

Department Information

Religious Education



Statement of Aims

Preface:

The Religious Education Department aims to be central to the spiritual expression of Bishop Challoner as a Catholic school. At Bishop Challoner we are concerned about the growth of the whole person and as such the Religious Education Department plays a fundamental role in the spiritual and moral development of pupils.

The curriculum

The scheme of work is designed to provide an engaging, meaningful and effective way to draw young people into an encounter with Catholic belief and faith. The process is designed to draw young people into a personal exploration of their own beliefs and values but in such a way that draws upon the living tradition of the Catholic Church in order to help develop, challenge and support the Christian human development of the individual.

No assumptions are made about the faith commitment of pupils; instead they are given an opportunity question and reflect upon ultimate and other significant questions of our time. The process begins with an open consideration of the Question, students considering their own initial responses are then brought into a dialogue or encounter with the Christian response to these questions. The scheme aims to provide a young person with a genuine encounter with Christian belief which impacts upon their world view and is not just 'learning about' religion. It also attempts to get away from the assumption that our pupils are necessarily practicing Catholics.

Aims

1. Academic

To provide an academic basis upon which knowledge about religious issues and beliefs can be explored and evaluated. It endeavours to equip pupils with a firm grounding in academic skills which relate to the subject, to enable pupils to enjoy Religious Education as well as reaching their potential at GCSE. The Religious Education Department have the unequivocal support of the management of the school; 10% of the length of the taught week is embedded in the timetable for each key stage of education.

- i. To enable pupils to be familiar with a body of Religious knowledge, principles, skills and vocabulary.
- ii. To enable pupils to see Religious Education in the context of a wider body of knowledge and skills.
- iii. To enable pupils to understand and use investigative/deductive methods.
- iv. To enable pupils to be able to work independently and as part of a team.
- v. To allow pupils to develop informed opinions and to be able to support them by reasonable arguments that recognise the possible limitations of the ideas and concepts used.
- vi. To make balanced and informed choices and decisions with regard to Religious, Moral and Social issues; critically evaluate alternative choices, decisions, faiths and beliefs; understand and use Religious terminology and explanations.
- vii. To provide pupils with opportunities to express information in a variety of forms.
- viii. To conduct lessons in a secure, supportive and disciplined manner.
- ix. To ensure that all pupils follow the same 'Scheme of Work'.



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2. Existential

Religious Education helps us as humans to search for the answers to the key questions of life; "the nature of man (sic); the meaning and purpose of life; good and evil; the origin and purpose of suffering; the way to true happiness; death; judgement and retribution after death and finally the origin and destiny of our existence."

(John Paul II Crossing the Threshold of Hope)

- i. For RE to be a forum where pupils are enabled to seek meaning in life through their own exploration of ultimate issues and questions. Within catholic RE this is always done in the context of our catholic faith, traditions and belief. The living tradition is the context in which their beliefs and attitudes can be developed, challenged and formed.
- ii. To draw upon the pupils own experiences and help develop their beliefs and ideas in a challenging and constructive way. If a student is able to grapple with moral and spiritual issues which are of direct relevance to their life then they will find the subject interesting and stimulating.
- iii. To provide variety of experiences/activities during a course of study and during a lesson if possible, activities which are relevant to pupils' everyday concerns and experiences. It is important that pupils learn about religion in the context of human experience.

3. Spiritual

RE should however also go beyond the realms of a mainstream subject; through exploration in the classroom, expression in liturgy and social action, the RE department should enable young people, whether or not they are Catholic, to discover a more profound experience of Christ and gain a deeper level of spirituality and moral awareness.

- i. To provide young people with opportunities to reflect upon their own spirituality through prayer within liturgy, retreats and in their study.
- ii. To enable pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of our Christian and specifically Catholic faith and traditions.
- iii. To provide opportunities for pupils to express and develop their faith through discussion, worship, and social action.
- iv. To facilitate an environment where pupils and staff can interact in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect. Lessons should foster a respect and informed judgements within the pupils for each other's religions, beliefs and cultures from a position of understanding.



Bishop Challoner strives to develop 'religiously literate young people who have the knowledge, understanding and skills - appropriate to their age and capacity - to think spiritually, ethically and theologically, and who are aware of the demands of religious commitment in everyday life"

(Religious Education Curriculum Directory for Catholic Schools. p 10)

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Subject rationale – Why study the subject? What benefits does it bring?

KS3 curriculum overview

Students will study the following topics

YEAR 7	YEAR 8	YEAR 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What sort of person do I want to become?• Why does the universe exist?• Who is God and why are people religious?• What are the signs of Catholic identity?• World Religions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can I find happiness and fulfillment?• Why do Christians suffer?• Why are relationships important?• How do I know what is right or wrong?• What does it mean to be Jewish?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do we meet the challenges to live justly?• What are Christian beliefs on the Value of Life?• How is the Catholic Church unique?• Does God exist?• What does it mean to be a Jew?

KS4 curriculum overview

Students at Bishop Challoner study the WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Religious Studies:

The aims of this course are

- develop learners' knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism
- develop learners' knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, practices, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying
- develop learners' ability to construct well-argued, well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject.
- provides opportunities for learners to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life
- challenges learners to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contributes to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community.



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Students will study three components across years 10 and 11 with the assessment breakdown below

Component Number	Title	Written Examination	%	Marks	Themes
1 Route B	Foundational Catholic Theology	1 ½ hours	37.5% of qualification	90 marks (plus 6 for spelling, punctuation and grammar)	Theme 1: Origins and Meaning Theme 2: Good and Evil
2 Route B	Applied Catholic Theology	1 ½ hours	37.5% of qualification	90 marks (plus 6 for spelling, punctuation and grammar)	Theme 3: Life and Death Theme 4: Sin and Forgiveness
3 Route B	Study of a World Faith: Judaism	1 hour	25% of qualification	60 marks	

Revision Guidance

At all key stages students will receive revision booklets and will participate in revision lessons targeted specifically to help students achieve their full potential in all assessed work. The department consistently uses low stakes testing in lessons, modelling of good practice and feedback to guide student performance. A formal assessment takes place in all key stages at the end of each unit of work with each assessment guiding student practice towards success in their formal assessments.

The department highly encourages the following strategies as successful revision:

- **Create a Timetable**
- **Organise your work; gather your notes, exercise book, mind maps, separate piles, separate folders**
- **Know the Exam Requirements.** Print off a copy of the Exam Syllabus/Specification for Eduqas Religious Studies route B. The Exam Specification will provide you with a breakdown of the topics that you need to cover. It will also help you identify the demands of each of the separate exam papers.
- **Make Notes.** Go through your school books and begin to make notes. Write notes again and again, each time more condensed. If you only read to revise, you will retain some of the content ... if you write notes to revise, you will retain much more of the content. Use memory aids, mnemonics, flashcards, if you find them helpful. Listen to podcasts, watch videos or documentaries, move to a new study area. By the week of the exam, your notes should have become condensed to just one side of A4.
- **Practice Past Papers.** You can access past exam papers online. Make sure that you choose Eduqas Religious Studies route B. Schedule one exam paper each week for each subject. Create your own exam conditions. Mark your own exam papers so that you understand the marking scheme. Ask your teacher or your friends for extra help, if there are topics that you do not understand.
- **Look after your Body.** Take the time you need to rest and relax from your studies. Spend some planned time with your friends. Eat nutritious food. Drink lots of water. Sleep long and deep. Find a healthy balance.
- **Build Confidence.** Confidence is built on accomplishment, so get things done. Small things to start with. Follow through on your plan. You will respect yourself if you say you're going to do something and then you do it. Recognise and reward your achievements.

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Career opportunities

Religious Studies students are highly employable. More than 82% go on to employment or further study, and 29% go onto professional jobs – more than any other Humanities and Social Science subject except architecture and languages.

In particular, Religious Studies graduates work in the NHS; the civil service; youth and social work, advertising, investment and banking, law, politics, business, the creative industries, the charity sector and NGOs, publishing and journalism, and education.

The skills developed in studying religions are increasingly in demand in a complex, connected, global world. They help us to understand ourselves, our society, and the world.

The ability to understand how people have thought and acted in different places and times, and the complexity of how social behaviours are shaped by beliefs and values.

- Contextualised critical and analytical skills, applied to the real world, and dealing with issues arising from multiple and conflicting interpretations of texts and traditions with sensitivity and empathy;
- Being able to understand different viewpoints and philosophies, from an interdisciplinary perspective—and apply that understanding to find practical solutions;
- Studying religion encourages self-awareness, initiative, creativity and teamwork.

Religious Studies students are excellent communicators and make great leaders.

Attachments/links/ further information

Useful attachments for key stage 5:

[Specification](#)

[Links to useful revision websites](#)

Useful attachments for key stage 4:

[Specification](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zb48q6f>

[How to revise GCSE RE](#)

Useful attachments for key stage 3:

[Quizzes](#)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zh3rkqt>