

Hopton C of E Primary Academy



Spiritual Development Policy

Approved by: LAC

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Our Vision and Values

At Hopton Church of England Primary Academy, spiritual development is a key part of how we develop the 'whole person'. It is relevant for both children and adults. Whatever personal faith or beliefs someone holds, they can benefit from the practises built into our school life.

Psalm 1 has been chosen as the key theological underpinning verse for the school:

'He is like a tree planted by streams of water, yielding its fruit in season whose leaf does not wither and who prospers in all he does.'

Hopton Church of England Academy is a Christian School where we grow together through being;

ROOTED in relationship,

FLOURISHING in character and

CONNECTING in community

Our school values are Respect, Courage, Perseverance, Friendship, Forgiveness and Responsibility—are deeply embedded in this theological foundation and shape our ethos, curriculum, and relationships.

What is Spiritual Development?

Spiritual development is a journey of growing awareness and connection with:

- Self – understanding our identity, purpose, and inner life
- Others – building empathy, compassion, and meaningful relationships

- Beauty – appreciating the wonder of creation and human creativity
 - Beyond – exploring the transcendent, the divine, and life's big questions
- We affirm that every child is born with a spiritual dimension and that nurturing this is essential to their flourishing.

A spiritually developed child might have the ability to:

- Enter into relationships
- Understand feelings and emotions
- Distinguish between right and wrong
- Consider the possibility of being loved by a creator God.
- Feel connected to something greater than themselves
- Articulate their own attitudes and values and stand up for what they believe in

Our Shared Understanding

At Hopton, spiritual development is understood as a metaphor and of ourselves as a tree, deeply rooted and strong enough to withstand external changes and pressures. The school community is a safe, inclusive and supportive space in which children can explore their own identity and become compassionate yet critical thinkers, making choices that lead them into a 'flourishing' life. We then talk about the tree, yielding fruit and prospering. We talk about this in the way that we learn new things, persevere and achieve, benefitting not only themselves but the wider community. We acknowledge that children develop at different rates and that no path is linear but we aim for all children to develop in character and in all areas throughout their time at Hopton and therefore flourish onto new adventures.

This approach is informed by:

- The Church of England's Vision for Education

- Ofsted's definition of spiritual development
- SIAMS Framework
- Research by Andrew Rickett, Lisa J. Miller, and David Csinos

We embrace a range of Spiritual Styles:

- Exploring ideas from the Bible through scripture, stories, and reflection
- Responding through music, art, and noticing our feelings
- Seeking silence, prayer, and practising being comfortable with mystery
- Living out Biblical culture through service and justice whatever our personal beliefs

Living Out Spirituality at Hopton

Spiritual development is not simply a concept—it is a daily practice rooted in Christian tradition. We actively seek to help others thrive in our school, families, and wider community. This is expressed through six core Christian values drawn from the Bible, each with practical habits that guide how we live, learn, and grow together:

Respect	We respect those around us and understand that everyone may have different beliefs.
Courage	We try new things and persevere in order to learn something new. We stand up for what we believe in.
Friendship	We are kind to everyone in our school family, the community and the world around us.
Forgiveness	We forgive one another and give each other a second chance.

Perseverance	We try hard and encourage others to do the same. We help one another when things are tough.
Responsibility	We are responsible in class, the school and OPAL, have roles and care for our each other and our environment.

These values are embedded in:

- Collective Worship
- Religious Education
- Wider Curriculum
- OPAL
- Forest schools
- Church visits and community worship
- Nurture provision

Collective Worship

Collective worship is central to the life at Hopton and provides the opportunity for our school community to share experiences, ideas and understanding. It is the context in which the language of spirituality, which we use as a school, is regularly and explicitly shared. Collective Worship provides the opportunity for pupils to become aware of the importance of reflection. We have three methods of this: invitational prayer, meditation and quiet stillness and thinking.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Spiritual development is monitored through:

- Staff and governor observations
- Pupil voice and feedback
- SIAMS self-evaluation
- Curriculum audits
- Termly updates to the Governing Body

References

- Education Act 1988 & 2002
- Ofsted Inspection Handbook (2023)
- Church of England: Spiritual Development in the Classroom (2019)
- Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich guidance
- The Spiritual Child – Lisa J. Miller
- Children's Ministry That Fits – David Csinos
- Growing Together