**Religious Studies**

Religious Studies contributes significantly to the ethos and character of the Academy and enables students to ask deep and often searching questions about their own faiths and beliefs, and the beliefs, faiths, and opinions of others regarding pertinent contemporary moral issues. The teaching of RS makes links between the beliefs, practices, and value systems of a range of faiths and world views studied. Students deepen their own understanding of God as encountered and taught by Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Buddhists. The RS curriculum helps to develop responsibility and respect for all aspects of diversity, whether it be social, cultural, and religious, and prepare our students well for life in modern Britain as global citizens.

**KS3**

At KS3 students get the opportunity to study and explore some of the main world’s main religions, starting with **Judaism**, moving onto **Buddhism**, then **Christianity** and finishing with **Islam**. Students examine key features of the different faiths, for example key figures, practices, and beliefs. This allows students to have a wider understanding and awareness of people’s personal belief and practices.

In year 8 these beliefs are then applied into a more ethics-based approach, focusing on **human rights** for the first term, exploring what they are, how they were introduced and explore examples of people who have stood up and fought for them. Then move onto a **crime and punishment** and **forgiveness** topic, investigating how people respond to ethical situations. Students have the opportunity to debate and discuss key issues like the use of capital punishment. Finally, the students examine some of the huge fundamental questions, **why are we** **here**? **How were we created and is there life after death**? Key Stage 3 provides snippets of the key stage 4 curriculum for the students to sample and explore, which, if they choose, they can then continue at GCSE level in year 9.

**KS4**

At KS4 students’ the students build on their KS3 knowledge and study for their **GCSE Religious Studies** exam under the **EDUCAS / WJEC Board Route** 1. The course is made up of three components, firstly **Religious, Philosophical and Ethical studies in the modern world**. This component is split into four topics: relationships, life and death, good and evil and human rights within these topics the students will have to evaluate issues like ‘*true forgiveness is impossible’* or ‘*It is the duty of religious believers to stand up for human rights and social justice, even if it means disobeying the laws of their country.’* The second component is the **study of Christianity**, looking at Christian beliefs and practices. The students focus on topics such as the life of Jesus and his incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, as well as practices such as pilgrimage, the different sacraments, festivals, and whether the UK is a Christian country. The final section is the **study of Islam**, focusing on the beliefs and practices. Looking at sources of the authority, the prophets, and angels, as well as the five pillars and jihad as practices. The GCSE consists of three exams, one for each component. The final grade consists of ethics forming 50% of the final grade, Christianity forming 25% and Islam forming the final 25%.

**KS5**

**A Level Religious Studies** follows the **OCR** exam board and consists of the three components, **philosophy, ethics, and development in Christian Thought**. Elements of GCSE Religious Studies are featured in the A Level course but studying GCSE Religious Studies is not compulsory to take the A Level. Philosophy includes topics such as ancient philosophers, the soul, arguments from reason and observation, religious experience, problem of evil, attributes of God and religious language. Ethics includes topics such as natural law, situation ethics, Kantian ethics, Utilitarianism, Euthanasia and Business Ethics. Developments in Christian Thought focuses on topics such as St Augustine, Death and the Afterlife, Bonhoeffer, Person of Jesus, Feminism, Pluralism, Secularisation and Liberation Theology. The students’ study each of the three components over the two years and sit exam on each at the end. The exams all include four 40 marks questions, three of which the students need to answer in two hours.