

Religious Studies

'Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious'

Stephen Hawking

Religious Studies (RS) is a core subject at Key Stage 3 and the aim of the RS Department is twofold. Firstly, the department aims to help the pupils understand the importance religions play in today's diverse world where different cultures interact with each other, and with that understanding to develop an appreciation of other points of view. Secondly, Religious Studies also asks questions about the meaning and purpose of life, giving space for individual reflection.

From Upper 3 to Lower 4 (Years 7 to 9) pupils are taught in form groups, studying a range of topics that build up to a body of knowledge about religions and issues that prepare them for the GCSE if they choose the subject as an option. Subjects include knowledge-based topics such as Religious Celebrations and Pilgrimages or Places of Worship and more abstract topics such as Ethics and Moral Dilemmas, involving the pupils in discussions and enabling them to formulate their own opinions and express their points of view.

In Key Stage 4 pupils will be given the option of studying the AQA Religious Studies GCSE which is in two examination units. Component 1 is the study of two religions such as Christianity and Islam. The pupils would be expected to have an in-depth knowledge of the beliefs, teachings and practices of the two faiths, building on the knowledge acquired in Key Stage 3. For Component 2 the pupils explore four themes which will require them to understand religious social teachings and points of view. The themes include Marriage and the Family, Human Rights and Social Justice, Crime and Punishment and Peace and Conflict.

Weekly homework tasks are set to extend and consolidate the classroom learning and to give opportunities for further research or to express their own ideas about issues and write reflectively.

The subject lends itself to opportunities outside the classroom with visits to places of worship or to have speakers come and talk to the students about their faith or issues.