



# Religious Studies

## Curriculum Intent

### Key Stage 3

We want to develop students who are curious but respectful of others beliefs and values. We want them to enjoy thinking deeply about challenging concepts and important questions about life and the world around us.

Students are introduced to world religions and non-religious world views including beliefs and practices. Throughout KS3, three broad areas of religion, philosophy and ethics are the lenses through which lessons are examined. We have considered the demographic of the school and developed a curriculum that reflects and supports this.

They will have opportunities to explore questions of meaning, identity and purpose. Students learn how to respond with developed explanations which draw on firm knowledge of religious and non-religious views but also challenge and extend their own perspectives.

In Year 7 students are introduced to philosophical questions, an overview of key themes in the Bible and a study of Christianity, the main religious tradition in Great Britain. In Year 8 students develop their philosophical skills while also studying two religions in more depth. Year 9 students consider ethical approaches to decision making and continue to develop their knowledge of world religions and philosophical ideas.

### Key Stage 4

Students studying the GCSE course will develop knowledge and understanding of 2 specific religions: Islam and Christianity. They cover religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including a study of key religious texts. Students also develop the ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject.

### Key Stage 5

Students will undertake an in-depth study of two core areas: philosophy of religion and ethics; and a study of religion (Christianity). Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the meaning and significance of religious and non-religious beliefs. They will consider the influence of these beliefs and teachings on individuals,

communities and societies, the cause and significance of similarities and differences in beliefs and teachings and examine the approach of philosophy to the study of religion and belief. Students will be able to analyse and evaluate issues arising from the topics, the views and arguments of scholars such as Aquinas, Aristotle, Hume and Paley. They will also be able to use specialist language and terminology appropriately.

# Curriculum Implementation

## Key Stage 3

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is Truth?</li> <li>• The Big Story</li> <li>• What does it mean to be human?</li> <li>• Christianity</li> <li>• Religion and Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinduism</li> <li>• What is Knowledge?</li> <li>• Buddhism</li> <li>• Arguments for the existence of God</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Right and Wrong - ethical theories</li> <li>• Sikhi</li> <li>• Problem of Evil and Suffering</li> <li>• Spirited Arts</li> </ul>

## Key Stage 4: GCSE (AQA)

Year 10	Year 11
<p><b>AQA Religious Studies A: Islam and Christianity</b></p> <p><b>Muslim beliefs and teachings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oneness of God</li> <li>• Sunni and Shi'a Islam</li> <li>• Nature of God</li> <li>• Angels</li> <li>• Prophethood</li> <li>• Ibrahim</li> <li>• Muhammad</li> <li>• Holy books</li> </ul> <p><b>Muslim Practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Five Pillars, the Ten Obligatory Acts</li> <li>• Salah</li> <li>• Sawm</li> <li>• Zakah</li> <li>• Hajj</li> <li>• Jihad</li> <li>• Festivals</li> </ul> <p><b>Christian beliefs and teachings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nature of God</li> </ul>	<p><b>AQA Religious Studies A: Themes</b></p> <p><i>Students need to study 4 Themes. Classes are given a choice from the 6 below.</i></p> <p><b>Themes: Religion, human rights and social justice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Justice and rights</li> <li>• Prejudice and discrimination</li> <li>• Religious freedom</li> <li>• Wealth</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Exploitation of the poor</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes: Religion and life:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Origins of life</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Abortion</li> <li>• Euthanasia</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes: Religion, crime and punishment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime and punishment</li> <li>• Aims of punishment</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Beliefs about creation</li> <li>● The incarnation</li> <li>● The crucifixion, resurrection and ascension</li> <li>● The afterlife and judgement</li> </ul> <p><b>Christian practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Worship</li> <li>● Prayer</li> <li>● Sacraments</li> <li>● Festivals</li> <li>● Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Suffering</li> <li>● Forgiveness</li> <li>● Death penalty</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes: Religion, relationships and families:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Human sexuality</li> <li>● Sexual relationships outside of marriage</li> <li>● Contraception and family planning</li> <li>● Marriage, divorce and remarriage</li> <li>● Nature and purpose of families</li> <li>● Gender equality</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes: The existence of God and revelation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Arguments for God's existence</li> <li>● Arguments against God's existence</li> <li>● Special revelation and enlightenment</li> <li>● General revelation</li> <li>● Ideas about the divine</li> </ul> <p><b>Themes: Religion, peace and conflict:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Violent protest and terrorism</li> <li>● Reasons for war</li> <li>● Nuclear war and weapons of mass destruction</li> <li>● Just war</li> <li>● Holy war and religion as a cause of violence</li> <li>● Pacifism and peace-making</li> <li>● Religious responses to victims of war</li> </ul>
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## Key Stage 5: A Level (AQA)

Year 12	Year 13
<p><i>AQA Religious Studies - Philosophy of religion and ethics &amp; a study of Christianity</i></p> <p><b>Philosophy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Arguments for God (Design, Ontological, Cosmological)</li> <li>● Evil and Suffering</li> <li>● Religious Experience</li> </ul> <p><b>Ethics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Normative ethical theories</li> <li>● Situation Ethics</li> <li>● Virtue Ethics</li> <li>● Natural Moral Law</li> </ul>	<p><i>AQA Religious Studies - Philosophy of religion and ethics, a study of Christianity &amp; Dialogues</i></p> <p><b>Philosophy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Religious language</li> <li>● Miracles</li> <li>● Self, death and afterlife</li> </ul> <p><b>Ethics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction to meta-ethics</li> <li>● Free will and moral responsibility</li> <li>● Conscience</li> <li>● Bentham and Kant</li> </ul>

- Application of ethical theories

#### Christianity:

- Sources of wisdom and authority
- God
- Self, death and afterlife
- Good conduct and key moral principles
- Expressions of religious identity

#### Christianity:

- Christianity, gender and sexuality
- Christianity and Science
- Christianity and the challenge of secularisation
- Christianity, migration and religious pluralism

#### Dialogues

This looks at how religion is influenced by, and has an influence on Philosophy of Religion and Ethical studies in relation to the issues studied across the rest of the course.

## Impact

### Key Stage 3

We have designed our curriculum to ensure that every student has the opportunity to make outstanding progress in Religious Studies. We strive for every pupil who studies Religious Studies to have developed skills of analysis and evaluation, as well come to gain a greater understanding of the world around them. Our discussions in religion, philosophy and ethics provides a holistic development and encourages our students to better understand and interact with the world around them, as well as giving them the academic confidence to succeed.

Students will be able to use religious and philosophical language and concepts to explain religions, beliefs, practices and values, including differences within religions and similarities shared across religions and non-religious worldviews.

They will be able to explain and interpret different forms of religious and spiritual expression.

Our students will be able to explain different interpretations of religious and non-religious beliefs and research different perspectives on issues and ideas.

They will consider different responses to and insights about questions of identity, meaning, purpose and value found in Christianity and other faith and non-religious worldviews, arguing their own views in the light of this.

They will be able to explain some challenges of living in a multi-faith and belief society and the impact of commitment on the lives of individuals and communities.

By the end of Key Stage 3 pupils will be familiar with the origins and history of Christianity as well as some of the other major world religions. Pupils will be able to describe a range of religious concepts including the practices of prayer and worship. Pupils will understand the significance of religious rules such as The Ten Commandments and their lasting importance in contemporary society. Pupils will develop confidence in becoming courageous advocates, challenging injustice and suffering in the world and through personal experience, foster empathy and tolerance within a diverse world.

### Key Stage 4

By the end of Key Stage 4 GCSE students will demonstrate a deeper understanding of Christian and Islamic beliefs, teachings and practices and how these can differ depending on denomination. Students will be able to identify places of religious significance around the world and the importance of those historically and as places of pilgrimage. They will confidently articulate

justified opinions on ethical issues, giving religious, non-religious and personal views. Students will be able to explain in detail how religious teachings in both Christianity and Islam can be applied to contemporary moral issues such as euthanasia, abortion, abuse of the world and the use of capital punishment. They will know how religious organisations challenge the global problems of injustice and poverty and link religious teachings to these issues. Students will be able to confidently articulate justified opinions on issues giving personal, religious and non-religious views.

All KS4 students will use a wide range of language, ideas, approaches and methods to analyse and demonstrate a broad understanding of religions and beliefs and their significance in modern society. Students will be able to pull together evidence and insights from religion and other disciplines to explore what it means to be human.

They will explain how different interpretations of religious and non-religious views may be brought together to share insights about meaning, purpose and values.

Students will relate a wide range of perspectives from religions and non-religious worldviews to contemporary social and moral issues, demonstrating understanding of the diversity of views within and between them.

They will be able to arrive at independent conclusions based on research into & evidence about religion and belief and their impact, positive & negative, on communities & society.

## **Key Stage 5**

Our A Level students will be confident, analytical, philosophical thinkers. They will demonstrate an excellent understanding of the arguments for God's existence and other key philosophical arguments while also being able to articulate the challenges and criticisms.

Students will have a strong grasp of the most significant ethical theories and confidently apply them to a number of contemporary moral and social issues.

Their understanding of Christianity will be developed further still as they consider how Christianity responds to potentially contentious and controversial issues.

The final part of the A Level course allows students to consider the dialogues that have taken place between religion, philosophy and ethics and to understand that these disciplines are interwoven with and influenced by each other.

Students develop greater skills in analysis and evaluation, with an excellent ability to construct and maintain an argument in written work. Their knowledge and critical understanding will be accurate, relevant and fully developed in breadth and depth with good use of relevant evidence and examples. They will demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the diversity of views and scholarly opinion in a clear and coherent presentation of ideas with precise use of the appropriate subject vocabulary.