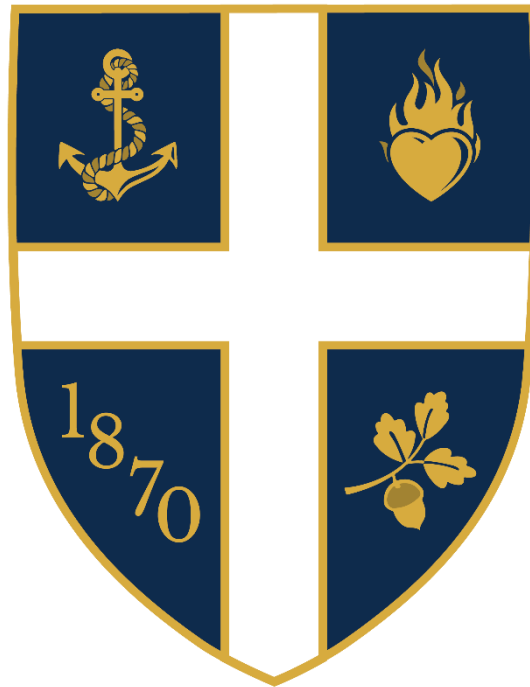


# St Augustine's C of E High School & Sixth Form



## Religious Studies Policy

September 2022

## Religious Studies Curriculum Intent

The Religious Studies department is at the heart of life at St Augustine’s Church of England High School.

We want students to engage positively with a range of religions and worldviews, articulate their own personal beliefs, ideas and values, whilst respecting the rights of others to differ. This is not merely to foster respect, encourage dialogue and minimise conflict, but also to enable students to learn from each other as they grow in **Love, Hope and Faith**

We are committed to offering the students a curriculum that will allow students to flourish and educate for dignity and respect, as laid out in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education in Church Schools

### How have we developed the Religious Studies curriculum?

Our curriculum is designed to meet the following aims:

#### 1) To develop virtues and values in our students

The department endeavours to help students grow in the Christian Virtues of:

- **Love**, as they gain respect for themselves and other people.
- **Hope**, as they look to the future and consider ways to improve the world.
- **Faith**, as they develop confidence in expressing their own beliefs and values.

Our curriculum is designed to allow students to grow in these Christian virtues.

#### 2) To develop religious literacy

We aim to offer them exciting learning experiences that allow them to become religiously literate, and try to cover material that they will not encounter at GCSE level. The KS3 curriculum is carefully planned to build up knowledge and skills as students progress. Whilst we have ensured that the curriculum prepares students for their GCSE exam, we aim to offer them so much more than this.

#### 3) To encourage a love of learning in our students

We want all of our students to be develop a fascination with learning during their RS lessons. We aim to offer an academically rigorous curriculum that inspires and challenges the students.

#### 4) To give students transferable skills

We believe that the study of religious studies can give students transferable skills that will be of use to them not just in their further education and work, but in their life. Many of the skills that are key religious literacy skills can also be transferred into the world of work.

### At each stage of the Religious Studies curriculum the knowledge and skills that students will develop are:

#### 1) KS3:

At KS3 level we grade students according to the six strands identified by the non-statutory RS framework (2004):

AT1 – Learning about religion	AT2 – Learning from religion
beliefs, teachings, sources of wisdom and authority (Investigation and analysis)	identity and belonging (Reflection)
practices and ways of life (Application)	meaning purpose and truth (Empathy and critical Evaluation)
Forms of expression (Interpretation)	values and commitments (Courageous advocacy)

We have identified 8 key religious skills that we would like all students at St Augustine’s to develop. This will help them to develop ‘religious literacy’ as they move through the school.

### Religious Literacy

#### Skills

AT1 – Learning about religion	AT2 – Learning from religion
a) Investigation – this includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• asking relevant questions.</li> <li>• knowing how to use a variety of sources in order to gather information;</li> <li>• knowing what may count as good evidence in understanding religion(s).</li> </ul>	e) Reflection – this includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the ability to reflect on feelings, experience, attitudes, beliefs, values, relationships, practices and ultimate questions.</li> <li>• the ability to draw meaning from significant experiences in their own</li> </ul>

<p>b) Analysis – this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>distinguishing between opinion, belief and fact;</li> <li>recognizing bias, caricature, prejudice and stereotyping;</li> <li>distinguishing between the features of different religions.</li> </ul> <p>c) Application – this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>making links between religion and individual, community, national and international life;</li> <li>identifying key religious values and their links with secular values.</li> </ul> <p>d) Interpretation – this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the ability to draw meaning from artefacts, works of art, poetry and symbolism;</li> <li>the ability to interpret religious language;</li> <li>the ability to suggest meanings of religious texts.</li> </ul>	<p>and others’ lives and from religious questions and answers.</p> <p>f) Empathy – this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>developing the power of imagination to identify feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow;</li> <li>the ability to consider the thoughts, feelings, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values of others;</li> <li>the ability to see the world through the eyes of others, and to see issues from their point of view.</li> </ul> <p>g) Critical Evaluation – this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the ability to debate issues of religious significance with reference to evidence, argument, opinion and statements of faith;</li> <li>weighing the respective claims of self-interest, consideration for others, religious teaching and individual conscience.</li> <li>The ability to think about their own beliefs critically, analysing the impact that they could have on their actions.</li> </ul> <p>h) Courageous Advocacy – this includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ability to develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people;</li> <li>challenging injustice by standing up for the rights of others.</li> <li>Recognizing all people as individuals made in the ‘image of God’</li> </ul>
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**Knowledge**

Each unit in KS3 is based around the study of key religious concepts. These are listed on the curriculum maps which are available on the website.

KS4:

The skills learnt at KS3 build into the skills that are needed in order to succeed at KS4 level. In a similar way to KS3, these skills can be divided into two categories;

<p>AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and beliefs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>beliefs, practices and sources of authority</li> <li>influence on individuals, communities and societies</li> <li>similarities and differences within and/or between religions and beliefs</li> </ul>	<p>AO2: Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyse and evaluate aspects of religion and belief, including their significance and influence.</li> </ul>
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Students will be challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth, enabling them to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues. Students will also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills.

The skills that we develop at key stage three feed directly into the skills necessary to succeed at key stage 4 level. The assessment at key stage three level is also designed to help prepare students for GCSE.

KS5:

A Level Religious studies at St Augustine’s is designed to allow students to:

- develop their interest in a rigorous study of religion and belief and relate it to the wider world
- develop knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion
- develop an understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies
- adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion
- reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study.

A level Religious Studies is designed to enable learners to develop their interest in, and enthusiasm for, a study of religion and its place in the wider world. Core Religious Studies is also taught to all Sixth Form students (see below)

**How do we teach our curriculum?**

The provision for RS at St Augustine’s CE High School looks like this:

Year group	Provision
Year 7	1 period of 50 minutes a week
Year 8	2 periods of 50 minutes a week
Year 9	2 periods of 50 minutes a week
KS4	All KS4 students are entered into GCSE RS, which they sit at the end of Year 11 3 periods of 50 minutes a week
KS5	Those students who choose RS as a subject at A level get 6 periods of RS a week
KS5 – Core Religious Studies	Two and a half days of curriculum time is dedicated to Religious Studies for all Sixth Formers. Students take part in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A day-long Religious Studies conference on Philosophy or Ethics</li> <li>• A morning of lessons on philosophy or ethics</li> <li>• A day long visit to Westminster Abbey and another site of religious significance in London</li> </ul>

The curriculum at Key stage 3 is designed to help students to gain the skills that we have identified, and gain ‘religious literacy’.

Each unit is based around a key question. During the course of the unit, students will consider different responses to the question, and will be asked to critically evaluate these responses. At the end of each unit, students will produce an extended piece of writing, in which they will be expected to present two different responses to the question, critically evaluate them and give their own conclusion.

**How does our curriculum reflect the school’s local context by addressing typical gaps in pupil’s knowledge and skills?**

Our school is located in one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse wards in the country, and we believe that the lives of students are enriched by being exposed to a variety of different religions and cultures.

**How is our curriculum equipping the pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life?**

Our curriculum helps give our students the knowledge that they need to success in life by:

- Giving them the opportunity to study all six world religions but with a particular emphasis on Christian teaching. The study of Christianity makes up at least 50% of curriculum time.
- Giving them the skills to help create and answer fundamental questions about the world; questions like ‘why are we here’, ‘what is the purpose of life’, ‘what is a good life’, ‘Is there a God’, and ‘Why does God allow suffering’.
- Question their own beliefs, reflect on their importance, and consider the impact that beliefs can have on the world.
- Challenge any misconceptions about certain groups that they might hold.
- Become courageous advocates for the common good, locally, nationally and globally

Our curriculum helps give students cultural capital that they need by:

- Engage with and interpret primary texts, including religious scripture.
- Encounter the work of scholars and theologians.
- Encounter a range of art from a diverse range of cultures and parts of the world. This includes a variety of mediums including paintings, music and poetry.
- Visit a number of significant places of worship in London and beyond.
- Visit a number of art galleries and museums.

**The Implementation of our Religious Studies Curriculum:**

The KS3 RS curriculum is designed to challenge and engage students, and to meet our aims as outlined in the ‘intent’ section of this document. We aim to implement a curriculum that fosters respect, develops religious literacy, promotes engagement, and develops transferable skills.

We have made a conscious effort to ensure that our curriculum moves beyond a phenomenological study of RS. We have a firm belief that students of all abilities benefit from a curriculum that is academically rigorous, and has clear substantive knowledge. Our curriculum recognises that RS is rooted in three disciplines. These are theology, philosophy and the human/social sciences. These three strands are taught simultaneously, and in all of our units.

The table below summarises some of the questions that each of the strands might deal with.

<b>Theology</b>	<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>Social Sciences</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Where beliefs come from</b></li> <li>• <b>How beliefs have changed over time</b></li> <li>• <b>How beliefs relate to each other</b></li> <li>• <b>How beliefs shape the way believers see the world and each other</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The nature of knowledge, meaning and existence</b></li> <li>• <b>How and whether things make sense</b></li> <li>• <b>Issues of right and wrong, good and bad</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The diverse nature of religion</b></li> <li>• <b>Diverse ways in which people practise and express beliefs</b></li> <li>• <b>The ways in which beliefs shape individual identity, communities and society in general</b></li> </ul>

The development of Christian virtues in students is implemented through a particular focus on Christianity at KS3. Over 50% of our curriculum is content that is Christian. At KS4, 75% of the GCSE content is Christian. 25% of it is a study of the religion of Christianity, and 50% is a study of Christianity through the study of issues in the themes paper. The other 25% is a study of either Islam, Judaism or Buddhism.

At KS5, students studying A Level RS have a particular focus on Christianity. Component 1 is a study of Christianity, and components 2 and 3 are the study of philosophy and ethics from a Christian perspective. Students who are not studying A Level RS receive their RS provision through a series of three ‘drop down’ days. These days include religious studies conferences, with visiting speakers, and trips to sites of religious significance

The KS3 curriculum is designed to build up knowledge of key religious concepts, and to build religious literacy. These key concepts, (for example salvation, atonement, penitence, equality etc) are concepts that apply to all religions and non-religious ideologies studied in the curriculum.

**Assessment**

Assessment in RS is divided into two main areas, learning about religion and learning from religion

Schemes of work are designed to build knowledge of key religious concepts up over time. Assessments are then designed to give students the opportunity to show off their skills. Students in years 7 and 8 are assessed using essay style evaluative questions that allow them to be assessed on all of these skills, with a particular focus on critical evaluation.

Each unit has two sets of specific assessment criteria that relate directly to the two assessment targets above. These criteria are tailored to each individual scheme of work (see schemes of work below). Each unit includes formative assessment activities that assess the students against these criteria. Each scheme of work has a particular focus on one of the strands from AT1, and one from AT2. Each unit ends with a piece of summative assessment.

Student understanding is assessed in a number of ways, including through oral questioning, written work, and assessments. After each piece of formative assessment, students are given specific written feedback.

All members of staff record assessment data on each student after each piece of summative assessment. These are then recorded on assessment tracking sheets centrally within the department.

**What are the teacher’s subject knowledge/specialisms in the department?**

All members of staff specialise in the teaching of Christianity. At GCSE level, all members of staff also specialise in one or more other religions.

Mr Trigg – Christianity, Judaism and Islam  
 Mr Russell - Christianity, Judaism and Islam

Ms Hill - Christianity, Judaism and Islam  
Mr Bokth – Christianity and Islam