

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Statement of Intent

At KS4 RS is offered as an option at GCSE with students following the AQA A 1-9 paper. This program of study focuses on both Christian and Muslim beliefs and ethical themes such as crime, conflict, relationships and environmental issues. The subject lends itself to discussion and debate around controversial topics and allows students to develop a deeper understanding of the wider context of society.

The aim is to develop students' knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, (such as atheism and humanism), and to develop their knowledge and understanding of teachings and sources of wisdom and authority through the reading of key religious texts and scriptures. They should also develop their ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject. This should enable them to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes to contribute to their preparation for adult life in a diverse, multi-faith society and global community.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The students will complete the AQA Specification A 1-9 Religious Studies qualification, which is broken down into 2 assessments of 1 hour 45 minutes long. Component 1 is focused on the religious practices and beliefs of both Christianity and Islam (50% of total marks). Component 2 is broken down into four ethical themes; families & relationships, crime & punishment, peace & conflict, religion & life (50% of total marks).

Religious Education Lessons

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their child from RE. This right to withdraw includes a whole or partial removal from the following:

- Receiving religious education (RE) given in the school in accordance with the school's basic curriculum
- Attendance at religious worship in the school (note: sixth-form pupils can choose for themselves to opt out of religious worship)

The right to do so is set out in section 71(1) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

We would encourage all parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of the RE syllabus and its relevance to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs before making any request.

We would also ask that you discuss any consideration to withdraw with colleagues at school before making a formal request, to ensure that you are making a fully informed decision.

Please note that when withdrawing students from RE, you will not be required to provide a reason we just ask that you do from an informed position.

Trips to places of worship

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their child from any trip that is part of the RE curriculum.

Prior to requesting a student's removal, we would ask that you contact the school so that we can:

- Explain what will happen on the trip, and how it links to the pupil's learning
- Explain any adverse effects on the pupil of not attending the trip, e.g. not getting the opportunity to visit a new place they might not experience otherwise
- Outline how the trip may foster good relations between individuals from different cultures and backgrounds, and explain how the trip fits into the curriculum scheme of work as is in keeping with the Equality Act 2010.

Extended Learning

What we offer to extend the learning of our students

GCSE RS students are involved in promoting key religious dates across the school through assemblies, festivals and other initiatives. Ethical themes are linked to our extra-curricular offerings of an LGBTIA+ club with support available should they wish for other social action groups to be set up. There are also many school activities in line with the theme of community which comes through in the topic, for example our whole school food donation drive, charities attached to each House and other fundraising activities. We may also have opportunities to visit places of worship and to invite faith leaders in for talks and discussions.

What can parents do to support extended learning in this subject

To support the subject a parent could check their child's spelling of new religious terms as students will achieve extra marks in their exam for correct SPAG. It would also be useful to discuss religious and ethical questions e.g., meaning of atheism and agnosticism, whether religion causes peace or conflict, misconceptions around religion and radicalisation. Parents could encourage students to follow BBC News, news websites and watch documentaries related to religious & ethical themes e.g., Louis Theroux on Scientology. It would be particularly supportive if children could be taken to visit religious places of worship – temples, mosques, churches, or visit the religion section of the V&A museum.