



**2020 October
Symposium
Member
Background info**

Member Symposium
Zoom session 2-5pm, 22nd October

- **Name of your organization:**
Dr Tony Eaude
(trades as New Perspectives...)
Email:
tony@edperspectives.org.uk
- **Your mission:**
My particular interest is in encouraging young children's holistic education, especially in terms of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Projects

I was previously a primary school teacher and deputy head and then the headteacher of a multi-cultural primary school in Oxford for nine years (1989-1998). I then completed a doctorate looking at how teachers of young children understand spiritual development. Since 2003, I have worked as an independent researcher, consultant and author.

Details of my work can be seen on www.edperspectives.org.uk

I have written extensively about areas related to young children's education. This has covered topics such as SMSC, values, pedagogy, expertise, moral education, developing primary classteacher expertise and most recently identity, culture and belonging. The next page list some of my publications, especially those relevant to spirituality. These are research-based and academic but written clearly and accessibly (I hope).

On the fourth slide, rather than list projects in which I have been involved, I have highlighted what I regard as some key messages about children's spiritual development.

Main publications related to children's spirituality and associated areas

2006: Children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development - Primary and Early Years Learning Matters: Exeter (now 2nd edition)

2009: Creativity and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development chapter in Creativity in Primary Education Learning Matters: Exeter (2nd edition)

2009: Happiness, emotional well-being and mental health - what has children's spirituality to offer? International Journal of Children's Spirituality, volume 14, no. 3

2011: Spiritual and moral development chapter in Debates in Religious Education Routledge: London

2014: Creating hospitable space to nurture children's spirituality -possibilities and dilemmas associated with power International Journal of Children's Spirituality, volume 19 (3 /4)

2016: New Perspectives on Young Children's Moral Education: Developing Character through a Virtue Ethics Approach Bloomsbury: London

2018: Addressing the needs of the whole child - implications for young children and adults who care for them pp. 61-69 in **The International Handbook in Holistic Education** Routledge: Abingdon

2019: Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development pp. 47-59 in **A Broad and Balanced Curriculum in Primary Schools – Educating the Whole Child** Learning Matters/SAGE: London

2020: Identity, Culture and Belonging: Educating Young Children for a Changing World Bloomsbury Academic: London



Some key messages about children's spirituality

It is important to see children's spiritual development as a process, rather than spirituality as a thing.

Spiritual development involves exploring questions related to identity, meaning and purpose (eg who am I? where do I belong? why are we here?)

Such questions do not have definite answers and can be explored within or outside a religious framework.

These questions involve difficult and painful issues as well as joyful and life-enhancing ones. Adults must enable children to think about these if they wish, rather than avoiding them.

Children should be seen holistically, with elements such as spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, mental and physically all intertwined and affecting each other, rather than seeing these as separate.

Children seem to have access to aspects of, and insights into, the questions associated with spiritual development which adults find much harder to access, maybe because of issues of status and power.

Experiences which enhance children's spiritual development often take place in quite ordinary situations, as well as those which are extra-ordinary.

Spiritual development does not just involve looking inward but adults need to take account of external cultural factors such as gender, race/ethnicity and class – and the influence of the media and technology and the messages which they convey.

Adults must recognise the importance of relationships and inclusive, hospitable environments which provide the time, space and (sensitive) guidance to explore such questions and enable children to do so in various ways eg through play, the arts and the humanities, encouraging qualities such as curiosity, creativity and imagination.