

KS4 GCSE Religious Studies

Course Specifications

Exam board: AQA

Course type: GCSE

Course Description

GCSE RS at Alperton achieves significantly above national average; you will be taught by subject specialists.

The GCSE RS Specification will consist of two exams at the end of Year 11. The first will involve a detailed study of the beliefs and practices of two major world religions, their sacred texts, worship, festivals and authority figures. The second paper will examine key topics in the modern world such as Poverty, Families and War, and will draw upon a range of teachings from all the major religious traditions in the twenty first century, as well as the ideas of atheists and non-believers.

GCSE, RS is a formal academic subject that will lead naturally to any academic subject at Advanced Level, most obviously Philosophy and Ethics but also those such as History that involve the expression of ideas and arguments.

Skills & Abilities

This course is great for followers of all religions and none! Students already studying their own faith out of school will be able to use that learning in school RS, but it is not essential. What is essential is the ability to think carefully about your own ideas and beliefs. You will need to listen to and respect the ideas of others and be able to explain the ideas of people who disagree with you. You will develop the skills to write formal academic text to answer written questions with maturity and style. An interest in current affairs and the news will be a big help as will a willingness to be open and debate.

Assessment

The course is examined by two written exams, each of 1 hour 45 minutes.

Careers & Progression

GCSE, RS is a formal academic subject that will lead naturally to any academic subject at Advanced Level, most obviously Philosophy and Ethics but also those such as History that involve the expression of ideas and arguments. A qualification in RS is well-regarded as a preparation for careers in areas as diverse as politics, journalism, Law, Medicine and the caring professions.

Guidance & Advice

BBC Bitesize contains a wealth of information. RE Quest is a great website with many virtual visits and articles by believers describing all aspects of religious practice. Smart phone users should download the free RE Definitions app to learn key terms for all topics. The 'Bible Gateway' site is an invaluable resource offering the ability to search the Bible by theme for quotes to use in long answers. For GCSE RS it is useful to visit places of worship, especially to experience the different denominations within the Christian tradition. Students should keep up to date with issues such as medical ethics around fertility and end of life issues, as well as environmental action and the criminal justice system. Watching and discussing TV news is a great help in preparing written arguments; reading a quality daily newspaper is even better.