

Religious Studies is a core subject within Archbishop Blanch School which is at the heart of our work as a Church of England place of learning. The opportunity for our students to study and share their ideas about our local and international faith communities, and to reflect on what it means to be a person of faith in the 21st century, is at the heart of the work of the department.

#What is your curriculum statement for each key stage?

KS3- In Years 7 and 8 the students follow schemes of work based on the New Framework for church schools. Students are given the chance to learn about religious life and work of a range of people, and to learn the skills of empathy and reflective understanding which are so important in this subject. In addition to developing the spiritual and moral language of our pupils, we emphasise key Christian values chosen by our school community. These are community, compassion, trust, thanksgiving, forgiveness and friendship.

KS4- In Years 9-11 all students follow a course in AQA Religious Studies. Students will sit two examinations at the end of Year 11 forming 100% of the course.

Our GCSE specifications provide a broad understanding of the beliefs and practices of the faiths Christianity and Islam, as well as promoting religious literacy and the contemplation of ultimate questions.

Students will be able to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in light of what they have learnt. There will be a range of relevant and contemporary themes to study that will promote awareness of modern-world issues and engagement within the classroom.

Students of all abilities will be challenged and inspired, whilst developing valuable skills sought after by higher education and employers.

KS5- In Years 12 and 13 students are able to follow the course in A level Religious Studies, which is one of the most popular subjects at this level in the school. We invite students who have achieved a Grade 6 at both English and Religious Studies to study the subject. The subject is split into three sections Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Ethics and The study of Christianity.

How does learning develop through each key stage?

Religious Studies at Archbishop Blanch Church of England High School is a rigorous academic subject. Religious Education and our Religious Education provision at the school enables students to respond to personal, spiritual and moral questions that face us all as human beings. The department aims to promote mutual tolerance, understanding, openness and an appreciation of diversity.

Our subject deals with the deeper issues of life and helps students to become more skilled at independent thinking and encourages them to think critically, creatively and with sensitivity. As such it has a fundamental role to play in creating rounded students who will be part of future societies. It is therefore clear that Religious Education should be at the centre of the curriculum and at the heart of what we do in education.

This is very much in keeping with the Christian heritage of the school and our Church School Status.

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What principles guide your decision making? What is distinctive about your curriculum?

Religious Education is implicit in so many curriculum areas. The department is committed to helping students reflect more readily on the intellectual and imaginative ideas they produce. The units of study and our provision here within the school have been designed to help the students reach their potential as students, thinkers and individuals.

As teachers of Religious Education we have a challenging but rewarding job to do. We need to embed a respect for and an interest in ideas without allowing students to take those ideas at face value, thereby motivating, encouraging and inspiring students. We need to promote a culture of listening to each other so that academic learning can take place and so that the students can grow in experience, wisdom and understanding. Alongside listening skills, the study of different religions and culture will contribute towards the development of regard for others and the world in which we live. As teachers, it is part of our role to give the students confidence to strive for higher standards; supportive communication in lessons and in our written and verbal assessment of their work is therefore essential. Assessment for learning and built in DIRT time will also enable students to understand how their attainment can be improved.

We need to be prepared to answer questions and deal with queries that the students may have and therefore good subject knowledge and the ability to think on ones feet are pre-requisites. However, it is sometimes right to communicate that we cannot say with certainty whether an ideas is right or wrong, and that some questions are very complex. It is also essential to admit that one does not know the answer to a difficult or obscure question and to look up the answer at a later date outside the classroom rather than to pretend one knows the answer in a lesson.

How do you expect to see your curriculum delivered? How do you vary this delivery to meet the needs of all learners?

The teaching style in the department acknowledges the various learning styles of the students. In Religious Education it is important to allow students to put forward their views, thoughts and questions in discussion and also via role-play and drama. We emphasise the importance of 'The Big Picture' which outline lesson title, lesson objective and success criteria.

The department recognise that Religious Education is about giving the students the capacity to analyse, evaluate, reflect, think and reason for themselves and therefore encourages independent learning. We aim to compliment the best from traditional and modern teaching techniques including the use of both starter and plenary sessions.

Our overall goal is to be committed to giving all students the best learning experience we can by being willing to take time to help them academically, both inside and outside of lessons.

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The Religious Education Department considers itself lucky that it is such a flexible and wide-ranging subject that can be communicated with a range of teaching and learning methods. The department aims to use a variety of methods, to establish a variety of skills and to experiment with different tasks and activities.

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We regularly use the following teaching and learning techniques:

- General discussion – this cannot be underestimated in value as it is always led by enquiry
- Dilemmas
- Group work
- Dramas, role-play
- Games and simulations
- Student research
- ICT for fact/image finding and for summative revision work
- Student presentations
- Essays
- Structured written questions
- Starter sentences
- Creative writing – poem, letter or diary form
- Trip/activities and workshops
- Input from visitors.

The department is committed to the importance of varied and engaging learning and teaching methods. All colleagues also ensure that their CPD review targets focus on the importance of delivering exceptional lessons.

How do you vary the learning experiences when delivering the curriculum? In the classroom / outside the classroom / through different learning opportunities?

Religious Education at all levels offers students the opportunity to:

- Adopt and enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religions;
- Explore religions and beliefs, reflect on fundamental questions, engage with them intellectually and respond personally;
- Present their own ideas more clearly, confidently and logically;
- Learn the following, specified skills: to recall, select and organise material; to analyse and explain the relevance and application of a religion; to offer a balanced argument by evaluating different responses to religious, philosophical and moral issues;
- Develop some understanding of the scope of both Theology and Philosophy;
- Learn to work independently and with others;
- Recognise the value and responsible use that Religious Education plays within society;
- Promote an appreciation of the development and significance of Religious Education in personal, social, environmental, economic and technological contexts and an awareness of advances in technology, including ICT;

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- Be complete in themselves and perform a useful educational function for students not intending to study Religious Education and Philosophy at a higher level;
- To have suitable preparation for theological and philosophical studies in higher and other educational establishments and for professional courses which require students to have a sound knowledge of Religious Education and Philosophy when admitted;
- Students should be made aware that Religious Education and Philosophy is not to be studied in isolation; it should be related, in a wider sense, to the needs of people. Relevant and important aspects of modern life should be stressed, including those of a personal, social, environmental, economic and technological nature. The relevance of Religious Education to everyday life should be borne in mind.

There are many opportunities in the Religious Education curriculum for the delivery of philosophical ideas, especially at Key Stage 4 within the GCSE programme. Philosophy is integral to the Religious Education units of study as it allows students to consider different arguments and the way in which people show that their case is more convincing than someone else's. Philosophy also stimulates the imagination, requiring students to think laterally about a variety of issues, giving them the opportunity to think for themselves.

The aims of Philosophy are:

- To appreciate and employ with accuracy the formal language of reasoning: reasons, conclusions, assumptions and flaws;
- To analyse arguments presented in formal academic contexts as well as in the media, being able to recognise strengths and weaknesses;
- To appreciate and employ with a good degree of accuracy the formal language of credibility: bias, vested interest, neutrality, expertise, reputation and ability to perceive;
- To apply understanding to multiple choice questions about the structure of argument, such as those used in thinking skills' tests increasing adopted by universities and employers;
- To recognise moral and other forms of dilemma and appreciate different points of view;
- To appreciate that there are competing scientific and/or philosophical approaches to the same issue;
- To underpin work in other subjects involving the use of reasoning skills, including any subject in which a line of argument must be sustained;
- To provide the opportunity to 'think outside the box', involving questioning the question or looking at an accepted idea from a fresh perspective;
- To stimulate both independent thinking and creative solutions to difficult problems;
- To generate an atmosphere in which all questions are welcome and connections made between subject areas usually regarded as separate;

What impact does your curriculum have on the learners at Archbishop Blanch?

At Archbishop Blanch Church of England High School we believe that Religious Education:

- Nurtures the habit of thinking.
- Gives students a thinking edge
- Improves speaking and listening skills
- Supports the research that shows that philosophy training helps improve the academic performance of students in all subject areas.
- Helps students to think before they act
- Provides opportunity for free-thinking and free-speaking
- Provides fun and enjoyment
- Helps students learn to follow through; to follow through on their own lines of thought to some degree of depth supported by the rigour and discipline of Religious Education and philosophy.

What are your assessments for this academic year?

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Year 7	Topic 1-What do Christians believe about God? <i>assessment 1</i>	Topic 2- How do we know the difference between right and wrong? <i>Assessment 2</i>	Topic 3- Muslim beliefs. <i>Assessment 3</i>	Topic 4- Caring for the environment. <i>Assessment 4</i>	Topic 5- Journey of Faith. <i>Assessment 5</i>	Topic 6-Britain as a multifaith society <i>Assessment 6</i>
Year 8	Topic 1- Can we prove that God exists? <i>Assessment 1</i>	Topic 2- Is death the end? <i>Assessment 2</i>	Topic 3- What do Sikhs and Hindus believe? <i>Assessment 3</i>	Topic 4- Are we all equal? <i>Assessment 4</i>	Topic 5-Incarnation <i>Assessment 5</i>	Topic 6-Messengers of God <i>Assessment 6</i>
Year 9	Topic 1-Islam- Beliefs and practices <i>Assessment 1</i>	Topic 2- Introduction to Christianity <i>assessment 2</i>	Topic 3 - Introduction to ethical thought <i>assessment 3</i>	GCSE Paper 1- Christian Beliefs & Teachings <i>Mid point assessment-point assessment 4</i>	GCSE Paper 1 Christian Beliefs & Teachings <i>End of topic assessment</i>	Paper 1 Bible Study Project External competition entry

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Year 10	Paper 1 Islamic Beliefs & Teachings <i>End of topic assessment 1</i>	Paper 1 Islamic Practices <i>End of topic assessment 2</i>	Paper 2 Theme D:Religion,Peace and Conflict <i>Mid-point assessment 3</i>	Paper 2 Theme D:Religion,Peace and Conflict <i>End of topic - point assessment 4</i>	Paper 2 Theme E:Religion,Crime and Punishment <i>Mid-point assessment 5</i>	Paper 2 Theme E:Religion,Crime and Punishment <i>End of topic -point assessment 6</i>
Year 11	Theme A- Relationships & Families <i>Mid Point assessment 1</i>	Theme A- Relationships & Families <i>End of topic assessment 2</i>	Theme B Religion & Life <i>Mid point assessment 3</i>	Theme B Religion & Life <i>End of topic assessment 4</i>	Revision	Revision
Year 12	Component 2 Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – inductive Arguments for the existence of God – deductive <i>End of topic assessment 1</i>	Component 2 Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief - the problem of evil and suffering <i>End of topic assessment 2</i>	Component 2 Theme 3: Religious Experience <i>End of topic assessment 3</i>	Component 2 Theme 4: Religious language <i>End of topic assessment 4</i>	Component 3 Theme 1: Ethical Thought <i>End of topic assessment 5</i>	
Year 13	Component 3 Theme 4: Determinism and Free will – Determinism <i>End of topic assessment 1</i>	Component 1 Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts <i>End of topic assessment 2</i>	Component 1 Theme 2: Religious concepts and religious life <i>End of topic assessment 3</i>	Component 1 Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought <i>End of topic assessment 4</i>	Component 1 Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity <i>End of topic assessment 5</i>	

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Long Term Plan:

	HT1	HT2	HT3	HT4	HT5	HT6	External assessment
7	Topic 1-What do Christians believe about God?	Topic 2- How do we know the difference between right and wrong?	Topic 3- Muslim beliefs.	Topic 4- Caring for the environment.	Topic 5- Journey of Faith.	Topic 6-Britain as a multifaith society	
8	Topic 1- Can we prove that God exists?	Topic 2- Is death the end?	Topic 3- What do Sikhs and Hindus believe?	Topic 4- Are we all equal?	Topic 5-Incarnation	Topic 6-Messengers of God	
9 AQA	Topic 1-Islam-Beliefs and practices	Topic 2- Introduction to Christianity	Topic 3 - Introduction to ethical thought	GCSE Paper 1- Christian Beliefs & Teachings	GCSE Paper 1 Christian Beliefs & Teachings	Paper 1 Bible Study Project	
10 AQA	Paper 1 Islamic Practices	Paper 2 Islamic Practices	Paper 2 Theme D:Religion,Peace and Conflict	Paper 2 Theme D:Religion,Peace and Conflict	Paper 2 Theme E:Religion,Crime and Punishment	Paper 2 Theme E:Religion,Crime and Punishment	
11 AQA	Theme A- Relationships & Families	Theme A- Relationships & Families	Theme B Religion & Life	Theme B Religion & Life	Revision	Revision	Paper 1 The study of Religions- Islam and Christianity 50%. Paper 2 Thematic Studies 50%.

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<p>12 Eduqas</p>	<p>Component 2 Theme 1: Arguments for the existence of God – inductive Arguments for the existence of God – deductive</p>	<p>Component 2 Theme 2: Challenges to religious belief - the problem of evil and suffering</p>	<p>Component 2 Theme 3: Religious Experience</p>	<p>Component 2 Theme 4: Religious language</p>	<p>Component 3 Theme 1: Ethical Thought</p>	<p>Component 3 Theme 2: Deontological Ethics</p>	<p>Component 3 Theme 3: Teleological ethics</p>
<p>13 Eduqas</p>	<p>Component 3 Theme 4: Determinism and Free will – Determinism</p>	<p>Component 1 Theme 1: Religious figures and sacred texts</p>	<p>Component 1 Theme 2: Religious concepts and religious life</p>	<p>Component 1 Theme 3: Significant social and historical developments in religious thought</p>	<p>Component 1 Theme 4: Religious practices that shape religious identity</p>		<p>Paper 1 Christianity 33% Paper 2 Religion and Philosophy 33% Paper 3 Religion and Ethics</p>