their own light, value the light in others, wonder at the world around them and explore the deeper questions of life and faith.

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At St Mary's, we believe that

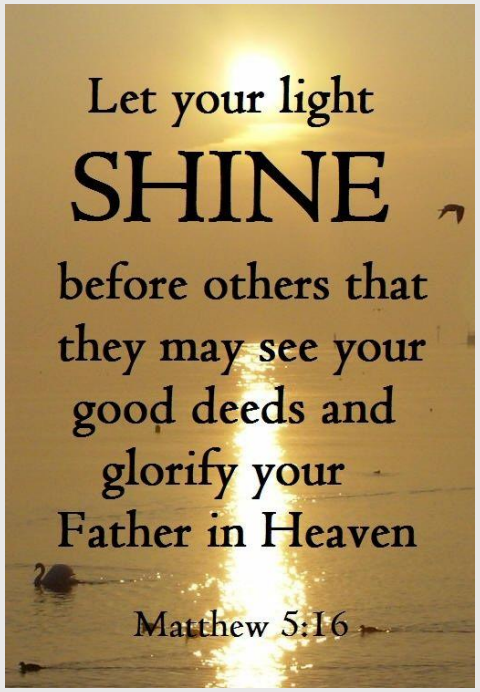
'Spirituality'

is noticing the *light*

in me, in you, in the world around us

and beyond what we know.

It helps us to wonder, think and grow.



How Spiritual Development happens here.

At St Mary's, we see spiritual development as a journey of encounter, reflection and transformation. We need opportunities not only to experience and notice, but also to think deeply about what those experiences mean and how they might shape them.

Encounter – noticing and experiencing – learning about life

We create opportunities to encounter ideas, experiences and questions that make us pause, wonder, feel, question or see something differently. These may come through collective worship, RE, the curriculum, relationships, creativity, nature or moments in everyday school life.

Reflection – thinking and making meaning – learning from life

We create time and space to reflect on what is encountered. We encourage everyone to a ask questions, explore their feelings and beliefs, listen to different perspectives and make connections with their own experiences. Not every question needs an answer. Learning to live with uncertainty, mystery and different possibilities is an important part of spiritual growth.

Transformation – growing and responding – learning to grow through spiritual moments

Spiritual development becomes meaningful when reflection contributes to growth. This may be seen in a new understanding of ourselves or others, a change in perspective, greater confidence or empathy, a developing belief or value, or a desire to respond in some way. Transformation does not need to mean a dramatic action. Often it is seen in the way a person thinks, relates, questions or understands the world differently.

These three elements are not separate lessons or a sequence that must always be followed. They help us recognise and create meaningful opportunities for spiritual development across school.

Our four areas of spiritual development.

At St Mary's, we think about spiritual development through four connected areas: **Self, Others, World and Beauty, and Beyond**. These help us to recognise the different ways in which pupils may encounter, reflect and grow spiritually.

Self – recognising the light within ourselves	Others – recognising and valuing the light in others	World and Beauty – noticing the light around us	Beyond – exploring the light beyond what we know
Spiritual development helps us to understand who we are and who we are becoming.	*Spiritual development helps us to understand that every person has worth and that relationships shape who we are.*	*Spiritual development helps us to notice, wonder at and respond to the world around us.*	*Spiritual development gives us space to explore questions about God, meaning and mystery that go beyond what can easily be seen, measured or explained.*
Encounter – learning about life Opportunities to notice feelings, strengths, gifts, hopes, values and experiences.	**Encounter – learning about life** Opportunities to encounter different people, lives, experiences, beliefs and perspectives.	**Encounter – learning about life** Experiences of nature, beauty, creativity, music, art, pattern, discovery and the richness and complexity of the world.	**Encounter – learning about life** Opportunities through worship, RE, prayer, stillness, Bible stories, sacred spaces, big questions and moments of awe or mystery.
Reflection – learning from life Questions such as: W*ho am I? What matters to me? What am I good at? What do I find difficult? What kind of person am I becoming?*	**Reflection – learning from life** Questions like –'*How are we alike and different? How do other people's experiences help me see things differently? What does it mean to value someone? How do my actions affect others?*	**Reflection – learning from life** Questions like - '*What makes me wonder? What do I find beautiful? Why does this move me? What is my place in the world? How do I respond when the world is beautiful, damaged or unfair?*	**Reflection – learning from life** Questions like '*is there more to life than what I can see? What do I believe? Where is God? What gives life meaning? Why are we here? What happens when there is no easy answer?*
Transformation – learning to grow through spiritual moments Growing in confidence and self-understanding, recognising strengths and areas for growth, developing resilience, becoming increasingly able to express beliefs, feelings, hopes and values.	**Transformation – learning to grow through spiritual moments** Growing in empathy, compassion and respect, developing relationships, listening more carefully to others, recognising and valuing difference.	**Transformation – learning to grow through spiritual moments** Growing in curiosity, gratitude and wonder, developing a deeper connection with the natural world, becoming more thoughtful about how we value and care for creation.	**Transformation – learning to grow through spiritual moments** Growing in openness to faith, mystery and different beliefs; developing the confidence to ask deep questions; finding personal ways to pray, reflect, wonder or be still.

These four areas are closely connected and will often overlap. Spiritual development is not confined to particular subjects or moments but can happen whenever pupils are given meaningful opportunities to notice, question, reflect, connect and grow.

Progression in spiritual development

Spiritual development is personal and does not follow a fixed path. However, as pupils grow, we would expect their capacity to **notice, question, reflect and respond** to become increasingly thoughtful and mature. Across the phases, progression can be seen in pupils moving from noticing and experiencing, to making connections, reflecting more deeply, and increasingly articulating their own thoughtful responses









Area	EYFS	KS1	Lower KS2	Upper KS2
Self – recognising the light within ourselves	Begin to recognise feelings, likes, strengths and experiences. Talk about what makes them happy, worried, proud or special.	Talk about strengths, challenges, hopes and feelings with growing confidence. Begin to recognise how experiences help them grow and change.	Reflect on identity, values, hopes and the kind of person they are becoming. Recognise that challenge, failure and success can shape them.	Articulate beliefs, values, strengths, hopes and questions with growing maturity. Reflect on how experiences and choices are shaping the person they are becoming.
Others – recognising and valuing the light in others	Notice that other people have feelings and needs. Begin to show kindness, care and awareness of difference.	Recognise that people may think, believe and experience life differently. Reflect on friendship, fairness, kindness and how their actions affect others.	Explore different lives, beliefs and experiences with increasing empathy. Consider questions of dignity, fairness, belonging and responsibility.	Show deeper empathy and openness to perspectives different from their own. Reflect on justice, dignity, responsibility and the impact they have on others.
World and Beauty – noticing the light around us	Respond with wonder to nature, colour, music, stories and new experiences. Begin to talk about what they find beautiful, exciting or surprising.	Notice pattern, beauty and change in the natural and created world. Begin to reflect on why places, experiences or creations matter to them.	Respond thoughtfully to beauty, creativity, nature and the complexity of the world. Begin to explore how wonder can sit alongside challenge, damage and injustice.	Engage thoughtfully with beauty, creativity, creation and the challenges facing the world. Consider their own response to what they encounter and what they value.
Beyond – exploring the light beyond what we know	Experience prayer, stillness, Bible stories and moments of wonder. Begin to ask simple questions about God, life and things they do not understand.	Ask questions about God, meaning, mystery and things that cannot easily be explained. Begin to recognise that people respond to these questions in different ways.	Explore bigger questions about God, faith, purpose, suffering and meaning. Become more comfortable with questions that do not have simple answers.	Explore questions of faith, God, meaning, purpose and mystery with increasing depth. Recognise that uncertainty and questioning can be part of spiritual growth and express their own responses respectfully and thoughtfully.

Where spiritual development happens

Spiritual development is not a separate subject. Opportunities arise naturally through collective worship, RE, the wider curriculum, relationships and everyday experiences in school. Staff help pupils to notice, question, reflect and respond when these opportunities arise.

Area	Examples of spiritual opportunities
Collective Worship	Prayer, stillness, Bible stories, music, reflection, big questions, shared celebration and opportunities to respond personally.
RE	Exploring faith, belief, God, meaning, different worldviews, sacred texts and questions that do not have simple answers.
English	Exploring identity, relationships, empathy, moral choices and experiences beyond pupils' own lives through literature and discussion.
Maths	Exploring pattern, order, infinity, problem solving, beauty and wonder in mathematical relationships.
Science	Wonder, curiosity, pattern, discovery, the natural world and questions about what science can and cannot explain.
Art and Music	Beauty, creativity, emotional response, expression and personal interpretation.
Geography	Place, belonging, interdependence, the beauty and fragility of the world, and different human experiences.
History	Human experience, identity, choices, suffering, courage, justice and legacy.
PSHE	Self-understanding, relationships, values, hopes, belonging and the kind of person we are becoming.
Outdoor learning / everyday school life	Nature, stillness, relationships, celebration, challenge, loss, change and unexpected moments of wonder.

These are examples, not a checklist. Spirituality is most meaningful when opportunities arise naturally from genuine learning and experience.