



**BISHOP RAWSTORNE**  
Church of England Academy

# Religious Education Policy

*'But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere'*  
James 3:17

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**FORTITER ET FIDELITER**  
*Bravely and Faithfully*

## **Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy Religious Education Policy**

### **Verse**

“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.”

James 3:17

### **Vision**

“Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy aspires to cultivate wisdom rooted in Christian Values. It is our vision that all members of our community will experience life in all its fullness, flourishing through dignity, knowledge and understanding, bound together in unity, giving hope and worth to all.”

### **Our Values**

Hope, Service, Compassion, Peace, Wisdom, Fellowship.

Our values are taken from the work of Neville Norcross ‘Christian Values for Church Schools’. Whilst there are many Christian values, we have chosen the six above to complement our commitment to a rich curriculum and outstanding pastoral care.

### **Philosophy**

Religious Education at Bishop Rawstorne is a core subject alongside Maths, Science and English. RE is an academically rigorous subject in which we embark on an in-depth study of the major world religions, alongside philosophical and ethical investigations.

We want our students to all:

Think Like Theologians

Ponder Like Philosophers

Assess Like Ethicists

As a Church of England school, we recognise the central place of Christianity in our studies, as a result, we dedicate a larger proportion of curriculum time to the study of Christianity in KS3. The curriculum is delivered in a varied and engaging way and is complimented by extra-curricular opportunities, for example educational visits to places of worship.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT IN OUR CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY**

Our aim is to ensure that you feel happy, safe and secure in your school.

#### ***We believe:***

- that every individual in our community is a unique and valuable creation made in the image of God.
- we all have a right to be considered equal, worthy of respect and esteem.
- we all have a responsibility to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves.



Bishop Rawstone  
Church Of England  
Academy

# Religious Education Policy



## **Bishop Rawstorne Religious Education Vision**

In line with the Statement of Entitlement, Religious Education at Bishop Rawstorne concentrates on the systematic teaching of faiths in their own terms to aid students understanding of religions.

Students who follow the Religious Education programme in our school gain a deep awareness of their own and others' identities; they wrestle with the mysteries of life and the answers given by a wide variety of religions and beliefs; they develop a clear sense of what is of real value in world today.

Students who follow the Religious Education programme in our school gain a deep knowledge and understanding of the teachings, practices and life stories expressed in a variety of ways within Christianity and other principal religions and world views. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in the light of their learning, they grow in respect for themselves and others. We aim to challenge stereo types and cultivate academic skills to promote religious literacy so that our students can navigate the contemporary society that they live in.

Students who follow the Religious Education programme in our school demonstrate curiosity about people of faith and commitment - who have changed individual lives, societies and cultures.

### **Aims and Rationale**

In the simplest terms, studying religion and belief has a claim to be an indispensable part of a complete education because of the influence of religions and beliefs on individuals, culture, behaviour and national life. Most religions and beliefs offer answers to life's deepest questions. And most young people are seeking answers to those questions, as they grow into independence and work out how to live a good life. Moreover, the majority of the world's population are religious, therefore it is important that our students develop a robust religious literacy.

### **The Faith Rationale**

Bishop Rawstorne is a 'faith school', traditionally it may be thought that one of the main aims of Religious Education is to hand on the truth of that faith to the next generation. However, at our school we do not approach Religious Education with a 'confessional' rationale built around the transmission of doctrines, rituals and ways of life. Rather, for those students who do have a faith, we seek to nurture that faith and allow them to grow spiritually. However, we do not seek to indoctrinate students of no faith. For Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy, Religious Education is an academic subject. We aim to allow our students to grow academically in Religious Education to make their own choices about religion.

## **The Whole Person Rationale**

Often it is thought that one of the main aims of Religious Education is to help young people on their personal journey of identity, thus Religious Education fits in the Academy's curriculum approach of a wide and diverse education to enrich 'the whole person', helping young people to better understand themselves and the world. The rationale for Religious Education here is concerned with such questions as:

- What is the meaning and purpose of life?
- Where are we going?
- What is 'true'?
- Is my own existence meaningful, and is there anything beyond personal happiness?
- What skills do I need to succeed in life?

This enables students to gain insights from religions and philosophies and give them practice in 'skills for life', such as empathy, sensitivity, humility, and in thinking and communicating well.

Through this approach we focus on Religious Education to aid our students' character development, developing young people spiritually, morally and ethically. The rationale is part of an overall intention to equip young people to lead a good life and achieve moral autonomy and responsibility. In the light of the many moral and ethical dilemmas we meet in life, ranging from the personal to the global, young people are seeking answers to questions such as:

- What is it to lead a good life? How do we know? Whom should we trust? How can I become my best self? What is my destiny and can religions or beliefs help me to understand it, shape it or accept it?

Thus, we allow our young people to reflect on their own beliefs and values, seeking guidance when faced with moral dilemmas, so that they can be informed by their understanding of religious and philosophical principles.

## **The Academic and Scholarly Rationale**

The aim of Religious Education in our school is to develop young people intellectually; it can provide a mental discipline to sharpen young minds. Since religious and philosophical systems offer a rich and complex field of study, they can bring intellectual stretch and challenge even if they are not directly relevant. This rationale focuses on questions such as:

- How can we explore religions and beliefs as a way of challenging and developing young people's intellectual abilities and skills?
- In what ways have religions and beliefs influenced us positively and negatively, and how can we develop arguments that evaluate their influence?

Religious Education is a study of religions and beliefs for their own sake, religions and philosophies exist, and they offer fascinating cultural phenomena, having limitless interest in their own right. This rationale is concerned with questions such as:

- Who was the author of this sacred text, and what meaning did it intend to convey?
- How can I penetrate through my own cultural assumptions, and my distance from the original context, in order to discover the truth about this text or object?
- What languages do I need to translate an ancient scroll?

This rationale may be justified in that it faces the intellectual challenge of exploring religions and beliefs and lays a claim to contribute strongly to young people's cognitive and cultural development. Religious Education in this sense is a specialist subject.

### **Objectives in Religious Education**

All students at KS3 study Religious Education and students at KS4 study Religious Education up to GCSE, there is no right of withdrawal from Religious Education. The school can under exceptional circumstances withdraw a student from the final GCSE examinations. At Bishop Rawstorne our weekly entitlement to Religious Education is a core component of the KS3 and KS4 curriculum. We also carry out faith trips to the local church, Blackburn Cathedral, Liverpool's Anglican cathedral and local Mosques. Students have opportunities to meet members of religious and belief communities through visits and visitors.

### **KS3**

- All students at KS3 study Religious Education for four hours and 10 minutes over two weeks.
- Spring Term Year 9 students begin their GCSE study.

Students engage in a progressive programme over three years studying aspects of four religions: Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Periodic assessments enable the monitoring of students' progress.

## KS4

Religious Education is a core subject for all students. Generally, students are taught in sets according to their overall ability and their academic performance. However, we do seek to balance groups and disperse some students across the higher sets who would be problematic if all grouped together. All students study a full course GCSE (Edexcel Specification B) for four hours and ten minutes over two weeks.

Students study Two religions:

- Christianity
- Islam

AND apply these religions to two areas of study. Each of these areas is worth 50% of the GCSE:

Area of Study One is Ethics. This explores God, The Family, Worship as well as Life and Death. (50%)

Area of Study Two is Peace and conflict. This explores God, Reconciliation, Worship and Peace (50%)

Students sit TWO papers at the end of Year 11. There are four sections within each paper with a combination of structured questions (worth 25%) and extended open response/critical thinking. (Worth 75%)

## Example of our RE specific grade criteria 1-9

Grade	Grade Mastery	Bishop Rawstorne Pupil Levels 1-9 - Skill & Ability Criteria
8	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: Write about religious beliefs with fluency. Confidently express an understanding of religious diversity. Deeply explain (analyse) the impact of belief & practices for believers, individuals, communities and society. Confidently use sources of authority. Compare and contrast different beliefs and practices by showing a mature understanding of the reasons for different approaches to beliefs/practices/sources of authority. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: Use evidence and justification to argue my opinion. Understand different points of view. Understand & explain religious texts and examples to assess the truth of arguments. Use complex religious language with fluency. My spelling and grammar is faultless.
7	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: Fluently write about religious belief. Confidently express an understanding of diversity within religion. Explain the significance of different (evaluate) practices and impact for believers including different uses of holy books/ beliefs/practices/source of authority. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: Argue my opinions using evidence and justification. Reasoned consideration of strength of arguments. Effectively use religious texts and examples to support arguments. Use religious language with confidence. My spelling and grammar is faultless.
6	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: Explain in detail key religious teachings and a range of diverse beliefs within one religion. Explain different religious practices within a religion (including interpretation of holy texts) explain why they are important. Assess the impact of religious beliefs on individuals/communities & society. Compare religious beliefs/practices and explain simply why differences exist. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: Developed opinion with reasons that are supported with evidence or examples. Reasoned consideration of strength of arguments. Effectively use religious texts and examples to support arguments. Use religious language with confidence. My spelling and grammar is consistently accurate with few very few errors.
5	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: Explain the key beliefs for the religion studied. Explain the key practices for belonging to a religion & their importance for the believer. Explain how religious beliefs influence: Individuals/Communities/Society & compare religious beliefs/practices. Explain simply why differences exist. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: Clearly explain my opinions supported with valid reasons. Explain different points of view. Use religious texts and examples accurately to support explanation. - Use a range of key words with accuracy. My spelling and grammar is consistently accurate with very few errors.
4	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: - Describe lots of religious beliefs. - Describe the important things that religious people do and why they're important. - Recognise how religious beliefs might influence behaviour in different ways. - Explain similarities and differences in beliefs and practices between religions and denominations. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: - Give an opinion with reasons & explanations. - Describe different points of view. - Use religious texts and examples to support arguments. - Uses key words in written work. - My spelling and grammar doesn't get in the way of understanding my answers.
3	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: Describe lots of religious beliefs & teachings. Identify the key practices for belonging to a religion. I can use key words correctly. Describe how religious beliefs might impact on the life of a believer. Describe similarities and differences in beliefs and practices between religions and denominations. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: Give an opinion with reasons. Recognise different points of views. Refer to religious text and examples. Define key words. My spelling and grammar doesn't get in the way of understanding my answers.
2	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: I can do the following: Identify a range of religious beliefs & practices that mean someone belongs to a religion. Know the sources of authority for a religion. Describe how religious beliefs might impact on the life of a believer. Describe similarities and differences in beliefs and practices between religions and denominations. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: State an opinion with reasons. Can rank arguments in order of truth or importance. I try my best with my spellings and grammar. Can identify reasons for different points of view. Can define key words.
1	Excellent Secure Developing Emerging	(A01) I can show my knowledge and understanding by doing the following: Identify key religious beliefs. Recognise the key practices for belonging to a religion. Know the sources of authority for a religion. Identify how beliefs impact behaviour. Identify similarities and differences in beliefs and practices between religions. (A02) I can use my knowledge and understanding to do the following: State an opinion. Identify arguments for and against. Identify reasons for different points of view. Recognise key religious words. Try my best with my spellings and grammar.

## Principles of teaching and learning

In our teaching and learning approach we promote *equal opportunities* and provision of *differentiated activities* to suit the broadest ranges of ability, background and learning needs in our academy institution. Our most recent SEF seeks to focus on student premium candidates and underachieving boys.

We seek to engage students through various approaches such as discussions, debates, music, writing, drama, visual arts, and ICT. We make space for students to reflect, to explore beliefs and values, to ask their own questions, to investigate, research and respond personally

Our schemes of work (learning) *balance* the different attainments targets (usually 'learning about religion and belief' and 'learning from religion and belief') through careful planning and resourcing of our curriculum.

Our *content* is selected through our Church of England status and the place of Christianity in the Religious Education curriculum and also through contemporary and relevant factors to our students and locality. Thus, we plan to ensure a deep and comprehensive coverage of Christianity as well as core aspects and narrative theology of other major religions represented in Britain. Of these religions we pay specific attention to Islam due to its contemporary relevance and it being one of our GCSE exam subjects.

We ensure that we make connections with students' experiences of religions with planned *visits and visitors* in our programme that enable students to come into first hand contact with adherents from a variety of traditions.

Religious Education lends itself to natural *cross-curricular* links within the school curriculum. History, Geography, Science and English all play significant roles in Religious Education content and execution. For example, our rigor with literacy takes its lead from the school's literacy focuses as well as the need for excellent SpG and writing technique demanded by our exam board. Moreover, this includes Religious Education's areas of Equal Opportunities, Multicultural Education, Environmental Education and Citizenship.

### **Assessment, recording and reporting**

The school has its own policies and approaches to assessment, recording and reporting which the Religious Education department follows. We also see it as vital that Religious Education teachers know how to evaluate how well students are doing in Religious Education and to feedback guidance on what they must do next to make progress through PAR marking Praise, Action and Response. This is an integral part of our practice that we build through spacing and gapping in our schemes of work to make 'marking and event'.

Whilst marking we assess students' knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and this is all recorded through the Academy's SIMS system thoroughly as well as in teacher mark books that are also monitored as part of our Quality Assurance programme.

### **Homework**

See homework policy document.

KS4

We use homework for weekly quizzing/revision. Part of this will also be quizzing for learning relevant quotations or Sources of Wisdom and Authority (SWA). We almost have a seven term KS4. Simply we will have three set types of homework at KS4 that carry through every year, creating routine and simplicity for our KS4 homework.

**Week A** – Students have to retrieve the 10 set keywords for the current topic (given to them on sheets for homework). They peer mark.

**Week B** – They used to have 5 random, interleaved prior topic keywords and 5 quotations. They will peer mark these too. The benefit of this is that they will see other students' quotes and it saves staff marking time.

Students will be told a topic and sometimes a religion from which they have to recall a quotation that could support a view (either 'for' or 'against'). They will need to recall an appropriate quote (not word for word – paraphrasing is fine) and where it is from. We are not getting students to learn specific references. We are getting them familiar with remembering the source e.g. The Bible, The Qur'an, Hadith etc.

### **The benefits of only 3 types of homework:**

- Students always know what they need to do; it doesn't change
- All of these support research from cognitive science on long term memory
- Parents know what to expect
- There is less chance of students getting stuck. There're no new concepts (the keywords are initially just a memory task)
- They need few resources: keyword list and a piece of paper to write the MC questions.
- The online quizzes mark themselves. We put the results on the screen. They mark their own keyword tests.
- All homework set is of the same quality; It has purpose and intent.
- All 3 homework types feed into important knowledge and skills they need for their exam

### **SIAMS Framework and Religious Education at Bishop Rawstorne**

#### **IQ6 Is the Religious Education Curriculum effective (with reference to the expectations set out in the Church of England Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education)?**

- a) How do school leaders ensure that the provision, profile, and priority of Religious Education in all key stages reflects its place on the curriculum of a Church school?
- b) How do school and trust leaders ensure that the Religious Education curriculum is challenging, accurate, well-sequenced, well-balanced, relevant, and diverse?
- c) How do school and trust leaders ensure that Religious Education is well-resourced, and that continuing professional development for staff has an impact on the effectiveness of the curriculum?

#### **IQ7 What is the quality of Religious Education in voluntary aided and former voluntary aided schools, or in former voluntary controlled schools in which denominational religious education is taught?**

- a) What is the quality of teaching?
- b) How well do pupils make progress in their learning as a result of a balanced and well-structured Religious Education Curriculum?
- c) How does assessment inform teaching and learning?