



Policy: Religious Studies Policy

Date of review: October 2025

Date of next review: October 2028

Lead professional: Sarah Hammill

Status: Non-statutory

Religious Studies Policy

Religious education should enable every child to flourish and to live life in all its fullness. (John 10:10). It will help educate for dignity and respect encouraging all to live well together. Such an approach is offered through a commitment to generous hospitality, being true to our underpinning faith, but with a deep respect for the integrity of other religious traditions (and worldviews) and for the religious freedom of each person. ***(Religious Education Statement of Entitlement February 2019)***

Introduction

At Trinity St Edwards, students and their families can expect a high-quality religious studies (RS) curriculum that is rich and varied, enabling learners to acquire a thorough knowledge and understanding of religion and worldviews.

As a church school, the teaching of Christianity is an important part of our RS curriculum. Links with our school vision, and support for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development are intrinsic to our RS curriculum and have a significant impact on learners. We provide a wide range of opportunities for learners to understand and to make links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of the religions and world views studied.

Intent for RS / Aims and objectives

Every school is required by law to deliver Religious Education, and every parent has the right to withdraw their child from it. Religious Education develops students' religious literacy, in preparation for taking their place in a diverse and ever-changing world. Students are equipped with a secure foundation in theology – the systematic study of religious beliefs – and how to apply this to explore philosophy, examining moral issues and considering what is reasonable to believe. Theology and philosophy provide our students with multiple critical lenses through which to investigate religion, world events, and the impact on both their local community and wider world.

As stated in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education, our school aims for all students:

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.

- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain's cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways of living, believing and thinking.

Curriculum balance and time

RS is an academic subject that has a high profile in our school curriculum. It is a priority for senior leaders, who ensure that the teaching, learning and resourcing of RS is comparable with other curriculum subjects.

This means that the RS curriculum:

- is intrinsic to the outworking of our distinctive Christian vision in enabling all students to flourish. In addition, it contributes to British values and to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- is delivered in an objective, critical and pluralistic manner to engage and challenge all students through an exploration of core concepts and questions. Lessons provide meaningful and informed dialogue with a range of religions and worldviews.
- reflects a good balance between the disciplines of theology, philosophy and human science, to enable students to develop their religious literacy*

**Religious Literacy: Helping children and young people hold balanced and well informed conversations about religion and belief. (Key principles of a balanced curriculum in RS.)*

- enables students to acquire a rich, deep knowledge and understanding of Christian belief and practice, including the ways in which it is unique and diverse, whilst engaging with biblical texts and theological ideas.
- provides opportunities for students to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help to form identity in a range of religions and worldviews.
- supports the development of other curriculum areas and other general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs.
- encompasses the full range of abilities to ensure that all flourish academically, using a wide range of teaching and learning strategies which consider the task, outcome, resource, support and student grouping as appropriate to students' needs
- offers tasks that are age appropriate, challenging and sufficiently demanding to stimulate and engage all students, whilst extending the most able and providing support for those who need it.
- ensures that all students' contributions are valued in RS as they draw on their own experiences and beliefs

Curriculum balance and time in our school

Reflecting the school's trust deed or academy funding agreement, parents and students are entitled to expect that in Church schools Christianity should be at least 50% of curriculum time. Sufficient dedicated curriculum time, meeting explicit RS objectives, however organised, should be committed to the delivery of RS. This should aim to be close to 10% but must be no less than 5% in key stages 1-4. Time Allocation.

Year 7 - 11	Core RS lesson plus STEM days 48 hours per year = 5%
KS4 Option GCSE	Year 10 GCSE RS additional 78 hours = total 13% Year 11 GCSE RS additional 117 hours = total 14%

A detailed scheme of work is available for teachers and other interested people alongside this policy on the academy website.

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
7	Introduction to Abrahamic faiths		How do Muslims practice their faith?		The teachings of Jesus Christianity	
	22 hours of Christianity, 12 hours Islam, 2 hours Judaism, 4 hours assess and feedback (56% school year is Christianity teaching time, plus assessment and feedback)					
8	Introduction to Dharmic faiths- Hinduism		The Problem of Evil and Suffering- Christianity		The Importance of Social Justice- Christianity	
	22 hours of Christianity, 13 hours of Hinduism, 4 hours assess and feedback (56% school year is Christianity teaching time, plus assessment and feedback)					
9	Peace, Justice and the Prophets Islam		Medical ethics Christianity		What does it mean to forgive? Christianity	
	25 hours of Christianity, 10 hours of Islam, 4 hours assess and feedback (64% school year is Christianity teaching time, plus assessment and feedback)					
10	Christian Beliefs		Theme A- Relationships and Families		Theme D- Revision	
	25 hours of Christianity, 10 hours of Islam, 4 hours assess and feedback (64% school year is Christianity teaching time, plus assessment and feedback)					
10	Paper 2- Theme B	Christian Practices		Theme E- Crime and Punishment		Exam Skills/Consolidation

	Religion and Life			
	25 hours of Christianity, 10 hours of Islam, 4 hours assess and feedback (64% school year is Christianity teaching time, plus assessment and feedback)			
11	Islamic Beliefs	Revision		
11	Islamic Practices	Revision		

Teaching and learning

We recognise the importance of teaching RS in a creative, knowledge-rich, broad and balanced way. The curriculum provides fully for the needs of all students, engaging and challenging them through an exploration of core concepts and questions. The curriculum provides opportunities for students to understand the role of foundational texts, beliefs, rituals, and practices and how they help form identity in a range of religions and worldviews. Students explore how these may change in different times, places and cultures.

Our RS curriculum introduces students to a range of relevant disciplines including theology, philosophy and the human and social sciences. The curriculum provides opportunities to engage in meaningful and informed dialogue with those of all religions and worldviews.

RS lessons provide a safe space to explore their own religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ways of seeing, living and thinking, believing and belonging. Students experience opportunities to learn by:

- Posing and discussing 'big' and challenging questions
- Reading and critically analysing texts
- Interpreting information from different sources
- Researching information for themselves
- Listening to and discussing with the teacher and other students
- Engaging in pair and group work
- Exploring a range of media such as artefacts, pictures, photographs, music and drama
- Experiencing visits and visitors
- Taking part in outdoor learning
- Taking time for reflection

Cross-curricular links

Cross curricular work is encouraged, in line with whole school policy on teaching and learning. Religious studies supports the development of general educational abilities such as literacy, empathy and the ability to express thoughts, feelings and personal beliefs. RS makes a major contribution to students' SMSC development. It addresses issues which arise in a range of subjects, such as English, art, drama and history, geography, computing and music, as well as personal, social and emotional education and citizenship.

Role of the RS subject leader

The subject leader will:

- Ensure that all students receive their legal entitlement of religious education.
- Ensure RS provision reflects the Church of England Statement of Entitlement.
- Produce and regularly review a subject policy to ensure that it remains up to date.
- Ensure all teachers know what should be taught in religious education, what resources are available, and what standards of attainment are expected at the end of each Key Stage. Monitor and review the implementation of policy and units of work.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in RS and students' progress and standards.
- Ensure there are rigorous assessment systems in place to enable teachers and students to gauge progress and attainment in RS.
- Monitor, analyse and question RS assessments carried out by staff.
- Liaise with the Principal and Governors to feedback on the monitoring and impact of RS across the school.
- Support colleagues by sharing new ideas and pedagogy, to help develop their subject confidence and expertise through CPD opportunities and support sessions.
- Seek opportunities to share effective practice locally and regionally and engage in professional development for themselves and other staff members.
- Oversee the RS budget and monitor RS resources to ensure they are kept and stored respectfully and replaced where necessary.
- Ensure there is a school protocol, that covers safeguarding procedures and a suitability process, for when visitors are invited into RS lessons.

Matching Work to Students' Needs

Our whole school policy regarding students with special needs and disabilities, applies to RS. Teachers should be alert to the fact that some students have special and deep experience of a religion through family practice. This of course may not relate to their general educational ability.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Assessment in religious studies will:

- Seek to identify development in the different areas of learning in the subject and not only in the acquisition of factual knowledge.
- Recognise the disciplinary knowledge and skills which the subject seeks to develop. Employ well defined criteria for marking and assessment which identify progress and achievement as well as effort, following the school's marking policy.
- Include student self-assessment.
- Enable effective tracking of student progress to identify areas for development in students' knowledge and understanding, as well as whole school areas for development.
- Enable effective reporting to parents.

Self-Evaluation

The subject leader for RS will assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development. This will be in line with SIAMS and OFSTED guidance about self-evaluation and review

Staff training and CPD

All staff have access to RS CPD in line with the subject leader's identified areas for development. This is either 'in house' or through Diocesan support. The RS subject leader also attends trust network meetings.

Other policy links

Spirituality policy

Collective Worship policy

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored annually for any changes required. Each year it will be evaluated by the policy lead for its impact, accuracy and content. The policy will have a formal review every three years.