

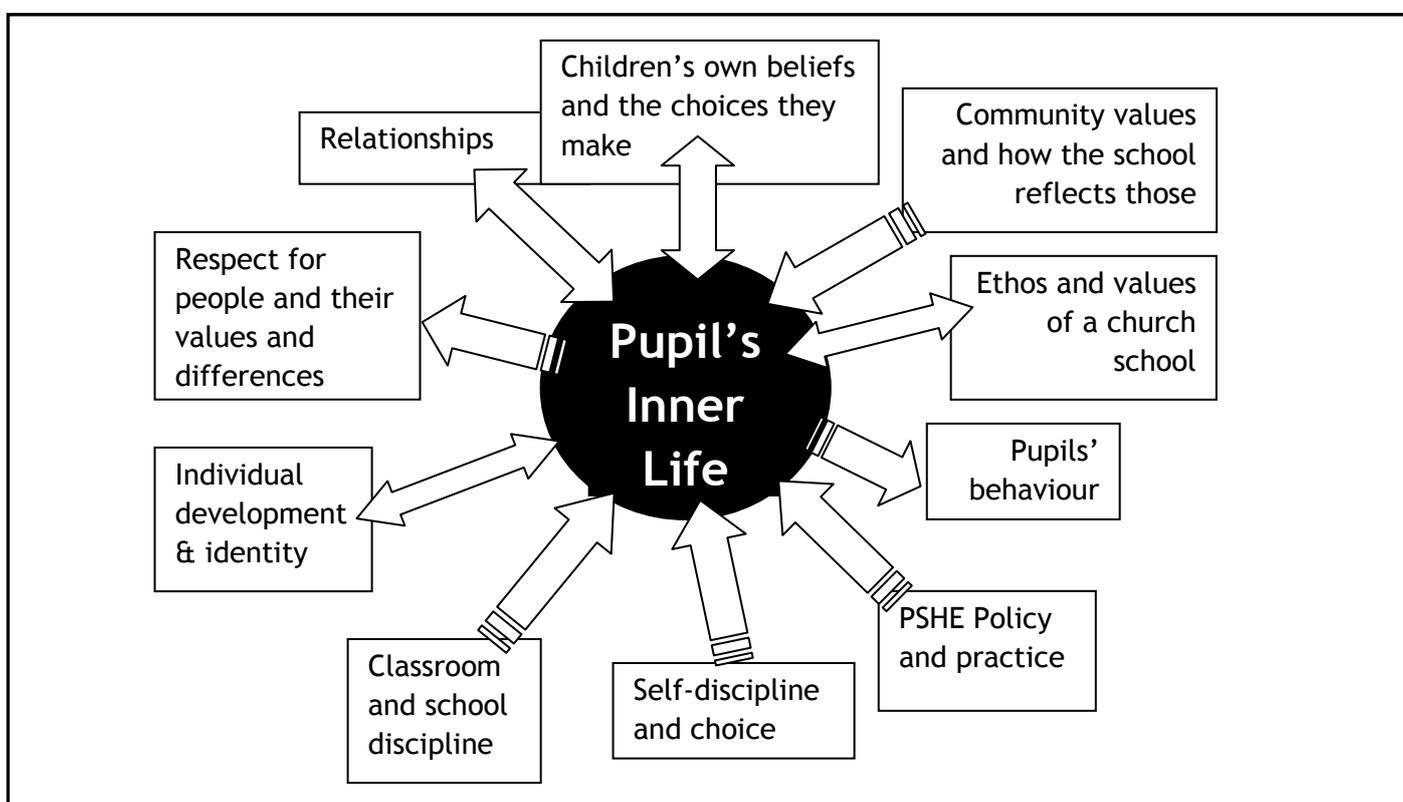
## Spirituality at CtS

All children have an inborn spirituality. However, if spirituality is not nurtured, it can wither. Spirituality is not the same as religious faith but it is the bedrock on which faith is founded.

A healthy spirituality can be recognised in children in three ways:

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

At CtS we believe that spiritual development is about helping children to develop academically but, more importantly, personally so that they become well rounded and ready to take their place in society fulfilled, happy, spiritually aware and socially and emotionally engaged.



Spiritual and moral development of children is essentially about ***the inner life***. As a school, we hold certain core values as shown in these verses:

*"From out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks" (Matthew 12:34)*

*"So in everything, do to others as you would have them to do to you" (Matthew 7:12)*

*"Love your neighbour as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18; Luke 10:27)*

*"Finally, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things."*

*(Philippians 4:8)*

The nurturing of children's spirituality is rooted in the most recent Ofsted inspection framework.

Extract from Spirituality policy SMSC Guidance

The most recent Ofsted inspection framework (January 2012) places SMSC as a central part of the judgement of a school's overall effectiveness. To be outstanding a school should ensure:-

*'The school's thoughtful and wide ranging promotion of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community.'*

To be judged good a school should ensure

*'Deliberate and effective action is taken to create a cohesive learning community by promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.'*

The definitions of Moral, Social and Cultural development are fairly well understood in most schools, but the definition of Spirituality is much more open to debate. In its subsidiary guidance (January 2012) OFSTED attempt to define what they are looking for:-

*Pupils' spiritual development is shown by their:*

- *beliefs, religious or otherwise, which inform their perspective on life and their interest in and respect for different people's feelings and values*
- *sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible*
- *use of imagination and creativity in their learning*
- *willingness to reflect on their experiences.*

In a church school it can be reasonably expected that spiritual development would be a considerable strength. Therefore the approach should seek to be at the very least 'deliberate and effective' but ideally 'thoughtful and wide ranging'.

At CtS we aim to develop children's spirituality through the following components. They are taken from HMI 2125, although the *material in brackets* indicates how we as a school are implementing some of them:

- The opportunity provided by teachers and support staff to explore values and beliefs, including religious beliefs, and the way in which they affect people's lives (*discussions in RE lessons, impromptu discussions with children-particularly through the use of Soul Space in the time of Advent, visits to places of worship, interactive teaching in collective worship as organised by class teachers and the Chaplaincy Team*)
- Support and development of religious beliefs where pupils already have them (*use of Soul Space as well as Soul Space in classrooms; encouragement of those who are members of local churches to share their experiences; using children of other faiths as experts to talk about their beliefs and how this impacts their life*)
- Encouragement of pupils to explore and develop what 'animates' themselves and others (*principally through circle time in class and assemblies; most often through teacher-pupil conversations in class in a variety of contexts*)

- Encouragement of pupils to reflect and to learn and change through reflection (*opportunities during circle time, in collective worship and in Soul Space*)
- Allowing pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and emotions, the way they affect people and how an understanding of them can be helpful; building empathy among pupils (*a key part of our community building circles, Restorative Practice, and, less personally, in the delivery of the PSHE curriculum*)
- Developing a climate or ethos within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respecting others and in turn being respected (*the ethos of the school comes from staff mutual respect, quietness of spirit in the way we teach, and full respect for the voice of the pupil; the active role of the Chaplaincy Team, the use of Restorative Practice to make sure that everyone has a voice*)
- In our actions as teachers, accommodating difference and respecting the integrity of individuals (*all teachers use Restorative Practice in the management of behavioural techniques*)
- Promotion of teaching and learning styles that
  - Value pupils' questions and give them space for their own thoughts, ideas and concerns
  - Enable pupils to make connections between aspects of learning
  - Encourage pupils to relate their learning to a wider frame of reference – asking 'how?' 'where' and 'why?' as well as 'what?'

### Summary

It is clear that class teachers have the responsibility for times of discussion, reflection, exploration and action through the questioning approach within the RE curriculum and the delivery of PSHE. The work of the Chaplaincy team, Rachel Foster and the WVEP will enable us to strive for a *'thoughtful and wide ranging promotion of the pupils' spiritual development.'* The use of Soul Space will also give us a unique opportunity to allow children to develop their spirituality through their own reflections and deep thinking. However, there are many other opportunities that need to be taken which will inspire children to think beyond the merely physical. These will include visits to places where landscape is a major feature, to art galleries and sculpture parks. Within the class are many opportunities to demonstrate responsibility and good behaviour. Learning by showing and teaching others is a lovely opportunity for both to grow in their inner life. Taking responsibility for one another can be encouraged as part of the basic understanding of both school and community life.

It is often said that Spirituality will only happen when we are open and willing to go deeper.

By 'Loving, Learning, Growing together' may we do so.