



RE POLICY

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RE POLICY

In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1988 and the Education Act of 1996, Religious Education is an entitlement for all students. This position has been made all the stronger following the Commission on RE (CORE) Report of 2018 and the OFSTED Review of 2021.

RE is unique in that while Agreed Syllabi are determined locally (in this case by Sheffield LEA) it still fulfils the aims of the National Curriculum by enabling young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens. It makes a major contribution to spiritual and moral development of young people by providing opportunities for them to learn from religious and secular world views as well as about them. Underpinning all the work of the RE department is our commitment to "Valuing everyone, caring for each other, Achieving excellence."

Our vision is that every young person experiences an academically rigorous and personally inspiring education in religion and worldviews to better equip them to realise their life chances and dreams. We live in a diverse, plural country and a globalised world. Society is neither wholly religious or wholly secular, it is both multi religious and multi secular. To become happy, confident, fulfilled, and successful members of modern society, our students need to understand their own perspective and those of others from multiple backgrounds and outlooks.

This means that our curriculum should:

- Support students to recognise, that they, like everyone else, have a worldview, crafted by perspective, experience and context.
- Help students to make sense of and appreciate the rich diverse and complex world around them in relation to religious and non-religious worldviews.
- Introduce students to disciplinary lenses such as philosophy, theology, and sociology to enable them to be open minded and make academically informed judgements about moral and social issues and religious and nonreligious worldviews in their context, culture, and diversity.
- Encourage students to recognise, reflect on and develop their personal worldview, and to understand how their worldview provides a lens through which they encounter the worldviews of others to help them gain a greater appreciation of their own place in society.
- Help students to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and non-religious world views, e.g. Humanism, represented in Great Britain.
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies, and cultures.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teaching of principal religions represented in Great Britain and statements by non-religious organisations such as the British Humanist Society.
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, cultural, and social development by:
 - o Developing an awareness of the fundamental questions of life raised by human experience, and the religious and secular responses to them.
 - o Reflecting on their own beliefs, values, and experiences in the light of their study.
- Develop and promote a tolerant understanding of and respect for religious and non-religious believers in our multicultural society.
- Develop a positive attitude towards living in a society of diverse religious and non-religious views.

In meeting these aims, RE at Tapton does not seek to promote any one religion; rather it promotes a learning environment which supports children of all faiths or none by encouraging students to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others in a way that reinforces the position of the individual within our community.

Our **curriculum intents** are shared with students via the SAIL mnemonic. The analogy of the ship envisages a multi religious, multi secular sea through which students must navigate. While at Tapton our curriculum journey is driven by the four sails: spiritual and personal development, academic progress, intellectual curiosity, and religious literacy. By the time students leave us, they will have had the opportunity to gain sufficient knowledge to prepare them for adult life in modern Britain and beyond. In analogous terms, this means they will be able to steer their own boat, recognising the developmental nature of their own worldview as well as being able to make academically informed judgements about the worldviews they encounter.

The Curriculum:

KEY STAGE 3:

RE Departments within TSAT share 50% of substantive knowledge and 100% of disciplinary knowledge, procedural knowledge, and threshold concepts.

Agreed core substantive knowledge:

It is likely that the three schools (Forge, Bradfield and Tapton) will share more than 50% of substantive knowledge in Y7 and 8 due to the collaborative nature of our relationships. It should however be noted that individual Schemes of Learning may differ due to context, prior learning, and links to nonaligned topics. At Tapton all units at Key Stage 3 are designed to facilitate the delivery of the new Sheffield Agreed Syllabus for RE.

Year 7

The first unit in Y7 underpins all the work of the RE department. Students are introduced to the concept of worldviews and the idea that everyone has a personal worldview that is shaped by their experiences in life. They are introduced to the rich and diverse religious and non-religious worldviews of the people of Sheffield and beyond. Throughout Key Stage 3 students are encouraged to recognise, reflect on, and develop their personal world view, recognising that it is a lens through which they encounter the worldviews of others and gain a better appreciation of their own place in society. They are also introduced to three disciplinary lenses through which all Key Stage 3 enquiry questions are investigated: theological, philosophical, and sociological. Other Y7 enquiry questions include, "Where can young people today find wisdom by which to live?", an investigation into the lives and example of Abraham, the Buddha, Jesus, and Martin Luther King. The final Y7 unit is a philosophical investigation into 'Where can God be found?' exploring both religious and non religious responses to this question.

Year 8

Students build upon the skills accumulated in Year 7 through a study of ethical issues in our world and the role that religion and philosophical thought has in tackling these. The question of wisdom is revisited, this time through the lives and influence of Muhammad, Guru Nanak, and Malala. An ethics module allows students to explore what religious and non-religious ethical theories can tell us about the right and wrong ways to behave. This includes a consideration of environmental issues from different ethical viewpoints. The final unit in year eight focuses How do Sikh teachings on equality and service make a difference today.

Year 9

Students will begin work on topics taken from the Edexcel GCSE course in Religious Studies (Specification B papers 1b and 2c) in an age-appropriate way. This enables students to gain a full GCSE at the end of Year 11 without impacting on their GCSE option choices.

Students undertake an in-depth study of Christian and Muslim beliefs. These units build on knowledge gained through the enquiry questions considered in Y7 and 8 and provide a strong platform from which to explore the application of specific religious teachings to important ethical issues in Y9 and in Key Stage 4. Students begin work on this during Y9 in the topic 'Marriage and Family through Christianity'. Here they apply ethical ideas studied in Y8 and Christian beliefs studied earlier in Y9. They are able to explore links to Personal Development topics such as Personal Relationships. Having two lessons per week in Y9 allows us to build understanding of difficult concepts more effectively due to the shorter gap between lessons and the opportunity to develop to deeper understanding.

KEY STAGE 4

In recognition of the valuable contribution that Religious Education makes to social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development, community cohesion and academic excellence, GCSE Religious Studies forms part of the core offer at Key stage 4. Students follow Edexcel GCSE Religious Studies B, papers 1B and 2C. While certification is not legally required, research shows that students gain the most from their experiences in RE when the academic value of the subject is recognised. The GCSE course focuses on Christian, Muslim, and non-religious responses to contemporary moral and philosophical issues such as war, crime and punishment, and matters of life and death. Students are encouraged evaluate these responses and to develop their own reasoned opinions.

There are 2 written exam papers at the end of the course in year 11.

KEY STAGE 5:

Religious Studies is also offered as an option at both AS and A Level. Students follow OCR Religious Studies H573. Religious Studies is a respected subject at this level due to the academic rigour and high level critical thinking skills inherent in the programme of study. In recognition of this, Religious Studies A Level appears on the Russell Group Universities list of preferred subjects at A Level.

The modules studied build on knowledge gained at GCSE Level but are not dependent on previous experience. A Level Religious Studies places emphasis on problem solving and a rigorous examination of evidence and scholarly views together with the development of sustained and well supported arguments. While it is a perfect choice for students hoping to pursue degrees in Philosophy, Theology or Religious Studies, it is also particularly useful for students considering careers in medicine, social work, personnel management, education, public relations, the police force, journalism, and the legal professions.

Modules studied:

Philosophy of Religion:

- Ancient Greek influences on philosophy of religion, specifically looking at Plato and Aristotle Tapton School
- The nature of the soul mind and body
- Arguments for the existence or non-existence of God
- Issues in religious language
- The nature and impact of religious experience
- The problem of evil and suffering and its challenge to belief.
- Ideas about the nature and attributes of God
- Issues in religious language.

Religion and Ethics:

- Normative ethical theories such as Kantian ethics, natural law, and situation ethics
- The application of ethical theory to euthanasia and business ethics.
- Ethical language and thought.
- Debates surrounding conscience and free will.
- Sexual ethics and the influence of ethical thought on developments in religious belief.

Developments in Religious Thought:

- Beliefs, teachings and ideas about human life, the world and ultimate reality: Augustine's teaching on human nature; Death and the afterlife.
- Gender and society; gender and theology
- The challenge of secularism; liberation theology

Withdrawal from RE

This right was first granted in 1944 when curricular RE was called 'Religious Instruction' and carried with it connotations of induction into the Christian faith. RE is very different now – open, broad and exploring a range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

Although parents still have the right to withdraw their child from the RE provided by the school, due to the inclusive nature of RE and many benefits it provides, parents rarely exercise this right. Every care is taken to ensure that RE provision is appropriate for all students and there should be no need for any child to be withdrawn. It is the policy of the school to address any concerns that parents may have concerning RE.

Parents wishing to exercise the right to withdraw their child from RE should in the first instance contact the Subject Leader for RE who will try to address any concerns. If following discussion concerns remain, parents should formalise their request by writing to the Head Teacher.

Parents should note:

- The right to withdraw is not from RE itself but from the RE provided by the school, alternative provision that seeks to further the child's knowledge and understanding of the parent's beliefs, values and philosophies must be provided by the parent and copies made available to the subject leader.
- This time is not for private study, extra tuition in another subject or homework.