

Religious Education

Pickwick Academy Trust



Religious Education POLICY Pitton CE Primary School

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‘Life it all its fullness.’

John 10 v10



Compassion



Respect



Truthfulness

We are a small C of E primary school working closely with other schools as part of The Pickwick Academy Trust. Our vision is set to bring to all areas of our lives and is rooted in the teaching of The Bible and yet fully accessible and inclusive. It is a catalyst for action, through it we live life to the full, with Jesus as our guide. Our Christian values of **compassion, respect and truthfulness** have been specifically identified by pupils, staff and governors to enrich our school values of **family, friendship and fulfilment** which are all lived out in policy and practice to enable pupils and adults to make the best of every opportunity that is given to us.

‘**Life in all its fullness**’ means that we are following the path of God and he is helping us along the way to greatness. ‘**Life in all its fullness**’ means to appreciate all that life offers us and to live a life knowing that we all strive to reach our potential. We live this through **compassion, respect and truthfulness**, which are the core values that strengthen our school values of **family, friendship and fulfilment**. Our Christian values deepen our school values and we express them by saying that we show respect in our families, compassion in our friendships and truthfulness that leads to fulfilment so that we can live life in all its fullness.

Our Mission:

Pitton Primary School recognises its historic foundation and strived to develop its religious characters in accordance with the principles of the church at parish and diocesan level. We aim to serve the community by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We encourage an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promote Christian values through the experience we offer all our pupils.

Our **School Mission Statement**, written by our children:

“Pitton School is a friendly place where we always feel happy and safe.”

Religious Education is unique in the school curriculum in that it is neither a core subject nor a foundation subject. The 1988 Education Act states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils.

Pitton is a Church of England Voluntary Aided School, therefore the provision of RE is in accordance with the Trust Deed of the School. Our MAT (Pickwick Academy Trust) advised and we use The Emmanuel Project as a scheme of work for RE.

The Emmanuel Project aims:

- **To develop religious literacy:** Helps children acquire a rich and deep understanding of Christianity and other worldviews.
- **To promote critical thinking:** Encourages students to engage with challenging questions about meaning and purpose.
- **To explore multiple faiths:** Covers units on Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu Dharma, Humanism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism.
- **To use an inquiry approach:** The curriculum uses "big questions" to explore key religious concepts, texts, community practices, and the lives of believers.
- **To provide resources for teachers:** Offers high-quality materials and training to support both specialist and non-specialist teachers in delivering RE lessons.

We also follow the **Curious City** Curriculum, that asks children to ‘be’ rather than ‘do’ a certain subject. For example, in RE and Collective Worship, we are being philosophers. What this means is that we try to make sense of the world by asking lots of questions. We also use ‘why’ questions and seek answers to difficult ideas like emotions, thoughts and ideas.

Aims for our Religious Education teaching

The principal aim of Religious Education at Pitton is to engage pupils in enquiring into key questions arising from the study of religion and belief, so as to promote their personal and spiritual development. In line with this, our teaching of Religious Education will:

- provoke challenging questions about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human
- develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, and religious traditions that examine these questions, fostering personal reflection and spiritual development

- encourage pupils to explore their own beliefs (whether they are religious or non-religious), in the light of what they learn, as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics; and to express their responses. This will also build resilience to anti-democratic or extremist narratives
- enable pupils to build their sense of identity and belonging, which will help them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- teach pupils to develop respect for others, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and help to challenge prejudice
- prompt pupils to consider their responsibilities to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society. It will encourage empathy, generosity and compassion.
- develop a sense of awe, wonder and mystery amongst pupils.

In Religious Education at Pitton School, we aim in particular for pupils to:

- develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity: the life and teachings of Jesus and how these are reflected in the beliefs and practices of the church, including festivals, celebrations and the cycle of the church's year.
- become familiar with the contents and organisation of the Bible, as well as key events, teachings and stories contained within it
- explore the influence and impact of Christianity on our local community and on our society today
- explore the expression of Christianity within the local Clarendon team of churches, the cathedral city and diocese of Salisbury and the worldwide Anglican communion
- explore questions of meaning which are common to Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism and consider how these religions have responded to them
- compare some of the beliefs, teachings, scriptures, symbols and worship of these religions and how these shape the lives of believers
- think and talk about their own beliefs and values in the light of the beliefs of others, both religious and non-religious, and the values of the school community.
- develop skills and attitudes which will support their personal, moral, social and cultural development.

The contribution of Religious Education to other curriculum aims and to citizenship

Section 78 (1) of the 2002 Education Act states that all pupils should follow a balanced and broadly based curriculum which 'promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, social, mental and physical development of pupils and of society, and prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life'. Learning about and from religions and beliefs, through the distinct knowledge, understanding and skills contained in Religious Education within a broad-based curriculum, is essential to achieving these aims. Exploring the concepts

of religion and belief and their roles in the spiritual, moral and cultural lives of people in a diverse society helps individuals develop moral awareness and social understanding.

RE plays an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It helps children and young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. It gives them the knowledge, skills and understanding to discern and value truth and goodness, strengthening their capacity for making moral judgements and for evaluating different types of commitment to make positive and healthy choices.

RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs, locally, nationally and globally. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

Pupil Entitlement

How RE is organised in our school.

In accordance with the structure of the Emmanuel Project scheme we have agreed that we will teach RE as a discrete subject. The RE Subject Lead, is responsible for updating the long-term planning, storing resources and information on the school server and in the allocated RE storage area. The RE Subject Lead is responsible for distributing useful information and delivering or arranging appropriate Inset to staff and governors.

At KS 1 pupils study units on Christianity and Judaism. The children learn about other religions through 'encounters'.

At KS 2 pupils study units on Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism and Humanism.

Assessment and Recording of RE in our school.

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording. It is expected that each teacher will be responsible for the regular assessment through marking work set and contributions to discussions/questions through AfL. The level achieved is used by the coordinator to track pupil progress through the school and is used by the class teacher to ensure that each pupil is set work that is appropriately challenging.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE and how RE contributes to School Self Evaluation in our school.

The subject lead monitors RE within the school through analysis of this assessment data and through a schedule of lesson observations and work scrutiny. This monitoring is fed back to staff in order to develop RE and raise standards. There are a number of areas of our SIAMS Self Evaluation Form that are related to RE and that the subject impacts on. This is reviewed termly by SLT.

Pupils will be taught RE for between 5% and 7% of the total curriculum time. This means in practice that we will allocate the following:

Early Years Foundation Stage: at least 36 hours per year, both teacher-led and child-led activities.

Key Stage 1: at least 36 hours per year (the equivalent of one hour per week)

Key Stage 2: at least 45 hours per year (the equivalent of one hour and fifteen minutes per week).

Approaches to the teaching of RE

At Pitton School, Religious Education is usually taught as a discrete subject in weekly lessons, but there is scope for flexibility within this; for example, it may take the form of an RE afternoon, an RE day or take a cross-curricular approach. Religious Education is taught by class teachers and the Headteacher, or by qualified supply teachers where necessary.

In order to make Religious Education a lively, active subject we employ a variety of teaching methods including art, music, discussion, the development of thinking skills, drama, the use of artefacts, pictures and stories. For periods of reflection and to help promote spirituality, we link Religious Education to our *Values for Life* themes wherever we can; these are displayed in the school foyer and the school hall.

Where possible, we also want our pupils to have opportunities to encounter local faith communities through visits to local places of worship or visit from members of local faith communities.

The right of withdrawal from RE

At Pitton School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents, of course, have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns or anxieties about the policy, provision and practice of religious education at Pitton School.

Managing the right of withdrawal.

The school will ensure that parents who want to withdraw their children from RE are aware of the RE syllabus and that it is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs.

Parents should be made aware of its learning objectives and what is covered in the RE curriculum and should be given the opportunity to discuss this, if they wish. The school may also wish to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents. The use of the right to withdraw should be at the instigation of parents (or pupils themselves if they are aged 18 or over), and it should be made clear whether it is from the whole of the subject or specific parts of it. No reasons need be given.

Parents have the right to choose whether or not to withdraw their child from RE without influence from the school, although a school should ensure that parents or carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the RE syllabus. In this way, parents can make an informed decision.

Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right must be respected, and where RE is integrated in the curriculum, the school will need to discuss the arrangements with the parents or carers to explore how the child's withdrawal can be best accommodated.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.

Where a pupil has been withdrawn, the law provides for alternative arrangements to be made for RE of the kind the parent wants the pupil to receive. This RE could be provided at the school in question, or the pupil could be sent to another school where suitable RE is provided if this is reasonably convenient.

If neither approach is practicable, outside arrangements can be made to provide the pupil with the kind of RE that the parent wants, and the pupil may be withdrawn from school for a reasonable period of time to allow them to attend this external RE.

Outside arrangements for RE are allowed as long as the LA is satisfied that any interference with the pupil's attendance at school resulting from the withdrawal will affect only the start or end of a school session.