



Mellor St Mary CE Primary School
Believing, Learning and Sharing Together



**Spirituality at
Mellor St Mary CE
Primary School**

Mission Statement:

Our school is the church on the hill;
the light that brings Jesus into the lives of all in our community.

Upon this rock I will build my church (Matthew 16:18)

Our Mission Statement is built on the notion that we are like a church; a beacon of light to which our families and local community can turn to for light, shelter, hope, education and love. It is rooted in Matthew 16:18 and reflects our ability to bring Jesus into the lives of our families through our curriculum, enrichments and community engagement projects.

Vision:

Our overarching vision at Mellor St Mary is:

Through our Christian Faith, we acknowledge our responsibility to all, to enrich lives and show love and respect within our school family.

We believe in lifelong learning aiming to equip our children to live life today and for tomorrow rooted in Christian love.

What is Spirituality?

We believe that exploring spirituality, by educating the whole child and providing full life experiences, supports our aspirational vision. At Mellor St Mary it is about following the way of Jesus.

We define spirituality as an ongoing, reflective journey. It is something that teaches us about questioning, understanding and relationships: relationships with ourselves, others, the world and beyond within a Christian context. Christian values are central to all we do at Mellor.

Spirituality enables our children to be happy, feel safe, accepted, loved and to flourish and succeed, thus living life in all its fullness.

For our children it is about:

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

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 our children 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. As a church school this is especially important. Our children learn about the world and how they can care for all creation.

Love:

*And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.
(Colossians 3:14)*

The Christian value love is at the very centre of all our work. We are a caring school and pride ourselves on our ethos of family. Through our Christian values, we teach children to care for friends, family and the community. We want our children to develop love and hope, based on God's love for all through Christ, and to develop friendships, welcoming supporting and loving each other, celebrating the gifts and talents of all.

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.

At Mellor St Mary 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.
- 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.
- Experience a range of stories, music, art, drama and dance.

How do we do this?

Our approach towards spiritual development looks to educate the whole child in fullness across a broad and balanced, local curriculum. Spiritual development is not specific to one curriculum area or activity.

Children are encouraged to ask questions and explore topics, discussing and responding to issues around them.

Whilst spiritual moments can be spontaneous, at our school, we plan to provide high quality, thought provoking and purposeful opportunities for spiritual development.

At Mellor St Mary's **we use a Windows, Mirrors, Doors approach** (based on the work of Liz Mills, Farrington Millennium Research 1997). This supports children to:

- Become aware of the world in all its wonder but also a sad realisation of its many problems, i.e. to realise that the world is both "awe-full" but also sadly 'awful' at times too, (to be aware of both its 'Wows' but also its 'Ows').
- The need to have a chance to reflect or think on this both alone and with others.
- The need to apply what has been learnt from this process in some sort of expressive, active way.

Briefly:

Windows:	Allow us to look out
Mirrors:	Allows us to reflect
Doors:	Allow us to move on

Windows:



Are for looking out onto the world and becoming aware of its wonders. Both the 'wows' and 'ows'; things that are 'awe-full' and make us wonder and be grateful and things that are 'awful' and make us wonder and ask questions. The whole curriculum and life itself are full of opportunities to recognise this sensitively. This allows our children to **learn about** life in all its fullness.

Mirrors:



Are for looking into and reflecting, alone and together, to see things more clearly, for thinking and asking important questions, learning from our own and each other's responses. Some subjects in school allow for this specifically, such as religious education and collective worship but in all subjects, there will be opportunities, unexpected or planned, when things 'just crop up'. Handled sensitively, it is possible to make the most of all these times, if there is ongoing deliberate support from staff. This allows children to reflect on their experiences; to mediate on life's big questions and to consider some possible answers. In this way our children are **learning from** life by exploring their own insights and perspectives and those of others.

Doors:



Are for looking through in order to then act or express this in some way in response; for moving on, making choices, and doing something creative, active and purposeful in response. This can either be through a change in attitude or behaviour or thinking. It can also be expressed through music, art, drama or dance and through social action or specific acts of giving. This allows our children to **respond** and to do something creative as a means of expressing, applying, and further developing their thoughts and convictions. In this way children are **learning to live** by putting into action what they are coming to believe and value.

"You are God's dear children, so try to be like him. ² Live a life of love. Love others just as Christ loved us. He gave himself for us." (Ephesians 5:1-2)

In Summary...

At Mellor St Mary we deliberately allow opportunities for spiritual development by understanding the importance of and allowing time to develop an increased awareness of the world (whether this be through worship or the curriculum) reflecting upon its wows and ows, finding ways in which this can be reflected on with others' support and exploring a range of creative ways to live out and put the 'faith' which is growing from this into practice.

These are some of the characteristics we seek to encourage in our pupils at Mellor St Mary to support them to become more confident in their own spirituality:

- Self-respect and respect for others
- A sense of adventure and willingness to try new things
- Curiosity about the natural world
- Confidence in our own beliefs with an openness to learning from other ways of thinking
- Imagination and creativity
- Fearlessness to ask 'big questions'
- A keen awareness of injustice

- An ability to stand in another's shoes and look at things from their perspective

Roles and Responsibilities:

At Mellor St Mary we recognise there are opportunities for enhancing the spiritual well-being of all in every aspect of our school life. Every member of our staff team is committed to support this spiritual growth wherever appropriate.

The Headteacher is responsible for supporting and leading spiritual development in our school, including monitoring opportunities for spiritual growth in collective worship, the curriculum and the general ethos of the school within daily life.

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 a group / team. ECTs and staff who are new to our school will receive training and support from the staff member identified as leading on spirituality.