

Spirituality at Blue Coat Church of England Academy

Our Spirituality

Spirituality is at the heart of our school, ensuring that the mind, body and soul are nurtured equally. Our school community continually reflects on the essential, inherent meaning of life and we support all learners to think deeply about themselves and their thoughts, feelings and emotions. We encourage students to develop self-respect and be secure in their identity and as a result they form healthy relationships with others. All our subjects contribute to this search for meaning and a recognition of being part of something bigger and beyond oneself. Our students 'accept themselves and each other, even in difficult times'. Within school they consider how they relate to the rest of the world and have a 'deep sense of self', as well as empathy and compassion for others. Our school provides opportunities for students to develop respect, values, a sense of enjoyment, a fascination in learning, creativity and deep reflection. Our school and curriculum allow all students to understand, respect and celebrate difference and diversity.

Blue Coat Church of England Academy has a rich culture of deep reflection and in each subject area and year group there are hundreds of opportunities for our community to grow spiritually. Some are distinct and others are shared, but all are acknowledged and valued.



Spirituality in Religious Studies

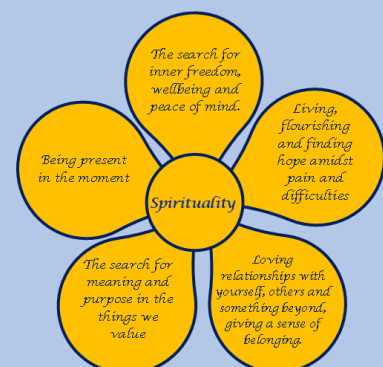
The Religious Studies curriculum nurtures spirituality by giving students opportunities to reflect on their relationship with themselves, others, the world, and God. In our inclusive school, all students are encouraged to reflect on their own uniqueness and their intrinsic value as individuals made 'in the image of God'. Students will encounter both religious and non-religious ideas related to the value of humanity. They will reflect on the values of empathy, equality and justice and peace that are found in both religious and non-religious belief systems. Similarly, studying beliefs, art and scripture pertaining to the fundamental value of the universe and nature will not only nurture a sense of awe and wonder, but also encourage students to develop the value of stewardship. Finally, as a department we believe that a rigorous study of religion will enable students to understand their faith or beliefs more deeply, and to encounter either God or a sense of 'the beyond' intellectually.

Spirituality in History

The History curriculum allows students to explore the world they live in and reflect on how civilizations and cultures have developed across the ages. The awe and wonder of human achievements, as well as the sorrow experienced during the study of catastrophes in the past, make students reflect on human behaviour and develop compassion, humility, self-awareness and respect. The brave curriculum challenges students to explore difficult and often divisive topics and encourages them to ask questions and form opinions, whilst respecting and acknowledging the thoughts and feelings of others. History makes them reflect and consider their beliefs, morals and actions both day to day and in the long term. Through studying what has happened in the past, students gain the opportunity to consider issues in the present and future, focusing especially on themes such as equality, religion and race.

Spirituality in Geography

The geography curriculum is designed to create both curious and critical learners, who simultaneously develop their knowledge of the world as well as themselves as people. Through placing themselves within a global context, through experiential learning, our students engage with various aspects of spirituality across all levels of our curriculum. Students consider both the practical and ethical implications of global issues, ranging from climate change to the impacts of globalisation. By doing this, they can transcend far beyond the geographic boundaries of their immediate vicinity, pushing themselves to come up with ways in which global geographic issues can be resolved through their actions.



Spirituality in Science

The complex relationship between science and spirituality is examined through the evaluation of 'big' questions and issues, ranging from the creation of the universe to the evolution of the species. Within the last 50 years, our understanding of science has allowed us to develop technology which has required us to consider the morality of scientific activities, for example, the ethics behind stem cell research or debating the morality of genetically modifying plants to increase yields to feed starving people. The requirement for deep reflection and critical and independent thought, allows students to consider their fundamental beliefs and nurture a sense of wonder in the universe. The lessons being taught provide students with the tools needed to understand the planet they are going to inherit. "Humankind has not woven the web of life; we are but one thread in it".

Spirituality in English

The English curriculum nurtures spirituality as it allows students to meet and consider humans beings from a wide array of backgrounds and across the decades and indeed centuries. In the deeply personal reading experience our students as readers make connections with characters and their circumstances and context thus allowing them to build empathy, concern, compassion for these characters whilst also considering deeply their plights, circumstances and choices. In doing so our students further engage in a spiritual experience as they then also can reflect on the characters they study, and the themes, to engage in self-reflection.

Spirituality in Modern Foreign Languages

In Modern Foreign Languages, the curriculum helps students embrace an understanding of other cultures, show an interest and develop tolerance as well as a meaningful understanding of how people from other countries (particularly French speaking countries) think, speak and live.

Spirituality in P.E.

Spiritual physical education develops deep thinking and questioning in the way in which the body works and how we can take charge of our body in the world around us. Students are encouraged to analyse and seek ways to improve performance and reflect on how they work with others as part of a team. A variety of skills are developed which allow students to express their feelings and emotions as well as be amazed by what their bodies can achieve. They are encouraged to develop respect, kindness and joy, be determined and resilient. Students are taught to accept and rise to challenges and to reflect on their work through self-evaluation and how this relates to our school values.



Spirituality in Maths

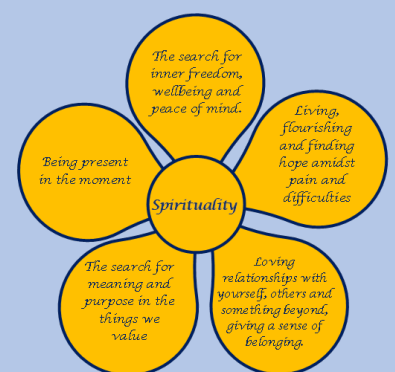
Mathematics equips students with a uniquely powerful set of tools to understand and change the world. These tools include logical reasoning, problem-solving skills, and the ability to turn abstract concepts into reality. Students have opportunities for rich conversations in class that will spark a more profound and spiritually gratifying appreciation of the subject. They can believe in something intangible which is actually tangible in the minds of believers.

Mathematics is important in everyday life, many forms of employment, science and technology, medicine, the economy, the environment and development, and in public decision-making. Different cultures have contributed to the development and application of mathematics. Today, the subject transcends cultural boundaries, and its importance is universally recognised.

Mathematics is a creative discipline. It can stimulate moments of pleasure and wonder when a student solves a problem for the first time, discovers a more elegant solution to that problem, or suddenly sees hidden connections.

Spirituality in Law

Law is steeped in spirituality as it delves into how laws that govern our everyday lives are fundamentally linked to our relationships with our families, relationship with the state and the community we live in. It is fundamentally about the way that people relate to themselves, each other, institutions, and the world around them. Students can consider what our birth right entitles us to, consider how people should relate to each other within the guidance of law; they investigate how those laws carry consequences which can improve humanity. Adapting human behaviours and understanding their human rights can ease conflict which lends itself to becoming citizens in an inclusive global community. Law gives us the opportunity to explore the relationship between citizens and the state, demonstrating how we should treat each other and how religion is an intricate thread of a woven society.



Spirituality in Music

At Blue Coat Church of England Academy music plays a strong role in the spiritual life. Church assemblies always have music playing at the start and often during the assembly for students to reflect upon. The choir often perform at end of term assemblies, Prize Evenings and special services such as the Civic Carol Service and Blue Coat Sunday.

In music lessons students listen and appraise music from a variety of times and places. They are encouraged to think about the wide range of emotions that music can evoke; reflecting upon how it affects our mind, body and spirit.

Spirituality in Health and Social Care

Health and Social Care promotes spirituality by giving an insight into the development through life stages. Students learn about vulnerability and the impact which depression, social isolation, disease and illness can have on individuals' health and social well-being. Individuals learn about case studies which increases students understanding and they can reflect on key issues impacting individuals and what services are available. They learn about care values like effective communication, preserving dignity and confidentiality and the impact it may have if these are compromised. Students develop a deeper insight on the impact poor care can have on clients and understanding the importance of empathy and compassion in care. The subject is linked to many careers and gives students a sense of purpose and this increases their compassion and commitment to improving the lives of others.

Spirituality in Business

The Business Studies curriculum takes into consideration the contribution businesses make to our communities and the wider world. Through this it is important for learners to develop their sense of self-value and their potential to create. The curriculum also cultivates spirituality by encouraging students to reflect on their own lives and the lives of others as they look at a wide variety of business-related case studies/contexts. By allowing learners to study these case studies/contexts, learners are encouraged to be motivated, confident and resilient. Learners can debate and formulate their own set of values and beliefs through the study of corporate social responsibility and ethics.



Spirituality in Psychology

Psychology promotes student's spirituality through understanding the different approaches in psychology and learning about how research in various areas has helped improve our quality of life: attachment, memory and social influence. It is a subject that deepens our insight and understanding of other cultures. Developing empathy, tolerance and the value of all citizens. Students can debate and respect a wide range of distinctive views and learn to listen to different perspectives on a variety of issues. This allows them to have a growth mindset by understanding things from other points of view. The subject is linked to many careers and gives students a sense of purpose and this increases their compassion and commitment to improving the lives of others.

Spirituality in Art

The very art of being creative is a spiritual moment. Students are encouraged to express themselves through the art they make, taking time to pause, reflect and possibly recreate. Students have strong positive emotional and supportive reactions to each other's work; they appreciate the work, the effort and creativity, often responding in awe. Students assess and reflect on their own and others' work in order, for collaboration; the goal being to reflect, improve and progress. The sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning new techniques, ideas, concepts, coupled with the celebration of a finished piece, relates directly to the school values of wisdom, kindness and hope.

Spirituality in Media Studies

Spirituality is examined in Media Studies as a major component in the make-up of all media products/ texts. It is interlinked with the Media producing institutions that operate in our society, as well as influencing those within a society. Students are asked to examine the factors that make up their own identity and the norms and values to which they conform and subscribe. Doing this allows us to look at others, their influences and their experiences within society and how this experience is reflected in a variety of Media products. As a network of diverse individuals working cooperatively, religion and spirituality often keeps order and respect between us and can feature more heavily in the lives of some more than others. Media Studies takes a critical eye to behaviours, whilst students of Media Studies are encouraged not to judge, but to observe from various perspectives, the way in which norms and values change within differing contexts. This supports an inquisitive mind, questioning and flexible in its approach to others. Understanding that many truths can exist simultaneously on this vast and diverse earth we all call home. Inclusion, diversity, tolerance and respect come as a result of this course of study, along with a hope of these values continuing long after the students leave school.

