

# What Lies Beyond?

*Spiritual? Moral, Social and  
Cultural Development?  
In Primary Schools?*

# Schools With Soul RSA 2014

- *Issues*
- Marginalisation
- Misunderstanding of concepts of spirituality and well-being
- No incentive to focus on purpose, aims, ethos
- Lack of vision, planning, delivery
- Sanitisation due to fear of relevance and controversial issues

# WHAT IS SMSC?

- Spiritual  
(Self Awareness/Knowledge)  
Meaning  
Reflection/Stillness
  - Moral  
(Right and Wrong/Decisions)  
Action  
Consequences
  - Social  
(Positive Relationships)  
Interaction  
Child/Child/Adult
  - Cultural  
(Celebrating Diversity)  
Belonging  
Community
- (From Eade 2006)

# What is Spirituality?

- Definition
- Latin “spirare” to breathe
- Greek “pneuma” breath or wind
- That which gives life or animates
- Breathing creativity into school
- That which integrates
- Is intangible, what part in educational process?

# Put It In A Pedagogy!

- Pedagogy is a process of relating aims, curriculum content and methodology
- Two contrasting views

Engaging with spirituality must involve encountering communities and traditions. Critical reflection within cultural pluralism

(Wright *Spiritual Pedagogy*)

Truth and knowledge underpin education

Mickey Mouse Spirituality ! (Taggart)

Truth is related to personal narrative constructed from individual experience.  
Children can construct their own spiritual development.

(Erricker *The Education of the Whole Child*)

Meaning is at the heart of education, emotion and imagination are as important as intelligence

# Deep Learning (Saljo 1979)

- Relate the subject matter to each other and the real world
- Reinterpreting knowledge to understand reality in a different way
- Self affirming positive relationship with the exploration of the subject matter and other learners
- Authentic curiosity applied to issues in a learning community

# SMSC Development

## Development or Journey?

- |                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| <b>STANDARDS AGENDA</b> | <b>SMSC</b>   |
| <b>AGENDA</b>           |               |
| Content                 | Process       |
| Skills and Knowledge    | Relationships |
| Literacy and Numeracy   | Breadth       |
| Pace and Challenge      | Reflection    |
| Measurable Results      | ? Outcomes    |

(from Eaude 2006)

# Spirituality and the Curriculum

- Spirituality constructed not known?
- Should we be affirming beyond the cognitive? What we are and are becoming.
- The present emphasis of the curriculum “leads to cognitive performance rather than critical autonomy”
- The curriculum has become “a script for knowing instead of a vehicle for learning”  
(See *Spiritual Education, Cultural, Religious and Social Differences* ed Erricker, Erricker, Ota)



# What is Spirituality?

- Spirituality as Dynamism
- Spirituality as Challenging
- Spirituality as recovering religious truth
- Spirituality as aestheticism
- Spirituality as communal identity

# Eminent Thoughts

- “The distinction between all the trivia we can talk about and all the essentials we can’t”

(Wittgenstein)

- Helps prevent “the idolatry of the immediate to the exclusion of the ultimate”

(Chesterton)

From Watson

*Priorities in Religious Education*

“Whatever view of reality deepens our sense of the tremendous issues of life is nearer the truth than any which diminishes that sense”

(Inge from Copley *Spiritual Development in the State School*)

“The great purpose of education should be to give people a greater reliance on the validity of their own inward and private experience, rather than a distrust of it”

(Wilson from Watson *Priorities in Religious Education*)

# Spiritual Intelligence

- A spiritually intelligent person has learned to  
LIVE (improve the self)  
DIALOGUE (inner speech)  
DIE (recognise a perspective beyond)  
READ (meditate on truths)

And is therefore constantly TRANSFORMED  
(Zohar and Marshall, Broadbent and Brown)

# WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- “Spiritual Intelligence is characterised by a fundamental valuing of the lives and development of all members of a school community”

(MacGilchrist 1997 quoted in

*A Passion for Teaching* by Christopher Day 2004)

Should we refer to spiritual “health” or awareness not “development”?

# FAQS

- Do we **all** have a “spiritual capacity?”
- Does spirituality **have to be religious**? Is it damaged by association with religion?
- Is there **spiritual intelligence**?
- If it is intangible and spontaneous can it be **developed**? should it be **measured or assessed**?
- Can/should you **scaffold** spirituality?
- Do you need **specialised language**?
- Is it **all through the curriculum** or just RE ,Collective Worship, Citizenship?
- Is it **subversive enough** to be engaged with in school?  
(does it challenge “false” spiritualities eg consumerism, individualism and is thus repressed by the adult world?)

## The Enchantment of Childhood? Spirituality is Evident in what we most Value (Hull)

- Effect of globalisation
- Superficial consumer culture, greed, idolatry of money
- Competition not collaboration
- Materialism and superficiality

So;

- Safe spaces for inner experience and imagination
- Curiosity, play, joy in present, adventure, magic, sacred, secret spaces, beauty, reconnect with nature
- Different reality, depth principle of life, longing for satisfying relationships, intimacy, meaningful communities, shared values, less stress, future vision

(see Grey M. in *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* Vol 11 No 1 April 2006)

- Meet ugly reality of child's world

(Ramsey in Thatcher *Spirituality and the Curriculum*)

# What Experiences?

- Poetry, Music, Art, Conversation, Shape, Beauty, Colour, Wonder, Stillness, Relationship with Natural World, Meanings beneath, Patterns, Links, Connections, Story, Reflection, Questions
- Naming feelings and emotions
- Responses/engaging with ourselves, neighbours, God?

# Across the Curriculum

- Art Looking and Creating
- Music Listening and Creating
- History Investigating and Wondering
- Geography Exploring and Marvelling
- PHSE Reflecting and Discussing
- RE Searching and Responding
- Numeracy Finding Patterns and Being Challenged
- Literacy Expressing and Articulating
- PE Being Alive and Enjoying
- ICT Visiting the World
- Science Experimenting and Discovering
- Citizenship Questioning and Collaborating



# Inspecting Spirituality

- Values projected by staff and pupils
- Quality of relationships between staff and pupils, methods of addressing each other
- How is conflict resolved?
- Quality of physical environment
- Range of opportunities outside formal curriculum
- Relationships with wider community
- Tone and content of material published by school

# A School Perspective

- Opportunities for Reflection
  - Valuing Observation
  - Exploring the Unanswerable
  - Respect
  - Staff as role models
  - Structures and Spontaneity
- (from Brown and Seaman  
National Society Project)

# A Teaching Perspective

- Openness, humour, listening, consistency, trust = Good Relationships
- Value each pupil
- Wide range of activities
- Open questions
- Role Play
- Encourage independent learning
- Bring in enrichment
- Be childlike to experience
- Teachers as Learners!

(from Brown and Seaman

*National Society Project*)

# A Classroom Perspective

- Active Learning
- Circle Time
- Class Worship
- Confidential Support
- Celebrate Work
- Good Relationships
- Reflection and Stillness
- Share Experiences

(from Brown and Seaman  
*National Society Project*)

# Spiritual Traditions

- **Christianity** the transformation of the world through love
- **Judaism** the spirituality of the mundane and normal
- **Islam** the extinction of the self in God
- **Hinduism** the discovery of self
- **Buddhism** the liberation of ethical dispositions

# MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Values
- Motivation
- Decisions
- Right and Wrong
- Responsibilities
- Consistency

A mixture of example, habituation and conscious choice? (Eaude 2006)

# Implications

- What is a moral community?
- How is moral development different from managing behaviour?
- A positive basis of virtues and qualities

(Eaude 2006)

# SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

- Relationships
- Rules
- Consideration
- Consequences



# CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Diversity
- Awareness
- Understanding
- Expression

# And Finally! Or perhaps not!

- **Relationships and atmosphere** within the classroom are crucial
- Question, silence and wonder (Bentley)
- **“The teacher, the teaching and learning and the taught are all grounded in mystery”**

(Webster from Copley

*Spiritual Development in the State School*)

# YOU the TEACHER

- “It ought to be self evident that when adults are working with children they are primarily communicating a way of being human. Teachers are not there primarily to process information or train in thinking skills”  
Hay 2006

# Developing the Whole Child

- And, when an increasing number of young teachers are leaving the profession because it was not “what they expected”
- “the most startling truth of all might be that there is a direct link between the spiritual and teacher retention”

Bill Gent *Spiritual Development and School Life:  
Finding the Words Resource Spring 2002*

# Further Reading

- Eade T. (2006) *Achieving QTS Children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development* Exeter, Learning Matters
- Browne A. Haylock D. (2004) *Professional Issues for Primary Teachers* London, Sage Chapter 15 Vanlint and Watson