

PICKHURST ACADEMY



POLICY FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION & COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Date: February 2026

Date Reviewed: February 2026

Pickhurst Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. *Please also refer to the Safeguarding Policy.*

Introduction

Pickhurst Academy is made up of staff and pupils who originate from a variety of nationalities, cultures and faith groups. As a school we aim to celebrate this diversity and offer a welcoming and inclusive environment for all our pupils, including new arrivals and non-native English speakers.

We believe that Religious Education provides an opportunity to celebrate and foster awareness of these differences within our school the community and the wider world. It is a subject that celebrates diversity and challenges stereotypes.

RE is taught in accordance with the aims of the Bromley Agreed Syllabus. Particularly relevant to our school are the aims which state:

'To help students to develop spiritually, academically, emotionally and morally in a way that enables them to understand and value themselves and others and to better cope with the challenges of living in a rapidly changing, multicultural world.'

'To enable pupils to develop the academic skills and specialist vocabulary to learn about the beliefs, values and ways of life of others and to reflect upon their own through enquiry.'

RE provides opportunities for children to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of religions
- explore issues within and between, faiths to help children respect different religions and traditions
- learn about religious and ethical teaching
- develop their sense of identity and belonging
- prepare them for their life as citizens
- reflect on, and analyse their own beliefs, values and practices
- help children learn *about* religion and to *learn* from religion

Legal Requirements

The 1988 Education Reform Act states that 'Every maintained school is required by law to provide a basic curriculum, which is 'broad and balanced', consisting of: a) religious education and b) the National Curriculum. The curriculum provided must 'promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental, and physical development of pupils' and 'prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life'.

In accordance with the law, we provide religious education for all pupils registered at the school. The teaching of RE comprises 5% of annual curriculum time, which broadly equates to 45 hours at Key Stage 2. Our curriculum timetables have been adapted to co-ordinate this, in addition to the input from collective worship, as required by the Agreed Syllabus.

Parents are informed in the school prospectus that they have the right to withdraw their pupils from Religious Education. Parents who choose to withdraw their children from Religious Education lessons are required to state this in writing annually to the Head teacher.

We believe that it is the responsibility of the parents who have chosen to withdraw their children from school RE to provide acceptable alternative religious education work for their children to do during RE lessons. We expect that this work will be discussed with the class teacher so that these children can be fully included, and their alternative work linked to what the rest of the class is learning.

The Scheme of Work

The scheme of work for Religious Education covers all the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. RE is taught from Year 3 to Year 6 in termly and half-termly units around Big Questions concerning issues and concepts which relate to themselves and the local community.

Big Questions:

- **Year 3:** What makes a building sacred? Can anywhere be sacred? What happens if we do wrong?
- **Year 4:** How do we know what is right or wrong? Why does there have to be good and bad in the world? Is there evidence of God?
- **Year 5:** Who is to blame if we do wrong? Is commitment the same as sacrifice? Why do Christians worship in different ways?
- **Year 6:** Why do we need suffering in the world? Why don't we all get on?

We also promote the fundamental British Values of Democracy, the Rule of Law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Teaching and Learning

The teaching of Religious Education at Pickhurst Academy adopts a combination of methods. We believe that Religious Education should be an active enquiry process, with well-informed and balanced discussions where students use a variety of approaches to interpret, analyse, apply and evaluate what they understand about other religions and worldviews. Through enquiry, pupils build their knowledge and understanding of other religions and worldviews and consider and reflect meaningfully on what they have learnt in order to create an informed view of their own. Developing familiarity with key subject knowledge and specialist vocabulary and making connections to prior learning will ensure new knowledge is committed into pupils' long-term memory.

Learning is planned around the Big Questions that relate to Thinking, Believing and Living. Enquiry should encourage pupils to specify what beliefs, practices and values are and suggest why these beliefs and values are held or expressed in a certain ways. Pupils should also consider how these beliefs and values might be interconnected and impact on people's lives.

We endeavour to draw on the varied experiences and backgrounds of our pupils and staff in order to make RE relevant and interesting to our pupils. This is through our links with local religious communities and places of worship. Children will have the opportunity to go on at least one visit per year, listen to visiting speakers and use a range of resources including RE books, videos and artefacts. Children are encouraged to use both the school library for research purposes and ICT skills where appropriate.

Children will work on activities which continue to build on knowledge and skills gained in Key Stage 1 in order to assimilate more complex information and work towards a more mature understanding of religion. In this way, they will be able to explore, consider and respond to the world around them. They will be encouraged to question, discuss and reflect on what may be learned from religion in the light of their own experiences. The class teacher will ensure that, where appropriate, activities are suited to the age and ability of the child.

Pickhurst Academy recognises that Religious Education is a sensitive issue and endeavours to value and respect the spiritual beliefs, values and opinions of all children to provide a secure learning environment in which to do this.

Religious Education promotes pupils' understanding of the multicultural and multifaith society that we live in today by enabling them to explore uses of belief and issues between faiths. Having learned about different faiths and beliefs, pupils are then encouraged to understand how we can interact with each other and explore inter faith issues of contemporary society.

Inclusion and differentiation for children with SEN and EAL are taken into account within planning and teaching. The planning and teaching of Religious Education embodies an open and objective approach to the subject which ensures the academic development of pupils regardless of ability, ethnicity, gender, culture, religious or non-religious beliefs. Within the teaching of RE, we enable children to develop sensitivity to relevant issues such as refugees and religious fasting, and engender positive attitudes towards themselves and others.

Through RE, children have the opportunity to develop key skills of thinking, researching, evaluating, reflecting and empathising. Wherever possible, links are made between Religious Education and other curriculum subjects. We encourage a creative curriculum; learning RE can be through stories, drama, ICT, visitors and visits.

Cultural Capital (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)

Religious Education is a key opportunity for children to develop morally, spiritually, socially and culturally. In RE lessons, as well as our Collective Worship programme, children are invited to reflect on their personal responses to issues, consider other people's responses, and appreciate that for some people belief in a spiritual dimension is important.

We encourage children to consider the answers offered by faith groups to questions of meaning and purpose and problems within society and their own experience.

Religious Education also strongly supports the school's citizenship programme by introducing pupils to the significance of belonging to a community, the diversity of communities in the wider communities, faith rules and their application to moral and ethical issues and cultural influences on religious practice.

Recording, Marking, Assessment and Reporting

Subject planning and evaluation for work in RE is incorporated into planning and evaluation for year groups – each week, half term or term.

Pickhurst Academy follow the schools marking policy. The Religious Education Skills Spectrum, which focuses on believing, thinking and living, is used to assess the children's learning and improve pupils' responses in their Religious Education work.

Evaluation is carried out by all staff including a regular review of the curriculum, pupils' progress and achievement.

Collective worship

Assemblies provide a quiet time for reflection and develop links with local Churches and charities for the school community. It enhances pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through an inclusive activity which promotes a common ethos and shared values. Children are encouraged to explore their own beliefs and those of others. Collective worship reflects the broad traditions of different faiths.

Children may be withdrawn from collective worship at their parents' request. They will use the time to either work through religious materials produced by their parents or to work on aspects of their general school work.

Quality Assurance

Policy and practice will be evaluated and monitored by the RE subject leader. The subject leader will monitor:

- The quality of teaching and learning.
- Planning at all levels
- How assessments are being used
- Individual/ group/ class and year group progress

The subject leader will use a range of evidence including collecting samples of planning and children's work and use the information to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

Management

The teaching, assessing and resourcing of Religious Education is managed by the RE curriculum leader in collaboration with staff and the Senior Leadership Team. The curriculum leader attends regular training and professional development, and organises INSET and training for other members of staff when necessary. The scheme of work is evaluated annually. Resources are bought when needed and are stored in the RE resource cupboard for use by all staff.