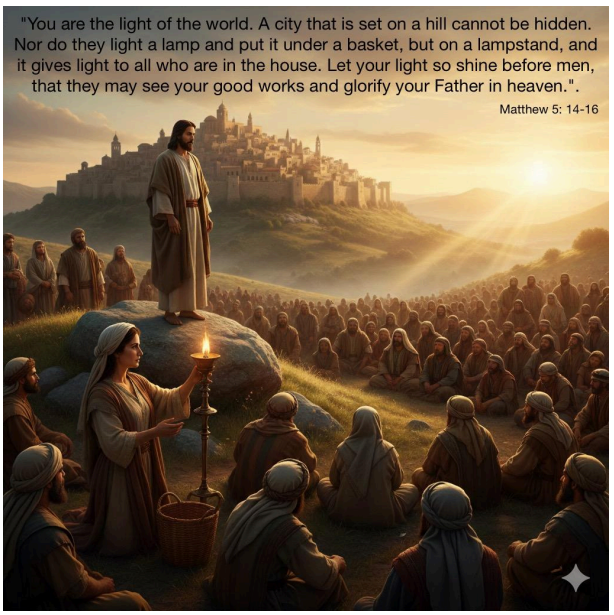
BRAILES C*of* E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Spirituality Policy



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1. OUR APPROACH TO SPIRITUALITY: GROW TOGETHER, SHINE BRIGHT - 'LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE'



The biblical passage from Matthew 5:14-16 guides our understanding of spirituality for all members of the Brailes community: children, staff, and families. For us, this means:

- **Recognising God-given Uniqueness (You are the Light):** We believe everyone possesses a "spiritual light" or spark as a unique Creation made in God's image. Spirituality is the journey of nurturing this potential so it is not hidden but celebrated.
- **Overcoming Barriers to Flourishing (Not under a basket):** We work together to banish darkness, negativity, and fixed mindsets, ensuring everyone can see clearly to reach their very best selves.
- **Building a Hopeful Community (A City on a Hill):** Just as a city on a hill cannot be hidden, our spiritual life is outward-facing, creating a positive force that illuminates our school, our communities, and the world.

Living Out Purpose (Good Works): We empower children to be "agents for change," using their "good works" and positive character—curiosity, courage, and compassion—to glorify God.

2. OUR VISION AND THEOLOGICALLY ROOTED VALUES

At Brailes C of E Primary School, our vision is: "Grow together, shine bright – 'Let your light shine'". This vision is deeply rooted in the theological concept of Creation. We believe that God's plan is for all of creation to flourish, and it is our sacred duty to provide the conditions for every child to grow like a healthy plant, reaching toward the light.

Our school values - Curiosity, Courage, and Compassion - are the tools that enable our children to place their light on a lampstand to serve the house.

The vision of the Diocese of Coventry is, 'Together, pursuing life in all its fullness' based on John 10:10 and reflects the Church of England's vision for education: human flourishing for all, one that embraces **excellence** and academic rigour, but sets them in a wider framework. We aim to

develop happy, confident, loving, and caring staff and children who value themselves, each other, their world, and their relationship with God or the Beyond.

Our Academy Trust RESPECT values are grounded in the story of God through history and the belief that God through Christ wants to bring us life in all its fullness (John 10:10).



In our schools, we seek to see each person as bearing the image of God, unique and precious with talents and gifts to celebrate. We value each individual, seeking the best for everyone and building up the common good. We offer opportunities for each person to flourish and pursue their interests with **passion** and find in school a place to belong.

Followers of Christ are called to build the kingdom of God together, and we encourage a culture which cares for others, works for inclusion and values integrity in relationships and behaviour. Our common life together recognises our interdependence and the need to build a community based on **trust** and **ethics** and rooted in the love of God for everyone.

As Jesus modelled servanthood by washing his disciples' feet, so we too are called in **service** to one another (Philippians 2:3-4).

Our **relationships** are built on the understanding that we belong together as the family of God, and that each of us has talents and gifts that are unique to us (1 Corinthians 12). This means that we **collaborate** together for the common good, recognising that we need one another.

The promotion of spiritual development is a requirement of all schools in England as part of their offering of a 'balanced and broadly based' curriculum. For Church of England schools considerable thought needs to go into how this can be worked out with integrity, recognising that our schools have a Christian foundation whilst many of our families and staff may not have any religious affiliation. This holistic approach, encompassing spiritual and emotional growth, is central to our educational purpose.

3. UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is a fundamental aspect of being human, influencing all areas of life and education. It is an innate quality that can be nurtured and developed over time, akin to a photograph gradually developing or a "spirituality journey of realisation". It is not solely dependent on religious belief.

Spirituality is primarily about our relationships. It's about how we connect with ourselves, with others, and from a Christian perspective, with God. To help children grow spiritually, we need to do two things:

1. Create a nurturing environment where good relationships can flourish.
2. Remember that everyone has different ways of connecting with each other and with God.

These ideas are the foundation of our approach to helping children develop their spirituality. In a Church of England school, Christian hospitality provides a great way to think about spirituality for everyone.

The Bible shows us that Christian hospitality is more than just sharing a meal. It's about nourishing the soul. When we are truly hospitable, we are creating a space where everyone is accepted and loved; we can meet the needs of all, especially those who are most vulnerable; we can feel God's presence, which can lead to emotional and spiritual change.

We can think about spiritual growth using the acronym SPIRIT:

Space: Giving children time and quiet to think.
Process: Allowing them to explore their own ideas and beliefs.
Imagination: Encouraging them to be creative and see the world in new ways.
Relationships: Helping them build connections with themselves, others, and God.
Intimacy and **T**rust: These are the most fragile qualities. For a child to feel a deep sense of connection (intimacy) and to feel safe enough to share their true self (trust), we must provide a truly nurturing environment that links wellbeing and learning.

All six of these elements are vital for creating a school where children feel secure and cared for. It's a place where they can safely explore their identity and what is most important to them.

At Brailes C of E Primary, we simplify the concept of spirituality for our community by exploring it through four key relationships, inspired by Andrew Rickett and Rebecca Nye's work:

- **Self:** Awareness of one's inner thoughts, feelings, and uniqueness, fostering self-respect and identity.
- **Others:** Developing empathy, compassion, and meaningful relationships, recognizing the worth and value of each individual.
- **Beauty (The World):** Perceiving and relating to the physical and creative world, appreciating nature, art, music, and human achievements.
- **Beyond (Transcendence):** Exploring experiences and meaning beyond the everyday, including "big questions" about life, purpose, and existence, and, for believers, a relationship with God.

Love is the connecting idea that binds together the four aspects of spirituality: Self, Others, Beauty, and Beyond.

Our language of spirituality begins from a Christian understanding that everyone is a valued creation, individually and uniquely made by God, like pots made by a potter (Isaiah 64:8). Yet, in life things happen that impact on the physical 'pot' of life and create cracks that provide a glimpse of something 'beyond' the tangible.

To make these concepts tangible, we use the "Windows, Mirrors, Doors and Traffic Lights" analogy.



- **Windows:** Looking out onto the world, recognizing its "WOWS" (awe-inspiring moments) and "OWS" (challenging experiences), prompting wonder and questioning.
- **Mirrors:** Reflecting inwards on thoughts, feelings, and beliefs, connecting external experiences with inner selves.
- **Doors:** Responding actively and creatively to what has been learned - the "good works" from Matthew 5:16 - where learning leads to transformed attitudes or deeds.
- **Traffic Lights:** Allowing us time to stop and look, to wait and think and then move on.

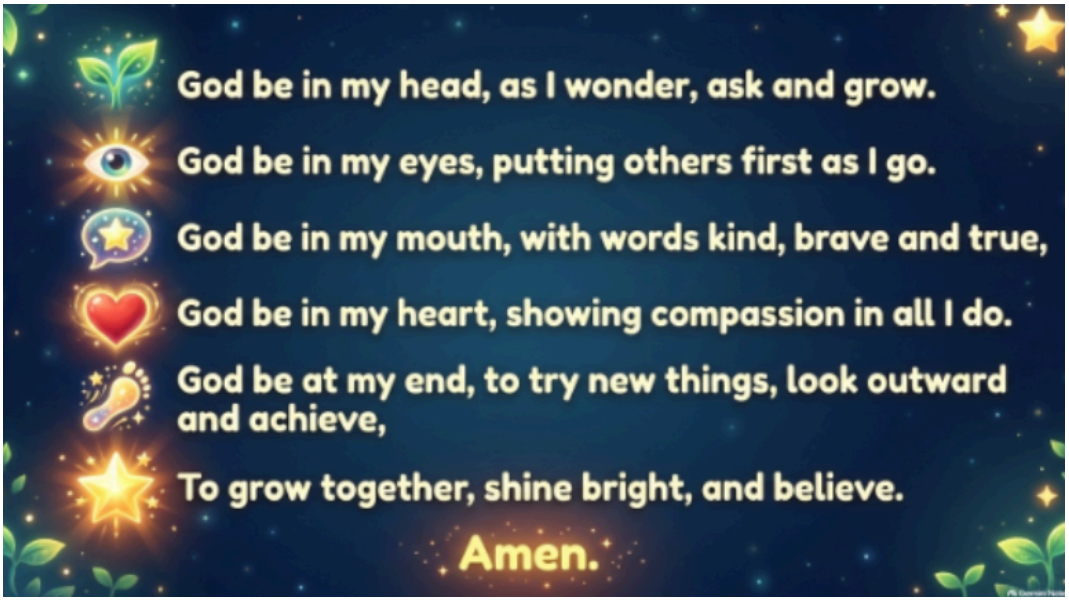
We also acknowledge the "NOWS" of life – the stillness and ordinariness of everyday moments where spiritual opportunities can arise through pause or reflection.

In these special moments there is a spiritual opportunity. Kintsugi, the Japanese art of mending broken ceramics with golden joinery or glue, creates something that has been broken into something even more beautiful. Using this metaphor, the WOWS, OWS and NOWS of life offer the possibility of cracks that are filled with golden glue and make the pot even more beautiful. The gold in the cracks reflect a little of the wonder of spirituality and spiritual growth.



4. SCHOOL PRAYER AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Our school prayer serves as a central spiritual compass for pupils and staff. Tracing each line of the prayer directly to our Christian vision (Matthew 5:14-16), school values, and spiritual framework demonstrates how daily prayer actively supports spiritual reflection across the school.



Core Pillars of Spiritual Reflection in Prayer

Inclusive: Prayer involves everyone in exploring and questioning, fully accessible to all, avoiding assumed faith language.

Invitational: Extended through 'warm fires and open doors' — authentic Christian reflection (the warm fire) with an open door for all to sit as near or far as they feel comfortable.

Inspiring: Formational and transformational, enabling pupils and adults to reflect on ultimate questions and prompting courageous advocacy.

Mapping Prayer Lines to Spiritual Reflection

School Prayer Line	Relational Direction & Analogy	Vision, Mission and Values Alignment	Spiritual Reflection & Flourishing Focus
Line 1: 'God be in my head, as I wonder, ask and grow.'	1. Learning & Wondering WINDOWS (Looking Outward)	Curiosity Mission: Aspire Vision Focus: Creation & Flourishing	Opens new perspectives, encouraging pupils to experience life's WOWs, OWS, and NOWs. Nurtures the child's relationship with the world through brave questioning and innovative thinking.

Lines 2 & 4: 'God be in my eyes, putting others first as I go.' 'God be in my heart, showing compassion in all I do.'	2. Reflecting & Discerning MIRRORS (Looking Inward)	Compassion Missions: Belong & Believe Vision focus: Imago Dei & Good Works	Provides dedicated inward reflection on how themes resonate personally. Recognises the sacred worth of every individual made in God's image, expressing character through daily acts of service.
Lines 3 & 5: 'God be in my mouth, with words kind, brave and true.' 'God be at my end, to try new things, look outward and achieve.'	3. Responding & Acting DOORS (Moving Outward)	Courage & Compassion Missions: Belong, Believe, Aspire Vision Focus: A City on a Hill	Encourages active response, stepping out of comfort zones, using voices for truth, and making a practical difference through reconciliation, restorative practice, and courageous advocacy.
Line 6: 'To grow together, shine bright, and believe.'	4. Connecting & Belonging BEYOND (Looking Upward)	All Core Values Missions: Believe & Aspire Vision Focus: Trinity & Matthew 5:14-16	Nurtures relationship with God and the collective whole. Individual lights combine to form a 'City on a Hill' — a hopeful beacon illuminating our communities through shared witness.

5. AIM

Our aim is to establish the right learning environment to enable the spiritual flourishing of all pupils and adults. We strive to support everyone to:

- Believe in themselves and each other, taking pride in the God-given talents that make them a unique source of light.
- Belong and feel valued, extending "unreasonable hospitality" so that every child has the confidence to be their authentic self.
- Aspire to excellence, being outward-facing and determined to achieve more than they think is possible.
- Learn from the 'ows and wows' of life, using courage to persevere and compassion to provide warmth to others.

5. PROVISION FOR SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Spiritual development is a core thread that runs through our school and is vital for the flourishing of all within our community. It is not confined to specific subjects but influences all areas of

education and life. Our approach to spiritual development is thoughtful, deliberate, and intentional.

We provide opportunities for spiritual development in the following ways:

Collective Worship
As the beating heart of our school, collective worship provides a space for shared experiences, reflection, invitational prayer, and engagement with Christian practices and stories. It includes opportunities to reflect on the "wows" and "ows" of life, fostering empathy and responsibility.

Religious Education (RE)
RE provides a safe space for pupils to explore their own religious, spiritual, and philosophical convictions, engaging in meaningful dialogue with diverse worldviews.

Wider Curriculum
Spiritual development is intrinsically woven into all subjects. Our curriculum is designed to spark curiosity and delight. Examples across subjects include:

- **Reading:** Reflect on characters, cope with challenges, and make personal connections, exploring themes of meaning and purpose. *How did a character cope with a challenge in life? How did the actions of a character surprise you? How do you think you would have responded to that wow or ow moment?*
- **Writing:** Encourage self-expression of thoughts and emotions, cultivate empathy, and use poetry as spiritual expression. *How is this writing valued?*
- **Mathematics:** Explore the exactness and patterns of Creation. *What cannot be measured, such as the infinite value of a single person's light?*
- **Art:** Use creativity to express the "spiritual spark" within. *How does your work reflect the beauty of being made in God's image?*
- **Computing:** Discuss moral dilemmas, contemplate possibilities, and examine technology's impact on human connections and service to others. *How do you celebrate the achievement and break-through wows of success? How do you support the ows of difficulty and frustrations?*
- **Design & Technology:** Encourage reflective and creative imagination, appreciate aesthetics, and reflect on the purpose and impact of technological achievements. *What motivates designers and their decisions - desire to make money or desire to help and make improvements to daily life for everyone?*
- **Geography:** Foster wonder for the world. *How can we be "agents for change" in protecting the world God created?*
- **History:** Reflect on those who were "cities on a hill" in the past. *Which historical figures used their "good works" to challenge injustice?*
- **Music:** Use your talents to inspire others. H*ow does music help your light shine for the benefit of the whole "house"?*
- **Modern Foreign Languages (MFL):** Promote cultural understanding, empathy, language as a tool for connection, and exploration of spiritual concepts in other cultures. *What motivates language learning (e.g. buying an ice cream on holiday or welcoming and comforting a stranger in our country)? What does it feel like to genuinely communicate with someone in a new language?*
- **Physical Education (PE):** Delight in movement and the development of the whole child. *How does it feel to be courageous when facing a new physical challenge?*
- **PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education):** Teach about love, empathy, self-awareness, and environmental care, supporting mental health and

understanding feelings. As you explore topics such as relationships, feelings and attitudes, keeping safe and your body, where are the natural links with the wows, ows, and nows? How can the honesty and sensitivity needed to explore these topics gently reflect the language of spirituality already used throughout the school?

- **Science:** Spark curiosity, appreciate the beauty and scale of life, and reflect on challenging themes, fostering understanding of interdependence. *Delight in discovering how things work and opportunities to linger longer on the wonder? What questions cannot be answered by science?*

Further examples of spirituality across the curriculum using Windows, Mirrors and Doors can be found in Appendix 3.

6. SCHOOL ETHOS, ENVIRONMENT AND PATHWAYS

Opportunities for spiritual growth permeate daily school life, including lunchtimes and playtimes. We provide appropriate spaces for silence, stillness, and prayer. This aligns with our 2030 Strategy's emphasis on engaging in spiritual practices as a "vitamin for flourishing".

Our commitment to holistic learning means developing the six global competencies: Character, Citizenship, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, and Critical Thinking. These skills are nurtured through our comprehensive spiritual development provision, empowering children to become discerning believers, responsible citizens, collaborative contributors, effective communicators, self-directed learners, and reflective thinkers.

Gary Thomas (2010, *Sacred Pathways*, p23-30) outlines nine spiritual temperaments or sacred pathways rooted in biblical narratives, personal experience and story. They are:

1. ***Naturalists: Loving God Outdoors - they are moved by creation, particularly being outside.***

- Incorporate natural objects like flowers, stones, and water into prayer spaces.
- Give pupils opportunities to enjoy being outside, even in different types of weather.
- Sing or listen to songs that focus on creation.

2. ***Sensates: Loving God with the Senses - they are often moved by sights, sounds, and smells.***

- Use candles and child-friendly liturgy in collective worship.
- Think carefully about how different subjects can engage all the senses, such as through art, storytelling, and speaking.
- Use visualisation exercises to help pupils focus on their breathing and senses.

3. ***Traditionalists: Loving God through Ritual and Symbol - they love the historic aspects of faith, such as symbols, sacraments, and ritual.***

- Introduce rituals like specific welcomes and greetings.
- Establish traditions such as giving a birthday cake or card to every child or starting each day with a "thought for the day."
- Create a book of remembrance to document key spiritual moments in the school's life.

4. **Ascetics: Loving God in Solitude and Simplicity - they like to be left alone.**

- Consider fundraising events that involve "going without" something, like food or social media. A communal Lenten fast is another option.

- Invite children and young people to participate in a silent retreat for a full day.
- Designate a specific time in the school day for silence and consider using silence in staff training days.

5. ***Activists: Loving God through Confrontation - they want to bring about justice and often take up a cause.***

- Organize a litter pick in the village or on a nearby street, extending beyond the school grounds.
- Write letters or emails to local politicians or organizations like Amnesty International.
- Sign up for the Global Neighbours scheme.

6. ***Caregivers: Loving God by Loving Others - they love serving others, particularly those who are poor and needy.***

- Send "get well" messages to children and adults when appropriate.
- Carefully consider the school's entrance and the welcome given to visitors, from the seating area and displays to how people are greeted.
- Explore whether the school building can be used to host other community groups.

7. ***Enthusiasts: Loving God with Mystery and Celebration - they love to celebrate and be cheerleaders for God.***

- Use a range of music in collective worship, including gospel and contemporary songs as well as more traditional ones.
- Hold regular celebration events, especially when members of the school community have risen above the ordinary or shown courage during difficult times.
- Make sure the curriculum has a sense of playfulness and curiosity.

8. ***Intellectuals: Loving God with the Mind - they need their minds to be stirred.***

- Provide opportunities for debate and discussion about spiritual matters, such as through a philosophy group.
- Encourage pupils to lead collective worship by giving a "thought for the day" or a brief theological reflection.
- Use current news items to help pupils connect biblical teachings with the world around them.

9. ***Contemplatives: Loving God through Adoration - they seek to be intimate with God.***

- Give pupils time to write poetry, music, prayers, or stories about their spirituality.
- Consider using prayerful and meditative reading of the Bible as part of collective worship or in prayer spaces.
- Use "stilling" or Christian mindfulness exercises.

We grow in God's love by moving beyond ourselves to embrace the fullness of the Christian narrative:

- **Trinity:** We celebrate diversity, ensuring our school is a "tapestry of interconnected flourishing".
- **Incarnation:** We get alongside others in their times of need, offering support through life's challenges.
- **Salvation:** We take action that leads to inclusion and equity.
- **Reconciliation:** We use restorative practices, choosing forgiveness and repair to maintain a harmonious community.

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Spiritual development cannot be measured in a quantifiable sense, as it is a lifelong journey. However, we monitor and evaluate the opportunities provided for spiritual development by observing and listening to children, discussing practice at staff and governor meetings, reviewing work, and gathering pupil and staff voice. This ensures our provision is consistent with our Christian vision and supports all pupils in their spiritual flourishing.

Our Trust believes that flourishing adults are essential for flourishing children. We are committed to supporting the spiritual flourishing of all staff through various routines and practices, including staff meetings, personal and professional development, collective worship, and opportunities for reflection and stillness. We aim to create a supportive and nurturing environment where staff feel valued, supported, and empowered to flourish and do their best work. This is integral to our Wellbeing and Learning driver in the 2030 Strategy.

Brailes C of E Primary School, as part of The Stour Federation, is dedicated to fostering an environment where every individual experiences a sense of belonging, safety, value, and inspiration, enabling them to flourish in all aspects of their being. As we believe the development of spirituality is a central purpose in education, it follows that this area of school life should also be shared with parents and carers so that they too can contribute to this aspect of children's development at home. There are many ways that schools can do this including: making this explicit in curriculum plans; including families in collective worship themes; sharing opportunities for first hand encounter through the school year; offering suggestions for activities or discussion points at home.

Appendix 1: Spirituality Conversation Starters

Learning from WOW Experiences	
	What I've learnt from this wonderful wow experience…
	I think this is amazing because…
	The biggest day in my life was…
	A person who I think is really good is…
	What matters most to me is…
	I am most thankful for…

Learning from OW Experiences	
	What I've learnt from this difficult ow experience…
	What I've learnt about forgiveness is…
	What I've learnt about truth is…
	Lying is wrong because…
	No one is perfect because…
	There would be less trouble if…

Learning from NOW Experiences	
	What I've learnt from this now experience…
	What I've learnt about love is…
	The world would be a better place if…
	I can find peace by…
	I think God is like…
	One thing I wonder about is…
	I felt God was near me when…
	Silence makes you feel…

Appendix 2: Broadening Opportunity for Spiritual Development

If spiritual development is to be something 'that should influence all areas of education as it does all areas of life' it is helpful for schools to have a shared language to describe this and to have explored what this might look like in different subject areas.

The work of David Hay and Rebecca Nye (2006, *The Spirit of the Child*) is helpful here. Their survey of writers on spirituality and child psychology found that experiences of spirituality can be categorized into 3 broad areas: awareness-sensing, mystery-sensing and value-sensing. The table below (adapted from Hay and Nye (2006) by Pawson (2018, *Spirituality and Spiritual Development* p152)) gives some details of these different aspects of spirituality and some suggested activities for use by teachers.

Categories of spirituality	Meaning	Suggested activities
Awareness-sensing	Paying attention to, being aware of, one's awareness	Stilling, meditation and contemplation
• Here-and-now	The ability to be 'in the moment'	Meditation exercises focusing on the breath
• Tuning	An intense feeling of connection or belonging	Listening to evocative music, viewing a beautiful image
• Flow	Getting caught up in an activity, where the experience transcends the physical	Opportunities for pupils to become engrossed in an activity
• Focusing	Getting in touch with the felt-sense of reality	'Grounding' activities, e.g. getting in touch with bodily feelings
Mystery-sensing	Seeing patterns in the world; becoming aware of transcendence	Asking big questions
• Wonder and awe	Sensing our smallness in the vastness of the universe; a profound feeling of amazement	Creating 'wow' moments through sensual stimulation
• Imagination	Transcending the ordinary through thoughts that go beyond the obvious	Telling stories; exploring symbolic meanings, myths and archetypes
Value-sensing	Awareness of the significance and importance of truth, principles, justice, fairness	Discussing ethical dilemmas
• Delight and despair	Sensing the emotional impact of experiences	Exploring issues related to the environment, poverty, human kindness, spiritual enlightenment
• Ultimate goodness	Trusting in goodness and love	Exploring examples of compassion, altruism and agape
• Meaning	Awareness of a deeper, transcendent meaning	Exploring issues of identity and purpose

Source: The Church Of England Education Office (2019), Spiritual Development: Interpretations of spiritual development in the classroom.

Appendix 3: Spirituality Across the Curriculum

Spiritual development is a core thread that runs through our school and is vital for the flourishing of all. It is not confined to specific subjects but is intentionally woven into our curriculum to spark **curiosity and delight**. We use the **Windows, Mirrors, and Doors** framework to map these opportunities:

Reading

- **Windows:** Imagine life in different settings and reflect on heart-warming moments that "heal the heart".
- **Mirrors:** Reflect on how we see ourselves within a narrative and how we might cope with the "ows" and challenges characters face.
- **Doors:** Use stories to inspire us to act for justice in our own lives and communities.

Writing

- **Windows:** Explore poetry as a way to convey deeper meanings and emotions about the world.
- **Mirrors:** Use diaries and journals for personal reflection and expressing the "spiritual spark" within.
- **Doors:** Use written communication—letters, cards, or petitions—to connect with and support others.

Maths

- **Windows:** Ponder the vastness of creation through the scale of large numbers (like the stars in the sky) and the Fibonacci sequence in nature.
- **Mirrors:** Experience a "moment of stillness" upon completing a task to appreciate the joy of discovery and patterns.
- **Doors:** Reflect on things that cannot be measured, such as the infinite value of an act of compassion.

Science

- **Windows:** Foster awe and wonder at the scale of life, from microscopic organisms to the interdependence of the physical world.
- **Mirrors:** Contemplate our unique place in the universe—feeling "significant" as unique individuals with genetic diversity, yet "insignificant" in the vastness of space.
- **Doors:** Reflect on how scientific discoveries can inspire hope and be used to care for God's creation.

Geography

- **Windows:** Foster fascination with the Earth's beauty and complexity, while reflecting on the "ows" of natural disasters.
- **Mirrors:** Explore personal feelings about different cultures and environments, developing our own sense of identity.
- **Doors:** Act as "agents for change" through stewardship, making ethical decisions that impact the planet's future.

Art

- **Windows:** Marvel at human creativity and technical mastery in the work of others, finding deeper meanings in their "wows" and "ows".
- **Mirrors:** Use art for self-expression, reflecting our innermost thoughts and our identity as beings made in God's image.

- **Doors:** Use our creative talents to raise awareness of social justice and bring hope to others.

Computing

- **Windows:** Explore "big questions" regarding AI and moral dilemmas, considering technology's impact on the global community.
- **Mirrors:** Reflect on how technology affects our emotions, mental health, and the way we connect with others.
- **Doors:** Leverage digital tools to promote inclusivity and serve those who are underserved or marginalised.

Physical Education (PE)

- **Windows:** Draw inspiration from the perseverance of athletes and the global unity of events like the Olympics.
- **Mirrors:** Learn to handle the emotions of winning and losing, building courage and personal growth through physical challenges.
- **Doors:** Use sport as a platform to promote messages of equality and justice.

History

- **Windows:** Use imagination and empathy to connect with the "wows" and "ows" of those who lived in the past.
- **Mirrors:** Reflect on our place in time and how the lives of significant figures might influence our own aspirations.
- **Doors:** Draw lessons from history to make ethical choices and stand up against injustice today.