



## **SMSC Statement - Religious Studies**

### **Spiritual Development in Religious Education**

Students experience and search for meaning, the purpose in life and the values by which we live. In learning about different religions and why people believe, students should have the opportunity to learn from their experiences, to reflect on and interpret spirituality and their own lives and discuss and reflect on ultimate questions. They are also encouraged to use their imagination and creativity in their learning.

In Key stage 3 students begin by studying some of the ultimate questions in life such as 'Is there a God?', the creation of the universe and the six main world religions, through a study of specific religions. We study the different cultures and belief systems to ensure students can relate to people from a different faith. The GCSE course develops into a thematic study of Christianity and Islam, through the Edexcel Short/Full course specification. Throughout both key stages, students are encouraged to reflect upon a range of experiences that are presented through life and develop their own opinion on religious, moral and ethical issues.

Examples of Good Practice include:

- In Year 7 students are given the opportunity to be reflective about their own beliefs when studying 'Why do we learn RE?', does God exist? and consider the 'Religion versus Science' arguments.
- In Year 8 students consider the problem of 'Evil and Suffering' for theists and evaluate arguments whether evil and suffering exists proves God does not exist, or it is the result of human actions.
- In KS4 students are taught how to answer exam questions in line with the examining body. They will learn how to link scripture to their own responses and the importance of presenting a balanced argument to religious and ethical issues, reaching a personal justified conclusion.

### **Moral development in Religious Education**

Students learn about shared and differing moral values, while debating moral dilemmas about right and wrong, good and bad, and so on. Students discuss issues such as people's responsibility towards the world and future generations. Students have the opportunity to make a personal response to right and wrong and to consider other people's responses to

moral issues. Students are given the opportunity to recognise the difference between right and wrong, and readily apply this understanding in their own lives.

In Key stage 3 students develop their study of religions into moral themes and consider ethical dilemmas such as: prejudice and discrimination, Animal Rights and designer babies. In Key stage 4 students are introduced to issues such as Abortion, Euthanasia and the effects of war. Students must develop their opinions on these issues and support them by explaining the consequences. All views must be challenged by an opposing views' through debates and discussions.

Examples of Good Practice include:

- In year 7 students study different religious teachings such as the 10 commandments, the eightfold path and the teachings of Guru Nanak, and reflect on how they are still relevant in modern day society.

- In Year 8 students study two comparative religions: Christianity and Islam, and examine the religious laws connected to issues of morality that occur in today's society.

In KS4, students consider the fundamental British values of the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

- In KS4 students consider the arguments for and against war and apply the Just War rules to conflict in the real world.

- In Key Stage 4 students gain an understanding of crime and punishment and examine how the justice system uses reformation and deterrence methods to ensure peace and harmony within society.

### **Social development in Religious Education**

Students explore similarities and differences in religions and cultures through sharing their experiences and opinions. Students must learn to accept differing viewpoints and are taught how to look at things from a different perspective. The expectation of tolerance and respect is embedded in lessons and is adhered to by all students. This then encourages students to continue with these attributes outside the classroom by assisting them to become informed citizens in the wider community. Through the study of different religions, students can develop an understanding and awareness of the similarities and differences they may have with other students in their class.

In Key Stage 3 students will study Religions found in Bradford and the UK. They will compare how different religions mark rites of passage and recognise that people may do things differently to them. In Key Stage 4, students continue to learn about religious communities and the daily life of followers of religion. They continue to study the diversity that exists within religion.

Examples of Good Practice include:

- In Year 7 students compare different Holy Books and their teachings of understanding other religious groups as their neighbour and embracing all faiths as equal.
- In Year 8 students focus on the bigger theological questions, such as 'Is there life after death?' and 'Is there evidence of religious experiences?'
- In KS4 students consider responses to conflict on a personal level and then more widely. They explore ways conflicts can be resolved and the importance of reconciliation.
- In Key Stage 4 students study the role of places of worship in society starting with the local community, then continuing to look nationally and globally.

### **Cultural development in Religious Education**

Students learn about other religions, giving them an opportunity to see what it means to belong, to develop confidence in themselves and be able to respond positively to similarities and differences in our multi-faith and changing society. Students are given the opportunity to understand and appreciate of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage and that of others.

In Key Stage 3 students study religion in the locality and build on their knowledge and understanding of the six main religions.

In key Stage 4 students are encouraged to accept and understand the diversity that exists within and between Christianity and Islam. As with Educational guidance, we ensure that Christianity is covered as the main religious tradition of Great Britain.

Examples of Good Practice include:

- In Year 7 students explore religions through guest speakers and visits to places of worship of other faiths to support the understanding of different cultures.
- In Year 8 students study the community cohesion unit focusing on racism, Britain as a multi-cultural society and Government actions to promote community cohesion.
- In Key Stage 4 students are expected to be able to appreciate the cultural differences between Christianity and Islam by reflecting on beliefs and practices such as the nature of God, Holy Books, customs and rituals.