


Founded 1565

Through faith, hope and love, we learn together

faith

To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see.


Hebrews 11 v 1



hope

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.


Jeremiah 29 v 11



love

And now I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love another.

John 13 v 34



William Gilbert Endowed C of E Primary School and Nursery Spirituality Statement

As a school we understand spirituality as the deep, personal sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves. It's not confined to religion, but is rooted in a Christian framework that values stillness, awe, wonder, questioning, and purpose.

Spirituality is the space where we reflect on who we are, what we value, and how we relate to the world. Spirituality is recognised as something that belongs to all, not just those with an explicit religious belief, and so we are able to foster an environment where everyone can belong, contribute, and grow in their own way. Spirituality is the thread that runs through our lives, not just in worship.

We believe that spirituality grows when children have opportunities to experience awe, wonder, reflection, connection, and meaning.

Spirituality is not something we can see or touch - we feel it inside all of us. It might be a sense of awe and wonder. It might be a sense of empathy and compassion. It might be a sense there are important questions to be asked which might not have obvious answers. It might make us want to laugh, cry, sing, be creative or be still. We might have spiritual experiences with others, or we might have them on our own. Spirituality is a sense of something bigger than ourselves.

Aims

We aim to ensure that children and members of our community have an evolving awareness of who they are, how they relate to others and the world around them.



Spirituality Across the Curriculum

At William Gilbert, spiritual development is intentionally woven through the whole curriculum. Across literature, history, science and the arts, pupils are invited to ask *big questions* about identity, purpose and ethics; to experience awe and wonder; and to pause, reflect and think critically through discussion, debate and creative expression. This inclusive approach, rooted in our Christian vision, creates age-appropriate opportunities for every child to explore meaning, values and belonging as part of everyday learning, not just in RE or collective worship.

- Spiritual development is treated as *intrinsic* to the curriculum; pupils explore *Who am I? Why does this matter? What is my role in the world?* across the curriculum.
- Lessons invite amazement—the *symmetry of nature and the vastness of space in science, the power of story in English*—to nurture contemplation and curiosity.
- Curriculum time deliberately includes moments to pause, reflect and evaluate, with structured discussion, debate and creative expression to deepen spiritual thinking.

Spirituality Across the Curriculum	
English	<p>“What does this story teach me about being human?”</p> <p>Through studying books that cover a range of concepts, themes and situations, including classic texts, develop children’s ability to recognise, and value, the things we share in common across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities.</p>
Mathematics	<p>“What does this teach me about logic, beauty, and persistence?”</p> <p>We facilitate moments of pleasure and wonder when a pupil solves a problem for the first time, or discovers a more elegant solution to that problem, or suddenly sees hidden connections.</p>
Science	<p>“How does this deepen my sense of wonder?”</p> <p>We develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science through different types of science enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them.</p>
Art	<p>“What do I feel when I create or see this?”</p> <p>We recognise that children are naturally creative. We give pupils the freedom, materials and space to enable them to use their creativity and imagination to communicate their inner most feelings. Pupils engage with a range of works of art that develop their understanding and respect for, different people’s feelings and values.</p>
Music	<p>“How does this music move me?”</p> <p>We facilitate the use of creativity, enjoyment, moments of awe and wonder and imagination in the children’s learning, allowing them to experience beauty and express emotions beyond words. Through shared musical experiences, pupils develop a sense of connection, reflection, and appreciation for creativity, deepening their understanding of themselves and the world.</p>
Geography	<p>“What is my place in the world?”</p> <p>We promote a sense of wonder and fascination with the physical and human world. Geography enables pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and experiences as they encounter different societies and cultures in their learning. We aim to captivate pupils by giving them opportunities to discover their place in a unique, diverse and wonderful world.</p>
History	<p>“What can past lives teach me about meaning and purpose?”</p> <p>Through drama, we bring historical events to life, helping pupils understand the emotional and human impact of the past, while fostering awe, empathy, and reflection; this sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others, and the world deepens their spiritual development.</p>
PSHE	<p>“Who am I becoming?”</p> <p>We develop a sense of fascination in learning about themselves; through reflection and discussion, they explore values, emotions, and relationships, deepening their spiritual understanding of identity and purpose.</p>

Physical Development	<p>“What do I learn about myself through movement?”</p> <p>We help pupils understand themselves, connect with others, build inner strength and reflect on purpose.</p>
Religious Education	<p>“What do I believe, and why?”</p> <p>To engage with challenging questions about the meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.</p>
Forest School	<p>At our school, Forest School plays a vital role in nurturing the spiritual development of every child. The natural environment provides a rich and powerful context for this growth.</p>

At William Gilbert School we have a coherent definition of spirituality understood by staff, pupils, governors, and parents. This definition is rooted in Christian theology but inclusive of pupils of all faiths and none. Staff can explain how spirituality differs from social, moral, and cultural development.

Spiritual development is intentional, not accidental. Teachers plan opportunities for:

- Wonder and awe,
- Reflection,
- Asking big questions,
- Exploring meaning and purpose.

		
<p>Windows</p> <p>Opportunities to look out at the world to learn, to gaze, to wonder and become aware of the world in new ways. To wonder about life's Wow moments (things we find amazing) and life's Ow moments (things that are worrying or upsetting).</p> <p>Learning about life in all its fullness.</p> <p>I wonder.... Why did that happen?</p>	<p>Mirrors</p> <p>Opportunities for us to reflect on our experiences, to consider some of the BIG questions of life and consider some possible answers. Exploring our own insights and perspectives, and those of others</p> <p>Learning from life</p> <p>What happened? How did it make you feel?</p>	<p>Doors</p> <p>Opportunities to respond to our experiences. To DO something creative to express, apply and further develop our thoughts and ideas. Becoming compassionate individuals who make a positive difference and inspire change.</p> <p>Learning to live by putting into action what you believe. How can you make a difference? What could you do?</p>

Spirituality within Collective Worship

Spirituality at William Gilbert is understood as a deep, personal connection to something greater than ourselves. It is nurtured through awe, wonder, questioning, and reflection – not confined to religious belief but open to all. Whilst opportunities for spiritual development are fostered across the whole curriculum, acts of Collective Worship provide opportunities for promoting the spiritual development of pupils. Collective Worship provides a space for pupils and staff to explore who they are, what they value, and how they relate to the world.

At William Gilbert School, Collective Worship is more than a daily routine – it is a transformative experience. It inspires pupils and adults alike to live out our Christian values, reflect deeply, and flourish in faith, hope, and love. Collective Worship deepens spiritual life

Worship is invitational, inclusive, and inspiring. Pupils experience:

Stillness

Prayer

Reflection

Biblical themes

Christian values lived out

Pupils can talk about how worship helps them think, feel, or reflect.

“Worship makes me feel loved and calm.”	“Worship makes me feel like I can do more for my community.”	“I feel happy that Jesus loves us no matter how bad we are, he will still love and care for us no matter what.”	“It made me feel happy that God has grace for us no matter what and always forgives.”
“Worship made me feel good and strong and brave.”	“Everyone matters and should be cared for, and nobody should be left out.”	“Made us feel more strongly that we should help people out.”	“God loves us no matter how rough it is because His love is unconditional.”
“If you are small, you can be strong and make a difference.”	“To forgive and respect each other.”	“We are the sheep and God is the shepherd, if we got lost, He would look for us.”	“Love everyone as your neighbour like the Good Samaritan did.”
“When Jesus said to Peter ‘feed my lambs’ He meant teach people about God.”	“To forgive each other no matter what.”	“God cares for everyone and would never leave any one behind.”	“God will guide you.”

“No matter what God will love you and care for you.”	“Show people love.”	“If you have faith, you can do anything.”	“Love and treat people as you want to be treated for ever and ever.”
--	---------------------	---	--

How we nurture spirituality

At school we create a culture of respect, compassion, and community.

- Our school Christian values are taught, lived out and celebrated.
- We make sure there are times of peace and for reflection in the school day.
- We spend time in special places such as St Alkmunds Church and other places of worship.
- We share art, music, stories and poems together.
- We share moments of awe and wonder.
- We encourage respectful debate and questioning and make sure children feel secure enough to ask those 'big' questions.
- We foster a love of creation through our school grounds including our Quiet Garden, Forest School area, and through school visits to Eyes Meadow and Millennium Nature Reserve in Duffield.
- We encourage the spirit of 'courageous advocacy' and standing up for what we believe in.
- We practice gratitude - we take time to give thanks and show thanks for the things, the actions and the people that bring us joy.
- We learn about our feelings, how to recognise them and live with them.
- We foster reflective thinking linked to our Christian values, encouraging us to look inward at our own behaviour and thoughts, outward at the wonderful world around us and considering actions of ourselves and others which make a difference moving forward.
- Relationships reflect Christian values such as love, forgiveness, and dignity. Pupils feel safe, valued, and listened to. Staff model humility, kindness, and respect.
- The school environment feels peaceful, welcoming, and purposeful.
- We offer opportunities for reflection and stillness:
 - Quiet spaces exist indoors and outdoors.
 - Pupils are given time to pause, think, pray, or simply “be”.
 - Reflection is built into lessons, worship, and pastoral time.

At William Gilbert School we can see evidence of spirituality in the way pupils treat each other. They show compassion and empathy towards each other. They have curiosity and depth of thought. Within their learning and through varied opportunities they show resilience and hopefulness. They have a strong sense of purpose and identity.

The pupils in our school have an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. They have an ability to understand the notion of community and to see themselves in relation to a variety of communities. They have a respect for themselves and for others. They understand feelings and emotions, and their likely impact, and an ability to talk about feelings.

Our Christian vision aims to shape a community that helps every child to flourish.