Spirituality in the RE curriculum

Spirituality is about seeking a meaningful connection with something bigger than oneself, which can result in positive emotions, such as peace, awe and wonder. Spirituality enables our children to be happy; to flourish, to succeed and to live life in all its fullness.



Planned opportunities

In Religious Education (RE), planned opportunities for spirituality focus on enhancing children's understanding of themselves, their relationships with others, their connection to the world, and their exploration of profound and universal questions. This holistic approach ensures that RE contributes to both intellectual and spiritual growth.

Self: RE helps children explore their own beliefs, values, and identity. Through lessons on various religious traditions and personal reflection activities, students are encouraged to think deeply about their own spirituality and what is important to them. For example, in Year 1, children learn about different religious festivals, reflecting on their own family traditions and what they celebrate. As they progress to Year 6, exploring concepts like morality and ethics encourages them to consider their own principles and how they make decisions in their lives.

Others: RE provides numerous opportunities for understanding and empathy towards people with different beliefs and practices. Learning about world religions such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism helps students appreciate and respect the diverse beliefs that exist in their communities and the wider world. Group discussions and collaborative tasks, foster mutual respect and understanding. This promotes social cohesion and a sense of shared humanity.

The World: RE connects children to global cultures and the diverse ways in which people understand and interact with the world. Studying religious stories, sacred texts, and practices from around the world helps students appreciate the richness of human culture and thought. For instance, exploring the concept of pilgrimage in various religions, such as the Hajj in Islam or the Jerusalem in Christianity, Judaism and Islam provides insights into the global nature of religious practice and its significance in different cultures.

Beyond: RE invites students to contemplate profound and universal questions about existence, purpose, and the nature of the divine. Reflective activities, such as meditation and philosophical enquiry, encourage children to think about life's big questions and their own beliefs about the meaning of life and the universe. For example, discussing concepts of the afterlife in different religions or the idea of karma can lead to deep reflections on morality and the interconnectedness of life.

- Studying different religious and philosophical traditions; exploring questions of meaning, purpose, and morality.

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By experiencing wonder and joy through learning about and from stories, celebrations, rituals and different expressions of religion and worldviews.
By asking and responding to questions of meaning and purpose.
By considering questions about God and evaluating truth claims.

In conclusion, by integrating spirituality into the RE curriculum, we can nurture well-rounded individuals who are not only knowledgeable about different religious traditions but also spiritually aware and connected. This approach prepares children to engage with RE thoughtfully and empathetically, appreciating the diverse and profound ways in which people seek to understand and find meaning in the world.
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<tr><td>Reception</td><td>

Self: The unit "Myself" invites children to think about who they are, what makes them special, and what they value. Through simple discussions and activities, children reflect on their own feelings, talents, and uniqueness, fostering early self-awareness and a sense of their place in the world.
Others: "Special People to Me" helps children recognise and appreciate the important people in their lives, such as family, friends, and community members. This unit encourages empathy by exploring stories from different faiths, including how Jesus cared for others, how Muslims respect their parents, and how Hindu families celebrate together. It helps children learn to value relationships and the love they receive and give.
The World: "Our Beautiful World" encourages children to explore nature and the environment, fostering a sense of awe and appreciation. Activities might include looking at creation stories from Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism, encouraging children to see the world as a beautiful gift. This helps instill respect and care for the planet from an early age.
Beyond: In units like "Salvation: Why do Christians put a cross in an Easter Garden?" and "Creation: Why is the word God so important to Christians?", children begin to explore deeper spiritual concepts. They learn about the significance of the cross at Easter and why Christians see God as central to life. These stories help children think about bigger questions, like love, forgiveness, and gratitude, and introduce them to the idea of a higher power.

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<tr><td>Year 1</td><td>

Self: Year 1 pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings through storytelling and discussion. For example, children hear the parable of "The Lost Son" from Christianity. This story can prompt discussions about kindness, forgiveness, compassion and understanding personal values. Through such narratives, children begin to explore their own sense of right and wrong and how their actions affect others.
Others: The RE curriculum places a strong emphasis on understanding and respecting others. By learning about different religious traditions, such as the Five Pillars of Islam, children gain insights into the lives and practices of their peers from different backgrounds. Activities might include creating a "kindness tree," where students write or draw acts of kindness they've experienced or observed, fostering empathy and respect for diverse perspectives.

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	• The World: A sense of wonder and appreciation for the world is cultivated through exploring various creation stories from different religions. This can be paired with outdoor activities like nature walks, encouraging children to observe and appreciate the natural world, fostering a sense of stewardship and interconnectedness. • Beyond: Introducing concepts of the divine and the sacred helps children think beyond the tangible. In Year 1, children visit a local mosque and cathedral, experiencing these places of worship firsthand. Discussions about prayer and meditation practices across different religions can help children understand how people seek connection with a higher power, instilling a sense of curiosity and reverence for the mysteries of life.
Year 2	• Self: Year 2 students are encouraged to reflect on personal beliefs and values through storytelling and discussions. For instance, the Christian concepts of incarnation and salvation, exemplified through the stories of Jesus' birth and his role as the Savior, allow children to contemplate themes of love, sacrifice, and forgiveness. • Others: Understanding and respecting others remains a key focus. Learning about Judaism, for example, students explore the significance of Sukkot and its customs. Additionally, studying the Five Pillars of Islam, provides insights into the values of fasting, charity, and community. These activities help children appreciate and respect the diverse ways people live out their faith. • The World: A sense of wonder for the world is nurtured through stories and discussions about creation from different religious perspectives. In our unit on Thankfulness in Christianity and Judaism, the children are encouraged to see the world as a precious gift. Activities like reflecting on what we are thankful for can encourage connection to the wider world around them, fostering a sense of responsibility and care for the natural world. • Beyond: Introducing children to the concept of the divine and sacred helps them think beyond the material world. Discussions about prayer, worship, and religious rituals help them understand how people connect with something greater than themselves. For example, children can learn about the Muslim practice of daily prayers and the significance of the Torah in Judaism.

Year 3	• Self: The LAS and UC units encourage personal reflection, especially in the *Big Questions: What is a good life?* Pupils are invited to think about what makes life meaningful and how their actions and beliefs shape their sense of purpose. The Christian unit on *Salvation* also encourages pupils to reflect on forgiveness and the personal implications of Jesus' sacrifice, helping them to think about love, redemption, and how they might practice these values in their own lives. • Others: The LAS and UC units foster empathy and respect for others through the study of diverse religious practices. For example, in the *Compulsory God* unit on Islam, students learn about the significance of Salah (prayer) and the Five Pillars, understanding how these practices shape a Muslim's relationship with others, including charity (Zakat). This focus on religious duty and care for others encourages pupils to reflect on how they can positively impact the people around them. • The World: Pupils explore how religious beliefs influence one's responsibility to the wider world. In the Hinduism *Compulsory God* unit, students learn about Brahman and how Hindu beliefs inspire care for all living beings, promoting reflection on environmental stewardship and the interconnectedness of life. Similarly, discussions on Christian beliefs, like the Trinity, help children think about God's role in the world and the Christian call to care for creation. • Beyond: In the study of divine concepts, such as *God/Incarnation: What is the Trinity?* pupils are encouraged to think about the nature of God and spiritual existence beyond the material world. In Hinduism, students explore the idea of Brahman as the ultimate reality, and in Islam, they reflect on the oneness of Allah, offering deep spiritual reflection on concepts that transcend the physical world.
Year 4	• Self: The focus on self encourages pupils to reflect on their own beliefs, values, and experiences. For example, in the "Creation: What do Christians learn from the Creation story?" unit, pupils are invited to think about their role and responsibility in caring for the world. They reflect on how they feel about the natural environment and their own place within it, nurturing a sense of purpose and gratitude. • Others: Exploring spirituality in relation to others emphasises empathy, respect, and understanding of different communities. In the "Community Islam" unit, pupils learn about the significance of the mosque and communal prayers in Islam. This helps them appreciate the importance of community support and togetherness in other people's lives, enhancing their awareness of diverse social bonds and connections. • The World: Considering the world expands pupils' perspectives on their environment and their impact on it. In the "Why do we celebrate?" unit, festivals are studied not just as cultural practices but as ways to connect with the broader world. These celebrations highlight themes of light overcoming darkness, gratitude, and shared human joy, encouraging pupils to think about their role in the global community.

	• Beyond: The concept of beyond involves exploring the spiritual and transcendent aspects of life. The "Pilgrimage" unit, for example, examines the journeys of faith such as Hajj in Islam or pilgrimages in Christianity and Hinduism. These lessons help pupils reflect on their own spiritual journeys, the quest for meaning, and the idea of a higher power or greater purpose beyond the material world.
Year 5	• Self: The unit "Being Human Hinduism" encourages students to explore Hindu beliefs about the soul (atman) and karma, prompting reflection on personal actions and responsibilities. Through this, pupils consider their own values and how they relate to ideas of right and wrong, personal growth, and the journey of self-improvement. • Others: Focusing on others, the "Being Human Islam" unit helps students understand how Muslims live out their faith through daily actions, such as showing compassion and maintaining community ties. This fosters empathy, encouraging pupils to appreciate how beliefs shape relationships and inspire care for others. • The World: In year 5 the "Expressing Beliefs through the Arts" unit examines how art, music, and symbols are used in religions to convey profound truths and emotions. For example, pupils might explore Christian stained-glass windows, Islamic calligraphy, or Hindu mandalas. This approach helps students see how beliefs are expressed globally and inspires them to think creatively about expressing their own values. • Beyond: The unit "Salvation: What difference does the resurrection make for Christians?" delves into Christian beliefs about life after death and hope. Pupils reflect on themes of forgiveness, redemption, and transformation, considering how these ideas influence the way Christians view life and the afterlife. Similarly, the "Incarnation: Was Jesus the Messiah?" unit challenges pupils to think about the significance of Jesus in Christian belief, prompting reflection on the nature of spiritual leaders and their impact on the world.
Year 6	• Self: The unit "God: What does it mean if God is loving and holy?" allows pupils to reflect on their personal beliefs about God's nature, considering ideas of love, holiness, and justice in Christianity. This encourages pupils to think deeply about how these concepts relate to their own values, prompting introspection about forgiveness, compassion, and personal integrity. • Others: The unit "Do you have to believe in God to be good?" engages pupils in discussions about morality beyond religious belief. Through exploring secular and religious perspectives, students consider how people of all backgrounds—including atheists, Christians, Hindus, and Muslims—live good lives guided by values like kindness and honesty. This fosters respect and understanding of diverse moral frameworks. • The World: In "Creation and Science: Conflicting or Complementary?", pupils explore Christian, Hindu, and scientific views on the origins of the universe. By examining creation stories alongside scientific theories like the Big Bang, students are encouraged to see how different worldviews can coexist. This unit highlights the importance of curiosity, respect for different beliefs, and the wonder of the natural world.

	• Beyond: The "Life Journey Hinduism and Islam" unit delves into significant life rituals, such as Hindu samskaras (life cycle rites) and Islamic practices like Hajj. These explorations help pupils understand how these religions mark important stages of life, fostering a sense of connection to something greater than themselves. Pupils reflect on their own life journeys, considering the broader meaning and purpose behind significant moments.