



## Religious Studies Curriculum

### Intent

#### Curriculum Vision

Religious Studies is an academic subject which contributes to the holistic development of students. Students gain a depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of the world religions and world views needed to fully integrate into today's multicultural society. Students learn from these religions and world views in a way that contributes to their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural capital (SMSC) development, understanding of the British Values, and Community Cohesion which prepares pupils for life in the 21st century. Students learn to understand and develop empathy for the different religious and non-religious perspectives, enabling them to form a point of view based on comprehensive understanding rather than biased or prejudiced beliefs.

Through studying Religious Studies, students will:

**Learn about religion:** developing the ability to comprehend the beliefs, teachings, and practices of the religious traditions of the world. This includes learning about the nature and demands of ultimate questions.

**Learn from religion:** what students learn about themselves – about discerning ultimate questions and religious ideas in their own experience.

**Develop religiously literacy:** the knowledge of, and ability to comprehend, religion, beliefs, practices, spiritual insights, and secular world views. It plays an important part in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain because it informs student's understanding and ability regarding religion in the 21st century.

**Develop an understanding of the disciplinary approaches:** RS is not a subject with a single clear academic lineage and therefore it is important students understand different outlooks and approaches in how to study religion. Students have the chance to embody the depth of disciplinary knowledge including their strengths and weaknesses.

#### Concepts and Skills

Concepts are the central ideas that help pupils and make sense of and interpret, the knowledge they encounter. By developing an understanding of key concepts, students' experience of Religious Studies will be little more than collecting unrelated bits of information.

The core concepts identified throughout the curriculum are:

A = Beliefs, teachings, and sources

B = Practices and ways of life

C = Expressing meaning

D = Identity, diversity, and belonging

E = Faith, Meaning, purpose and truth

F = Values and commitments

These concepts will be used as an interpretive framework for students. It enables pupils to comprehend what it means to be a member of a religion by understanding the significance for the believer and their beliefs and practices. Using concepts as an interpretive framework allows students to appreciate how the study of religion highlights key similarities and differences, which can form the basis of dialogue between religions. Pupils will be encouraged to: reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes; understand those who hold beliefs different from their own; find ways of working and living alongside those with different beliefs.

The overarching skills students develop in Religious Studies are:

- **Investigation:** asking relevant questions; knowing how to use a variety of sources to gather information; knowing what may count as good evidence in understanding religion(s).
- **Interpretation:** the ability to draw meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry, and symbolism; the ability to interpret religious language; the ability to suggest meanings of religious texts.
- **Reflection:** the ability to reflect on feelings, experience, attitudes, beliefs, values, relationships, practices, and ultimate questions.
- **Evaluation:** the ability to debate issues of religious significance concerning evidence, argument, opinion, and statements of faith; weighing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching, and individual conscience.
- **Empathy:** developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness, and sorrow; the ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and values of others; the ability to see the world through the eyes of others, and to see issues from their point of view.
- **Analysis:** distinguishing between opinion, belief, and fact; recognizing bias, caricature, prejudice, and stereotyping; distinguishing between the features of different religions.
- **Synthesis:** linking significant features of religion(s) together in a coherent pattern; connecting different aspects of life into a meaningful whole.
- **Application:** making links between religion and individual, community, national and international life; identifying key religious values and their links with secular values.
- **Expression:** the ability to articulate ideas, beliefs, and values; the ability to respond to religious ideas, beliefs, and questions through a variety of media.
- **Self-Understanding:** the ability to draw meaning from significant experiences in their own and others' lives and religious questions and answers.

## Vocabulary

### Key Stage 3

**Year 7:** Dukkha, asceticism, Enlightenment, Eightfold Path, Sangha, Wesak, , Reincarnation, Funeral rite, Karma, Moksha, Samsara, The Wheel of Life, Immortality, Old and New Testament; omnipotent; omnibenevolent; The Fall; Exile; Messiah

**Year 8:** Original Sin, Resurrection, Incarnation, Utilitarianism, Situation Ethics, Genetic Engineering, Guru Nanak, Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, The Khalsa, Kaur, Vaisakhi, The 5 k's, Kesh, Kangha, Kara, Kachera, Kirpan, Seva, Langar, Gurdwara, Guru Granth Sahib.

**Year 9:** 'Seven I am statements', Beatitudes, Pharisees, Sadducees, Liberator, Hypostatic Union, Homousious, Word, Messiah, Jewish Messiah, Prophet, Religious experience, Mecca, Medina, Jibril, Angel, Hajira, Night of Power, Battle of Badr, Miracle, Allah, Kabba, Monotheism, Polytheism, Missio dei, Blasphemy, Covenant, Haggadah, Mezuzah, Mitzvot, Orthodox Jews, Pesach, Promised Land, Reform Jews, Seder Plate, Shema, Tallit, Tefillin, 10 Commandments, Tzitzit, Monotheism, Synagogue

## **Key Stage Four**

Immanent, The Trinity, Inconsistent Triad, Resurrection, sacraments, infant baptism, believers baptism, Akhirah, Prophethood, Qur'an, Sunni, Shi'a, , 5 Roots of Usul-Ad-Din, Predestination, Caliph, Sunnah, 6 Articles of Faith, Tawhid, Imam, Imamate, Jihad, Shahadah, Salah, Sawm, Zakat, Hajj, Almsgiving, Lesser Jihad, Greater Jihad, Pilgrimage, Id-UI-Fitr, Id-UI-Adha, Persecution, Holy Communion, Eucharist.

## **Key Stage Five**

Absolute ethics, Act Utilitarianism, Apophatic Way, A Posteriori, A Priori, Aretaic Ethics, Body/Soul Distinction, Categorical Imperative, Cataphatic Way, Cognitive Language, Conscience, Darwinism, Deontological Ethics, Determinism, Disembodied Existence: Divine Command Theory, Emotivism, Ethical Naturalism, Ethics of Duty, Eudaimonia, Falsification, Free Will, Hedonic Calculus, Hermeneutics, Hypothetical Imperative, Intelligent Design, Intuitionism, Irreducible Complexity, Libertarianism, Material Cause, Materialism, Meta ethics, Natural Law, Negative Utilitarianism, Non-Cognitive Language, Normative Ethics, 'Numinous 'Experience, Prescriptivism, Principle of Utility, Subjectivism, Teleological Argument, Teleological Ethics, Summum Bonum, Symbol, Theodicy, Via Negativa, Via Positiva, Virtue Ethics

## **Homework**

All students in years 7-11 have Knowledge Organisers as part of their homework in RS. The Knowledge Organiser content is in line with the sequencing of the curriculum. Self-quizzing supports the retrieval of and embedding of knowledge in long-term memory. Our low stakes Do Now's at the beginning of each lesson tests cumulative knowledge of multiple previous topics, giving students the opportunity to strengthen memory through retrieval practice. This is supplemented by our cumulative multiple choice Knowledge Organiser test at the end of each term. Instead of revision being perceived as something which is crammed into a few weeks, our homework programme supports spaced practice throughout each academic year. By repeatedly returning to content covered, students' knowledge has had time to 'rest and be refreshed'.

Year 7 and 8 students have the opportunity to complete a number of super-curricular tasks, further embedding their understanding.

Students in year 9 also have additional homework in RS. Flip learning tasks are set and students are asked to research case studies to support learning and bring independent ideas to subsequent lessons. SENECA learning software is used as a tool for low stake retrieval to identify misconceptions and support memory retention.

Students in years 10 and 11 research a list of case studies of individuals and events to support the application of religious and ethical ideas to modern situations such as 'Gender pay gap', 'London riots' and 'Treatment of criminals.' Year 11 students are also provided with a systematic retrieval schedule that gives students the independence to revisit and consolidate their learning to achieve mastery. Homework helps our students achieve mastery in RS. Students who need extra support to achieve mastery are supported by our 10:10 programme in RS and all have access to our daily Homework Club.

# **Implementation**

## **Overview Statement**

The curriculum in RS is sequenced coherently so that concepts and skills are developed over time. Skills are introduced appropriately within the curriculum to ensure students fully achieve both attainment objectives and learn both about religion and from religion. Students develop literacy and written clarity in all key stages demonstrating the importance of academic precision. This supports students of all abilities, especially SEN students and identifying the links between beliefs and practices. Planning is informed by Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction and Cognitive Theory. Cross curricular links are explicitly referenced and exploited in order to deepen understanding. This is utilized through the use of concepts which they are identified throughout the RS curriculum and taught discretely as an interpretive framework. The core concepts are visible on curriculum maps, in classrooms, and in lessons to highlights key similarities and differences, which can form the basis of

dialogue between religions studied. Homework, daily retrieval-based 'Do Nows' and termly low stakes knowledge organisers quizzes strengthen memory as do mid-term and end-of-year assessments which are cumulative. Learning is also embedded through themed units which draws on the faiths that we have studied up to that point requiring students to retrieve subsequent learning and apply their knowledge to ethical topics.

Vocabulary is developed in RS through the Frayer Model and students are taught to read, write and speak demonstrating religious literacy. Technology is employed through the use of laptop apps, interactive whiteboards and visualisers in class to strengthen learning. Learning character is developed each lesson through the use of the six Learning Applications (LApps).

## Impact

### Key Stage Three

Through studying the Key Stage Three curriculum, students will be able to use interpretive, analysis and evaluative skills to understand sacred texts supporting religious literacy. Students will apply the narrative and ideas of Buddhism and Sikhism and investigate how these are expressed in practices. Using the skill of synthesis students will identify concepts between the two highlighting key similarities and differences. They will have developed a deep knowledge of beliefs and teachings, practices and ways of life, expressions



of meaning and truth claims. Students will be able to apply this knowledge to Thematic topics at the end of each year including Environment and Animals, Medical ethics, life after death and engaging with the community. Students develop all the Lapps but especially their Empathy and Awareness through understanding different world faiths and reflecting on their ideas and beliefs. Students have an introduction to the disciplinary literacy required to be able to communicate with religious literacy, and all opportunities to develop numeracy are fully exploited in context, such as using statistics to understand changes in religious demographics. Cognitive Theory is interleaved throughout the curriculum so that students gain a knowledge of how they learn and manage their cognitive load.

### Key Stage Four

The Key Stage Four curriculum builds upon students' initial understanding, extending their knowledge in the areas of beliefs, practices, and teachings, expressions of faith and truth claims in Christianity and Islam through different faith traditions. Through developing their knowledge of Christianity and Islam, they are able to investigate the practices of these religions in local communities and the wider world. Students will further their synthesis, application, and evaluation of religion to thematic studies and will use non-religious and a variety of normative ethical approaches to bring depth and breadth when expressing their evaluation and judgements of ethical situations.

Students also develop an understanding of the entwined nature of their studies, though explicit cross-curricular links and inter-disciplinary study. Their progress in RS is recognised through their GCSE/ BTEC entry, which acts as a benchmark of their mastery and provides them with the national currency needed for access to further education and employment. Students use their knowledge of cognitive theory to recognise and use the most impactful methods of revision and retrieval practice.