

## Religious Education

The study of Religious Education is taught across all key stages. Students are taught for one hour each week at KS3 and more frequently at KS4 and KS5. Our students find the subject fascinating because it provides opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs and traditions. Students learn how religion influences communities and society as well as the implications that religious beliefs has on human behaviour. They consider questions of meaning and purpose in life and they also learn about religious and ethical teachings, enabling them to make reasoned and informed judgments on religious and moral issues. Religious Studies does not seek to urge religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another. We encourage students to explore and express their own spiritual, moral or ethical attitudes, values and beliefs throughout their studies.

**Our Aim:** For students to develop a sense of identity and belonging, preparing them for life as citizens in a plural society. We want students to develop an enquiring mind and to be able to articulate their skills through the use of distinctive language. We want students to be able to demonstrate good listening skills, and be able to empathise with others. The R E department will work with students to inspire, support and challenge the individual, enabling them to achieve their full potential and excel at their particular talents.

### Topics covered at Key Stage 3

Year 7 students study three units; Introduction to RE, the Life of Jesus and Judaism and freedom. **Introduction to Religious Education** introduces students to the six world religions and the arguments for the existence of God.

**The life of Jesus** allows students to know the key events and teachings in the life of Jesus and the different views on the truth of Jesus. Finally, **Judaism and Freedom** allows students to learn the key beliefs in Judaism and explore the importance of traditions and freedom and how they are valued in British society.

Year 8 students study Hinduism and Life after Death, Sikhism and Equality and Buddhism and Suffering. **Hinduism and Life after Death** allows students to explore the concept of 'karma' and discuss what they think happens after death. **Sikhism and Equality** enables students to understand the main beliefs in Sikhism and consider the role of women within religion. Students also investigate religious attitudes to discrimination and the lives of inspirational leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. Finally **Buddhism** allows students to explore Buddhist views on suffering and why it is one of the fastest growing religions in the West.

Year 9 students study Philosophy and Ethics, An Introduction to Islam and Religion in the Modern World. **Philosophy and Ethics**, students learn how 'ways of thinking' have developed over time and the teachings of key philosophers. They will also explore different approaches to moral issues and dilemmas. **An Introduction to Islam** introduces students to the founding principles of Islam and prepares students for the start of their Edexcel GCSE course. **Religion in the Modern World** allows students to discuss the role of religion today and look at contemporary issues facing religious believers.

**Topics covered at Key Stage 4**

All students are offered a full Edexcel GCSE in Religious Studies taking two exams in Year 11. The first GCSE paper is 'Religion and Life' and explores non-religious as well as Christian and Islamic attitudes to Believing in God, Matters of Life and Death, Marriage and the Family and Community Cohesion. In Year 11 students then study 'Religion and Society' again investigating religious and non-religious beliefs and arguments to Rights and Responsibilities, Environmental and Medical Issues, Peace and Conflict, and Crime and Punishment.

Two parts of an exam question (B & D) are opinion based and students enjoy debating activities and discussions in order to develop and articulate reasons for their opinions or explain why someone may disagree with them. Parents and carers may also wish to discuss their own views on these sometimes controversial issues that also arise periodically in the media such as euthanasia to support their child through their studies.

**Topics covered at Key Stage 5 (AS and A2)**

The Religious Studies department teaches Edexcel Philosophy and Ethics at RR6 for AS and A2 students, which is deemed as a valuable subject for the top universities. Philosophy of religion comprises of philosophical arguments about the existence of God and selected problems in the philosophy of religion. Ethics comprises of a study of ethical concepts and dilemmas.