



ST GEORGE'S SCHOOL
A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

Religious education is a core subject and reflects the distinctive Christian ethos and spiritual DNA of the St George's School community. It is the aim of the Religious Education Department to promote Christian values consistently amongst pupils, but without any expectation that they should belong to a denomination or faith. Religious education is the most human of the humanities and in turn it supports community cohesion and the development of SMSC (Social Moral Spiritual Cultural) and Fundamental British Values. Students grapple with the biggest questions about our existence, how we should live and how our society should be. Religious education encourages curiosity, empathy and dialogue across all sections of society, both locally and globally.

The RE classroom provides the perfect environment for debate, questioning and critical analysis of some of the most complex, fascinating and perplexing areas of the human experience: love, death, emotion, sexuality, crime, social justice and the environment, whilst presenting opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It offers pupils an insight into current affairs and allows them to explore different perspectives through understanding and tolerance. As an interdisciplinary subject, combining elements of philosophy, literacy, sociology, language and science, RE plays a vital role in underpinning a broad and balanced curriculum and helping pupils see their learning in the world around them.

Finally, RE also has a unique scope to help pupils make sense of their own lives and their own worldview. It is a subject which truly embodies our ethos, inspiring our young people to believe, achieve and care through learning about and from religion.

Our uniting scripture is "John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Our RE curriculum engages, inspires, challenges and encourages pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to answer perplexing questions, which they will take with them in life beyond the classroom. As a subject, RE contributes significantly to the Christian ethos of the school and enables pupils to have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of God by asking deep and searching questions about their own faith and beliefs, as well as those of others. The teaching of RE makes links between the beliefs, practices and value systems of a range of faiths and worldviews, which is vital in helping to identify and develop responsibility and respect for all aspects of diversity, fully preparing pupils for life in modern Britain.

In order to achieve a true understanding of RE, topics have been intelligently sequenced based on the following rationale:

- Rigour and challenge develops through the key stages and it has been coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulative knowledge. This means that pupils extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and other world views throughout the key stages.
- The RE curriculum is built upon developing religious literacy right from Y7. Students are introduced to key vocabulary in their exam preparation booklets. This knowledge is revisited and reinforced in every single lesson, through researched retrieval and retention. It is then applied in a variety of different contexts in order to increase retention and flexibility of application. Vocabulary deconstruction, analysing meaning and links, and exploring connections to the wider world are vital in preventing common misconceptions. This allows pupils to produce oral and written responses which use higher order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation and interpretation.
- By studying religion within a Christian context, and reflecting the Anglican tradition of our school, we aim to provide exciting learning experiences and sequenced learning, reaching for the highest standards of religious literacy and academic rigour. Religious Education is taught in line with the Church of England's Statement of Entitlement. Our aims are expressed in the words of Lord Runcie: *"Nourish those of the faith; Encourage those of other faiths; Challenge those who have no faith."* (The Way Ahead, Archbishop's Council 2001).

The RE curriculum will address social disadvantage by addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills:

- The RE curriculum will expose pupils from socio-economic disadvantaged backgrounds to religious and non-religious traditions other than their own, widening their scope of social understanding and diversity. By studying a range of world faiths and worldviews, it provides pupils with the knowledge and skills to flourish both within their own community and as members of a diverse and global society.
- We recognise that not all pupils will join St George's from a church primary. In support of this, we begin our journey by asking the questions 'what does it mean to belong?' and 'why are beliefs and values important to me and others?'. By exposing the pupils to the main religions, we provide them with the core knowledge that is needed to progress further as a compassionate member of society.
- The RE curriculum will give pupils a safe space to discuss their own beliefs and values. This in turn, means that the teacher and other pupils can address misconceptions through a meaningful and informed dialogue.

We fully believe RE can contribute to the personal development of pupils at St George's:

- A true love of RE involves learning about various cultures and we fully believe that as a subject it can contribute to the personal development of our pupils at St George's. We therefore teach beyond the specification requirements, but do ensure pupils are well prepared to be successful in their GCSE examinations. We have chosen to study Buddhism alongside Christianity at GCSE level, presenting pupils with a diverse outlook at two major world faiths, whilst also allowing them to explore their own views in relation to the divine, spiritual and scientific aspects of the world around us.
- It provides opportunities for pupils within each scheme of work to discuss and critically reflect upon key questions of meaning, philosophy and truth, such as the origins of the universe, life after death and beliefs about God.
- It will allow pupils to consider the relationship between religion and cultures, and how religions and beliefs contribute to cultural identity and practices. The teacher will always make the class aware of the diversity, as well as sensitivity to the questions and challenges that different views and cultures can present. By learning about a wide range of world faiths and world views, this will promote racial and interfaith harmony and respect for all; combat prejudice and discrimination, and promote awareness of how interfaith cooperation can support the pursuit of the common good.
- It will provide opportunities for social development, allowing pupils to investigate social issues from religious perspectives, recognising the diversity of viewpoints within and between religions, as well as the common ground between religions.
- By the end of Key Stage 3, pupils will be familiar with the origins and history of Christianity and the Abrahamic faiths, as well as some of the other major world religions. Pupils will be able to describe a range of religious concepts including the practices of worship and pilgrimage, as well as religious rites of passage and expressions of faith. Pupils will understand the significance of religious rules such as 'The Ten Commandments' and 'The Five Pillars of Islam' and their lasting importance in contemporary society. Pupils will also develop confidence in becoming courageous advocates, challenging injustice and suffering in the world and through personal experience, fostering empathy and tolerance within a diverse world. Through the teaching of stewardship, pupils will develop care and respect for each other and the world in which they live. Teaching of the 'Golden Rule', is of vital importance at St Georges, within Christianity and is upheld by all religions, and other religious stories and parables will instil and reinforce the qualities of kindness and tolerance and support the need for equality for all.
- By the end of Key Stage 4, pupils will demonstrate a deeper understanding of Christian and Buddhist beliefs, teachings, and practices and how these can differ depending on denomination. Pupils will identify how each faith might view the world around them, as well as the values required to live out their lives as part of a religious community. Pupils will confidently articulate justified opinions on ethical issues, giving religious, non-religious and personal views. Pupils will be able to explain in detail how religious teachings in both Christianity and Buddhism can be applied to contemporary moral issues such as euthanasia, abortion,

abuse of the world and the use of corporal and capital punishment. Students will know how religious organisations support the global problems of injustice and poverty and link religious teachings to these issues.

Opportunities are built in to make links to the world of work to enhance the careers, advice and guidance that pupils are exposed to:

- The RE curriculum systematically builds high-level employability skills that are essential in modern, globalised work environments. By analysing complex ethical dilemmas, interpreting varied source texts, and participating in structured debates, students master advanced skills in objective argumentation, conflict resolution, and information synthesis. Furthermore, the constant requirement to view situations from multiple perspectives fosters strong emotional intelligence, active listening, and the exceptional cross-cultural communication skills highly valued by contemporary employers.
- The academic and analytical nature of this subject prepares students for specific education routes and courses. The carefully selected content provides an essential foundation for GCSE and A-Level Religious Studies, Philosophy, Sociology, and Government and Politics. In higher and further education, it opens direct pathways to BA (Hons) degrees in Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, Law, International Relations, History, and Social Anthropology, alongside professional public sector apprenticeships.
- Engaging with diverse religious standpoints and ethical frameworks serves as a gateway to a broad spectrum of future careers across both public and private sectors. Direct professional pathways include roles in the civil service, local government, international development, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Additionally, the deep understanding of human diversity, legal ethics, and social dynamics makes RE an excellent foundation for highly competitive careers in law, journalism, human resources, social work, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and global marketing.

Through all key stages, our belief is that exam preparation, practice and home learning revision should be interleaved with revisited powerful knowledge that has been modelled and taught in lessons. This knowledge is recalled and applied through a range of tasks, from low-stakes quizzing to extended practice.

- At Key Stage 3, pupils will gain an understanding of **subject specific key terms** through Exam Preparation homework. These terms will be highlighted during their curriculum time and their knowledge will be expanded upon by putting these into context and practice. Recall quizzes and glossary tasks aim to consolidate this knowledge and understanding in preparation for assessment.
- At Key Stage 4 pupils will also gain an understanding of **subject specific key terms** relevant for the GCSE specification. These terms will be a focus of homework and are required in order for pupils to be able to fully engage with GCSE style questions.

CURRICULUM SEQUENCING

All children are entitled to a curriculum and to the powerful knowledge that will open doors and maximise their life chances. Below is a high-level overview of the critical knowledge children will learn in this particular subject, at each key stage from Year 7 through to Year 11, in order to equip pupils with the cultural capital they need to succeed in life. The curriculum is planned vertically and horizontally giving thought to the optimum knowledge sequence for building secure schema.

Unit Sequencing		
Year 7	Term 1	What does it mean to belong? What does it mean to be a person of faith?
	Term 2	How does the covenant shape Jewish identity and the global Jewish community? How does Jesus' identity shape the global Christian community?
	Term 3	How do Muhammad and the idea of the ummah shape Muslim identity? How do Dharmic religions reflect diverse perspectives on life and reality?
Year 8	Term 1	Do arguments for God's existence provide proof or simply support belief? Do beliefs about life after death provide certainty or simply offer hope?
	Term 2	How can people live as responsible stewards of the world? Life: Is it fair?
	Term 3	What happens when faith inspires action? Do sacred texts enable response in times of crisis?
Year 9	Term 1	What really matters in the journey of life?
	Term 2	How visible are religious beliefs and worldviews?
	Term 3	What do Christian beliefs reveal about the nature of God? How and why is Jesus Christ seen as the redeemer?

Year 10	Term 1	Christianity Practices: Worship & Festivals Christianity Practices: The Role of the Church
	Term 2	Buddhism: Key beliefs - The Life of the Buddha Buddhism: Key beliefs - The Dhamma
	Term 3	Buddhism Practices: Worship & Festivals Buddhist practices: Buddhist Ethics
Y 11	Term 1	Thematic Studies: Crime and punishment Thematic Studies: Peace and Conflict
	Term 2	Thematic Studies: Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice Thematic Studies: Religion and life
	Term 3	Revision and closing the gaps