

School Statement on Spirituality

To talk about spirituality is, essentially, to talk about something which is beyond words. To make conversations about spirituality more accessible to every member of our school community, Great Kingshill Church of England Combined School (GKCS), uses the concept of ows, wows and nows and we use the ideas of Kintsugi and golden glue to support our thinking about spirituality.

This language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that everyone is a valued creation, individually and uniquely made by God, like pots made by a potter,

'We are the clay, and you are the potter; we are all the work of Your hands' Isaiah 64:8.

Sometimes pots can crack or break, and sometimes things in life happen that make us feel cracked or changed. The things that impact on the physical 'pot' of life can create cracks that provide a glimpse of something 'beyond' the tangible. Christians would view this as an opportunity to relate to the Divine Creator God. Cracks may be caused when something so good and breath-taking happens that the pot expands and cracks – **the wows of life**. Cracks may happen when something challenging happens and threatens the comfort of everyday – **the ows of life**. Cracks can also happen in the stillness and ordinariness of everyday – **the nows of life**, when a moment of stillness, a pause or prayer creates a crack in the normal, physical every day.

In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the wows, ows and nows of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with gold and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality. GKCS uses this language and the concepts of wows, ows and nows to explore relationships with: - ourselves - others - the wider natural world and beyond - and offering the invitation to relate to God.

Our school's Christian vision is based around the bible story of **The Good Samaritan** (Luke 10: 25-37) as it resonates with our school values of Love, Courage, Forgiveness, Hope, Respect and Truth and guides us in our vision of 'Aspiring to be our best with kindness, respect and faith.' Being a Good Samaritan is at the heart of everything we do at Great Kingshill, and this is also reflected in our school song 'Would you Walk by on the Other Side' (Cross Over the Road) The parable of the Good Samaritan shows us that our society, our communities and relationships are not permanently broken. We can restore them. And it can all begin with reaching out to others whoever they are, whatever state they are in. Our school vision is a driver for spirituality in our school, and the ows, wows and nows help support our spiritual development by considering:

- our ability to be reflective about our own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life
- our knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values
- our sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about ourselves, others and the world around us
- our use of imagination and creativity in our learning
- our willingness to reflect on our experiences.

Organisation

The spiritual growth of pupils is not only dependent on learning in RE, opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners are developed in every aspect of our school life. We support the whole school community to share this responsibility and to develop the shared language of spirituality. Opportunities are available for all

to develop spiritually in our supportive and nurturing school inspired by our vision and lived out through our Christian values.

At GKCS we aim to provide experiences and spaces where our community has time and space to have moments of calm, to contemplate and reflect. For example, our garden area is designed to provide a peaceful area for contemplative reflective practice. Many of our classrooms also have a prayer area which pupils may use to reflect upon any ows, wows or nows.

We have identified specific areas which contribute to the spiritual growth of pupils:

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of GKCS It 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 and how our positive and negative experiences can be formative. It also provides a real sense of being present (now moments) which are often linked to invitations to pray. Through daily Collective Worship, pupils are offered a space and a place for hearing the Christian story. They are offered an understanding of worship by being invited to participate in, or observe, Christian spiritual practices such as: prayer, reading and reflection on the Bible and liturgy and are introduced to different musical traditions. Opportunities to reflect on the wows of life such as beauty and joy of the world are given, as well as time to reflect and empathise with the ow moments of disappointment or pain. Pupils are given time to consider their responsibilities to others and to grow in love and service. Time is given for celebration, both for the accomplishments of school members and to mark seasonal Christian festivals and celebrations in the calendars of other faiths. In this way pupils are offered time to be able to contemplate and develop spiritually. Collective Worship at GKCS is invitational, inspirational and inclusive.

Spirituality in Religious Education

The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement outlines the aims and expectations for Religious Education in Church of England Schools and guides this school's approach to RE and spirituality. Learning activities in RE provide for the needs of all pupils, offering a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. They provide opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews, linking these to pupils' ideas of spirituality and the language of wows, ows and nows where appropriate.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

Our school's Christian vision based on The Good Samaritan, is a driver for the curriculum design. We deliver RE using the Discovery RE scheme. Discovery RE brings together learning about and from religion, questioning and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. RE provides an opportunity for children to explore and test out different ideas about the world that we are living in. We believe that these opportunities should be clearly rooted in understanding about different religions. This understanding then underpins the children's confidence to question ideas and make links to their own experiences and opinions. We believe that these opportunities and experiences provide children in our school with the understanding of why RE is relevant to their lives now and how it will continue to be relevant in the future. Drawing on the language of wows, ows and nows; conversations around spirituality are included in classroom teaching when appropriate from Reception to Year 6. In addition to this we also have Year 5 pupil worship leaders who lead Spirituality sessions

once per half term. These sessions reinforce the metaphors of ows, wows and nows and our worship leaders introduce activities which provide us with moments of calm to contemplate and reflect.

Our approach to **spirituality** enables children to develop into adults, being about to tackle the ups and downs of everyday life and respect and appreciate the world and those around them whilst not being afraid of questioning how they see the world. Examples of this may be volunteering, being positive and optimistic, contributing to society, connecting with others, feeling a sense of belonging and practicing self-care. Within each curriculum subject area, we promote spirituality. Below are some examples of how we promote this across the curriculum areas.

- **Maths** - Perseverance when tackling tricky tasks, sense of achievement, creating confident learners, teaching children self-worth and encouraging them to take risks.
- **English** - Understanding the world and other's feelings through books and texts, developing compassion and understanding of others, understanding emotions through written words, visiting other worlds through books and text, creating an idea of awe and wonder through literature, perseverance when writing/reading, sense of achievement, creating confident learners through developing reading and class discussions.
- **Science** - Asking questions about science, religion and the world, having an awe and wonder about the various scientific concepts, discovering space, the universe and beyond, creating links and questions between science and religion, perseverance.
- **Computing** - Joy and excitement of what can be developed and created, communication with others and how to take responsibility for themselves online.
- **PE** - Working as a team, caring, encouraging and supporting others, participating in sports teams to achieve a bigger goal, understanding failure and disappointment as well as success and joy.
- **RE** - Developing a sense of questioning the world around them, asking questions about faith and religion on a personal and wider level, use of music and art, worshipping, understanding other cultures, opinions, values and points of views, understanding many celebrations and beliefs, developing an understanding of commitment.
- **Collective worship** – Prayer, reflection, sharing collective worship, listening to stories, connecting together, sharing a multitude of emotions and feelings, empathy, awe and wonder, creating questions, encouraging self-exploration, school values.
- **Around the school** - Promoting self-responsibility for behaviour, caring for others inside school and on the playground, respect, kindness, thankfulness, manners, helpfulness.

Spirituality within the Ethos of the Daily Life of the School

At GKCS we view spiritual growth as becoming more and more aware of one's natural, innate spirituality. These opportunities happen throughout each and every day as children deal with delight, disappointment and the chance to be present with themselves. For this reason, all members of the school community, are familiar with the school's shared language of spirituality and will respond to pupils appropriately. Throughout the daily life of the school, including lunch times and playtimes, pupils know that their references to wows, ows and nows will be heard and taken seriously. They will be encouraged to reflect on these experiences and be comfortable about talking about the golden glue of spirituality.

Roles and Responsibilities

Recognising there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of learners in every aspect of our school life, every member of our staff team is committed to support this spiritual growth wherever appropriate. Nicole Gandini and Nicole Gray are responsible for supporting and leading spiritual development in our school, including monitoring opportunities for spiritual growth in collective worship, the whole curriculum (including RE) and the general ethos of the school within daily life, this role also includes:

- Providing and sourcing in-service training for staff as necessary
- Ensuring all staff are familiar with the shared language of spirituality
- Acquiring and organising appropriate resources to support the development of Spirituality
- Monitoring the opportunities for spiritual growth through regular observations and learning walks in both formal and informal contexts, discussions with colleagues and pupil voice
- Contributing to the SIAMS self-evaluation process

Approval/review by governing body

Headteacher signed:

Date:

Chair of Governors/LAC signed:

Date:

Date of next review:

Date:

Awaiting approval