



Brenzett CE Primary School
Spirituality Policy
2024-2027

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Legal Framework: Links to OFSTED and SIAMS expectations

The OFSTED School Inspection Handbook, November 2019 No. 190017, page 59 & 60, states:

Inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. This is a broad concept that can be seen across the school's activities but draws together many of the areas covered by the personal development judgement.

Provision for the spiritual development of pupils includes developing their:

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

The SIAMS Evaluation Schedule for Schools and Inspectors, April 2018, includes the question:

- How well does the school support all pupils in their spiritual development, enabling all pupils to flourish? (Strand 2)

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, Brenzett CE School has chosen to follow ideas developed by the Diocese of Canterbury.

This language of spirituality is based on the understanding that all humans have the capacity to experience the world as a rich source of nourishment and the more attuned to this we become, the more we flourish as individuals. Spirituality is an intrinsic part of all religions and in Christianity this is understood to mean that everyone is a valued creation individually and uniquely made by God like pots made by a potter (Isaiah 64:8).

Yet, in life things happen that impact on the physical 'pot' of life and 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 everyday.

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.

Brenzett CE School uses this language and the concepts of **wows**, **ows** and **nows**. These are used to explore relationships with:

- ourselves
- others
- the wider natural world and beyond
- and offering the invitation to relate to God

School's Name: Brenzett CE Primary School

School's Christian Vision:

Through belonging, everyone flourishes in a purposeful, nurturing and inspiring learning environment that puts community and family at the heart of everything we do. All are seen as unique individuals, valued and precious in the eyes of Christ, who are aspirational champions of their own success, working together to succeed.

We believe wholeheartedly that enabling each and every child to flourish is our primary role and purpose at Brenzett CE Primary School and that each pupil's journey with us is unique and personal. With this in mind, pupils can be confident that staff are committed to shepherding them towards reaching their full, individual potential and to experiencing life in all its fullness, reflecting on the **wow** moments in life and learning from the **ow** moments. In this way – pupils are encouraged to value aspects of life beyond the material world and to be increasingly aware of the awe-inspiring, often fleeting spiritual dimension, to respect this and draw strength from it.

Collective worship is for us the primary vehicle by which we also build an awareness that there is something other, something greater than the course of everyday events. This then filters through every other aspect of school life, where together we seek to find meaning and purpose rooted in our values of community, compassion, love, friendship, trust and respect. Feelings of awe, wonder and mystery are discussed, shared and reflected on daily and these shared experiences serve to strengthen our pupils feelings of connectedness and belonging to a community at many levels. A feeling of belonging is intrinsic to a healthy mental and emotional life and so is at the very heart of our work as a school.

Flourishing means to grow, prosper and thrive and requires an environment that can support this growth. At Brenzett CE Primary School, our curriculum understands that learning needs a spark: pupils are like lamps to be lit and we embrace the opportunity to provide the spark with exciting learning opportunities and experiences which feed the spirit and activate the imagination. We truly believe that each child at our school is unique and precious so the individual contribution that each child makes is acknowledged, valued and celebrated. In this way, their confidence and self-belief may grow.

We also believe that spiritual development is a process which can be encouraged by first noticing a spiritual Wow! Ow! or Now! moment. At Brenzett, we use the analogy of Windows, Mirrors and Doors to describe the process of turning a spiritual moment into an opportunity for spiritual growth. First of all there is an experience; a spiritual spark or "sparkle which may be a Wow! Ow! or Now! moment. Pupils are encouraged to stop and notice, as though looking through a window to admire or notice something happening outside of themselves. Then comes a "mirror" moment where they reflect on the experience. This reflection process is what turns a spiritual moment into an opportunity for spiritual growth and is usually guided by an adult who leads them to wonder at this special opportunity. Finally comes a door: having experienced and reflected on a spiritual moment a child might wish to respond in some way. This outward looking part of the process helps pupils to view themselves as having a place in the world where they can make a difference: they can be activists, advocates and artists who can express their thoughts and feelings in their own individual way. The doors help pupils to connect to the wider community and the wider world and empowers pupils to develop their own self-identity and character.

Spirituality at Brenzett CE Primary School enables pupils to find meaning and purpose in their lives: they are able to find the extra-ordinary in the ordinary and in this way they truly thrive.

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.

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

collective worship, the whole curriculum, including RE, our physical school grounds both internal and external and the general ethos of the school within daily life.

Spirituality in Collective Worship

Collective Worship is the beating heart of Brenzett CE Primary School. 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 in Brenzett CE Primary School 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.

For further details, please refer to Brenzett CE Primary School's Religious Education Policy and The Church of England's Statement of Entitlement.

Spirituality within the Curriculum

Our school vision is at the very heart of our school curriculum, which has been designed so that every opportunity is taken to enable pupils to flourish socially, culturally, morally and spiritually.

Through belonging, everyone flourishes in a purposeful, nurturing and inspiring learning environment that puts community and family at the heart of everything we do. All are seen as unique individuals, valued and precious in the eyes of Christ, who are aspirational champions of their own success, working together to succeed.

Staff see their role as shepherding pupils on their unique learning journeys through the school, supporting pupils not only with their academic development but also with the with the acquisition of vital life-skills such as perseverance, resilience and emotional intelligence and a healthy, inquisitive mind-set so that they are ready to meet the challenges of life both now and in the future.

At Brenzett CE School, we see it as vital that learning should evoke curiosity and wonder at every opportunity, so that pupils are intrinsically motivated to learn. Taking the opportunity to reflect on the **wows**, **ows** and **nows** in lessons is central to this and allows pupils the opportunity for spiritual development throughout the day – not just when at worship or prayer. It is an embedded part of our school culture and staff always have in mind the following thoughts:

Where is the awe and wonder in this lesson? What reflective questions could facilitate the spiritual growth of the pupils? How can I reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary? Here are some examples of where links to spiritual growth can be made within the academic curriculum:

Maths

- The wonder of number patterns
- What cannot be measured? For example, love
- What cannot be accurately counted? For example, the difference an act of kindness makes.

Reading

- Questions can be framed around a text. For example
 - ❖ What inspired you in this text?
 - ❖ How did a character cope with a challenge in life?
 - ❖ How did the actions of a character surprise you? How do you think you would have responded to that **wow** or **ow** moment?
 - ❖ What do you think makes these words so powerful/beautiful/painful?
- Pupils can be versed in “lyricism” – where an artist has expressed emotions in an imaginative and beautiful way.

Writing

- If pupils are invited to write about things that have profound meaning to them, how is this writing valued?
- How can it be recognised as having value, rather than simply be reduced to an evaluation of SPAG?

DT

- What motivates designers and their decisions? For example, is it a desire to make money or a desire to help and make improvements to daily life for everyone?
- Pupils should be encouraged to marvel at the ingenuity of life-changing technologies and the impact this has had on human culture

Music

- What style of music ‘invites you to explore the mystery that dances within your soul’ (K. Hall)?
- What styles of music have the opposite effect?
- How does music encourage creativity, delight, and curiosity?

MFL

- What motivates language learning? For example, buying an ice cream on holiday or welcoming and comforting a stranger in our country?
- What does it feel like to genuinely communicate with someone in a new language?

Geography

- The **wow** of physical geography.
- The **ow** of discovering different physical regions do not provide the same opportunities.
- What options/opportunities are there to respond and take responsibility in a challenging world?

History

- Which stories tell historical **wows**?
- Which stories tell historical **ows**?
- What lessons for future decisions and choices do they provide?

PE

- How do you celebrate a new skill? How does it feel to be proud of your whole self?
- What does it feel like to be completely focused on a task or challenge?

- How do you recognise the delight in movement, connectedness, and creativity?
- Encourage the awareness of one's own strength and limitations.
- Recognise/celebrate equality, freedom, respect and trust.

Science

- Delight in discovering how things work.
- Opportunities to linger longer on the wonder!
- What questions cannot be answered by science?

Art

- How does art invite you to explore the mystery that dances within your soul?
- What are the **wows** and **ows** in the stories behind the artists you study?
- How do you celebrate and respect different responses to art?

PSHE & RSE

- As you explore topics such as relationships, feelings & attitudes, keeping safe and 'your body' where are the natural links with the **wows**, **ows** and **nows**?
- How can the honesty and sensitivity needed to explore these topics gently reflect the language of spirituality already used throughout the school?

All Subjects

- How do you celebrate the achievement and break-through **wows** of success?
- How do you support the **ows** of difficulty and frustrations?
- How do you maximise the everyday moment of concentration and being in the present, creating a sense of calm and completeness?

At Brenzett CE Primary School, we understand our curriculum to encompass not just these academic subjects but also the social, emotional, moral and spiritual development of our pupils. This wider curriculum includes further opportunities for personal growth and enrichment and includes play-time, Forest School, Club, trips, visitors as well as enrichments including special events, days and occasions.

Forest School

- Creating moments in nature to be still and notice things. What can you hear? See? Smell? in the natural world today?
- Celebrating the **wows** of nature including perceptible seasonal changes.
- Marvelling at the awe, wonder and intricacies of nature e.g. the individuality of a leaf or pebble and considering how many individual leaves and pebbles there are.
- Reflecting on the feelings of peace, calm and acceptance that nature brings.
- Enjoying the beauty of nature.
- Reflecting on the **ows** of nature such as a creature stuck in a spider's web; creatures or plants that have died; how this supports further life.

Outdoor Play and Learning

- Self-directed play which supports pupils personal growth
- Opportunities to realise personal strengths and interests through creative, dramatic, social, communicative, physical play-types
- Opportunities to enter flow state of uninhibited, child-centred play

Trips, visits and visitors

- Opportunities to visit places of cultural interest which inspire awe and wonder including museums, galleries, theatres and concert spaces
- Visits to places of worship which inspire awe, wonder and curiosity
- Opportunities to meet people from other cultures and faiths and to ask questions

Enrichment activities including theme days, celebrations and special events

- Connecting to national events such as Coronations, Jubilees, Remembrance Day where pupils develop their identity as being part of a larger community and being connected to history through the present celebration
- Opportunities to experience joy in learning through enrichment activities and special days (giving a performance, learning a song to share together, engaging in deeper learning)

Spirituality within the Ethos of the Daily Life of the School

In Brenzett CE Primary School, 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, every member of the school community, including our lunch staff and administrative staff 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**.

Spirituality and behaviour

When pupils find it hard to remember our school values or have made behavioural choices which are at odds with our rules, they are given every opportunity to learn from the experience in order to make better choices next time. All staff use a shared language to help pupils to reflect on an incident – guiding and shepherding them to use the **OW** moment to find spiritual and moral growth. As a school, we take care to prepare pupils for times when they might feel they have fallen short or “failed” in some way and give them tools to manage the difficult and conflicting emotions which can accompany such experiences. We look at examples of people in history who have overcome adversity only to triumph; we share our own stories of turning a negative situation around and experiencing a positive result; we re-enforce the message that life involves downs and well as ups but that we can develop a positive mind-set to face the challenges.

We have a sensory room where pupils who are struggling with their emotions can find a moment of respite in order to re-set before continuing with their learning. Each class-room also has a **calm-corner** and a small **adjoining garden** where pupils can take a moment to regulate if they become overwhelmed in their learning or around other people during the day. These spaces have been created to promote feelings of well-being, peace and safety as we understand that learning is prohibited whilst a pupils feelings of security are under threat.

Recording, Monitoring and Evaluation

The **Standard and Ethos Committee** review the policy twice-yearly in partnership with Senior/ Middle Leaders and consider any views expressed by parents, children and staff in order to make any changes or recommendations. Recommendations are fed back to the full governing body and are then actioned as appropriate.

Governors ensure that this policy is fully implemented and that practice is consistent with the school's Christian vision, in line with the school's monitoring policy and schedule for governors.

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.

Nicholas Sermon and Rowan Wright, our RE and SIAMS leader, 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:

- Ensuring personal knowledge and expertise are kept up-to-date by participating in CPD and shared good practice

- 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, managing a budget when necessary
- 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 particularly around Strand 2

Staff Development and Training

We ensure that all staff, including support staff, receive appropriate training and opportunities for professional development, both as individuals and as groups or teams. ECTs and staff who are new to Brenzett CE Primary School will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality. This policy is shared on the school's website and is part of the induction pack for new staff and new governors. This policy is reviewed every 3 years, or more frequently, as required.

Approval/review by governing body

Headteacher signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Chair of Governors signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Date of next review: _____ **Date:** _____

Additional Support Material

Useful questions for the school to consider:

- How does the school's Christian vision provide opportunities to meet the spiritual needs of learners?
- How does an awareness of spirituality permeate school life?
- What is the impact of this for the learner (and staff and the wider community)?
- How are staff inducted and supported so that they have a shared understanding of spirituality and spiritual development?

Prayer used by the School:

Mysterious God,

Most of the time we can explain what happens in the world by science But sometimes we may see a glimpse of something beyond:

The joy of making a new friend,

The excitement of being able to do something today which we couldn't do yesterday, The delight of warm sun on our faces or splashing in cold puddles. In these **wow** moments, when we're aware of something beyond, Help us to be open to the idea of you, God.

Comforting God,

Most of the time we feel safe and secure

But sometimes life can be difficult and painful and we long for something beyond:

Someone who understands what it's like to be alone,

Or let down by friends,

Or feel like they have nowhere to call home.

In these **ow** moments, help us to be open to something beyond And brave enough to reach out and pray.

Constant God,

Most of the time we are busy running or learning or playing,

But sometimes it's good simply to be, help us then to glimpse something beyond the everyday:

When we are still,

When we are present to ourselves, When there is nothing to distract us.

In these **now** moments, help us to be open your possibility God And help us to pray.

Amen

Spirituality Conversation Starters

Learning from **wow** Experiences

What I've learnt from this wonderful **wow** experience...
I think this is amazing because...
The biggest day in my life was...
A person who I think is really good is...
What matters most to me is...
I am most thankful for...

Learning from **ow** Experiences

What I've learnt from this difficult **ow** experience...
What I've learnt about forgiveness is...
What I've learnt about truth is...
Lying is wrong because...
No one is perfect because...
There would be less trouble if...

Learning from **now** Experiences

What I've learnt from this **now** experience...
What I've learnt about love is...
The world would be a better place if...
I can find peace by...
I think God is like...
One thing I wonder about God is...
I felt God was near me when...
Silence makes you feel...