



Nebula
where stars are born



Spirituality Statement

THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES OUR FEDERATION'S DEFINITION OF SPIRITUALITY AND EXAMPLES OF HOW OUR CHILDREN'S SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT IS FOSTERED THROUGH ALL ASPECTS OF OUR PROVISION.

MRS BEST-WHITE

NEBULA FEDERATION

Frettenham Primary School
Old Catton VC Junior School

Hainford VC Primary School
White Woman Lane School

Horsford VA Primary School
St. Faiths' Primary School

Nebula Federation: Spirituality Statement

As a federation, we have defined spirituality as:

Spirituality is the bitter-sweet yearning for beauty, truth, love and wonder beyond ourselves. It is a longing we pursue together and a treasure we glimpse in ourselves and one another and seek beyond us into eternity. It is life in all its fullness.

It is very difficult to put into words what 'spirituality' actually is because it is a very personal experience. It differs from person to person, and often spirituality changes within people during their lifetime. Spirituality is not the same as having a religion or faith; a person can be spiritual without having a particular faith.

For our children, we have simplified our definition to:

Spirituality is the feeling that there is more to the world than we can touch and see.

Spirituality is both an individual and collective awareness – we grow spiritually as people in a community. Within the Nebula Federation, not only is this true of children and staff in a school it is also true of the schools within the federation.

Spirituality must be grounded in the context of a school community.

The Nebula Federation enables each school to retain its individuality and be unique and different to the other schools. The Federation then provides resources, support and collective wisdom to help each school live its life more fully, in all its uniqueness, than would be possible outside the federation.

Spirituality is not something we can see; it is something we feel inside ourselves. It is about awe and wonder, asking questions, inspiration, love and being aware of something 'bigger' outside of ourselves.

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Teaching Opportunities and Strategies

We have identified three ways in which our schools provide opportunities for spiritual development in our curriculum offer: ⁱ

WINDOWS: giving children opportunities to become aware of the world in new ways; to wonder about life's 'Wows' (things that are amazing) and 'Ohs' (things that bring us up short). In this, children are learning about life in all its fullness.

MIRRORS: giving children opportunities to reflect on their experiences; to meditate on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this, they are learning from life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.

DOORS: giving children opportunities to respond to all of this; to do something creative as a means of expressing, applying and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this, they are learning to live by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

We provide **WINDOWS** throughout our curriculum. Our lessons will promote awe and wonder focus with a variety of stimuli, including photos, videos, music, current events, visits, visitors, real-life stories and enquiry.

We place a high value on thinking skills, incorporating the use of Enquiry, Philosophy and Let's Think in English in our curriculum. We also provide 'Big Questions' and 'Deeper Questions' for children to explore. These strategies offer a variety of **MIRRORS** for the children to reflect on the world in different, deeper ways. It allows them to ask and discuss bigger questions and consider their own ideas and beliefs. Through high-quality RE lessons, children are consistently challenged to reflect on their learning about religion to help them learn from religion, regardless of whether they have a specific faith.

Children at our schools often identify **DOORS** for themselves. They may hear of a local issue or an international event and request to take action, through fund raising and raising awareness. We also work with the local community and with local fundraising and other activities. We take part in Comic Relief, Children in Need, as well as identifying other charities to support during the year.

Children's spiritual development is fostered through all aspects of our provision. It is about the relationships and the values that we consider to be important, as well as the development of knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes. We give children opportunities to:

- Express personal beliefs and compare views with others, sharing feelings and opinions through discussions and stories.
- Begin to develop their own system of beliefs which may or may not include religious beliefs.
- Experience a love of learning through rewarding their enthusiasm and by encouraging exploratory play and learning.

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- Reflect upon the world around them and show a sense of awe and wonder towards aspects of the natural world or human achievement.
- Reflect on the situations of others through role play, stories and news
- Experience a range of stories, music, art, drama and dance

We have also included in our curriculum plans for each subject, how the teaching and learning in that subject will help children develop their spirituality and also reinforce our Christian vision and values.

When talking to children about spirituality we refer to:

- A sense of awe and wonder
- Care for nature and living things
- Wanting to love and to be loved by people
- Truth and beauty

Awe and Wonder

Children are born inquisitive, and it is our duty to nurture this natural curiosity and guide them towards looking at the world and noticing, with awe and wonder, the natural and man-made delights all around us. We want to encourage them to ask 'big questions' about life, religion, nature, science and any other area of fascination.

Caring for Nature and Living Things

We provide many opportunities for children to learn about nature and the role they play in protecting our world. Through science and topic work, children learn about the world and how they can care for living things.

Love

We are very caring schools and pride ourselves on our ethos. Through our Christian Values, we teach children to care for friends, family and the community. Indeed, our curriculum includes learning about those we love and who love us.

A Delight in Truth and Beauty

Subjects such as mathematics for example, demonstrate truth and beauty. Mathematics works, it has shape and pattern and numbers are infinite. Mathematics is everywhere. It is in the objects we create and in the works of art we admire. It can help explain the way galaxies spiral, a seashell curves and patterns replicate.

The beauty and enjoyment of the curriculum as a whole is in the knowledge, the skills, the concepts, or in the results, the explanations and debate. At other times, it is the thought processes that make your mind turn in enjoyable and satisfying ways, in the emotions that you feel, or just working in the flow - like getting lost in a good book.

ⁱ Liz Mills The Stapleford Centre.