

DEPARTMENT : Religious Studies

“Religious Education no longer strives to induct children into the Christian faith or offer a superficial religiously-oriented course of multicultural studies. Instead it provides an intellectually grounded, philosophically and theologically astute exploration of ultimate questions of meaning, purpose and truth that have direct relevance to British society.” (Andrew Wright – writing in the Telegraph)

Religious Studies is a core subject at Holy Trinity. We form a strong department with exam results which have been good for a number of years. We share a strong vision of education for religious literacy and spiritual growth and strive continuously to provide an education which meets the needs of individual children – both academically and in terms of their cultural and religious identity. We encourage high level, respectful discussion which is inclusive of the rich diversity of beliefs and traditions this school is blessed with. It is our aim for every child to understand the Christian beliefs and way of life, not just by experiencing it through the school community but also by understanding it through rigorous learning.

The department has an important part to play in promoting the Christian ethos within the school and helping other departments to integrate Christian teaching into their own subjects.

STAFFING STRUCTURE

The department consists of five specialist teachers with a wide range of experience and expertise including the Head of Law and a Lead Practitioner who is also the school’s Professional Tutor. In Year 7, students have one teacher for all of their Humanities subjects, whilst retaining discrete Religious Studies lessons. We are looking to add another subject specialist to the RS team.

Courses and Exam Boards

In Year 7,8 and 9 all pupils study Religious Studies for 1 hour a week. There is an umbrella theme for each of these years which focuses mainly on Christianity. In addition, other world religions are studied systematically.

Currently the theme for Year 7 is “Symbol and Story in religion” which includes aspects of Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Sikhism. Years 8 the theme is “Community” which includes the study of Islam. We are also looking at “Salvation History” and the community of the Church. In Year 9, the theme is “An introduction to philosophy and ethics of religion” and Buddhism is studied. Our schemes of work are being developed in line with Church of England’s new initiative Understanding Christianity.

At Key Stage 4, all pupils take GCSE. In addition to a study of Christianity, alongside Ethics from a Christian perspective, we have chosen to teach Islam as the 2nd religion. This is the largest of the minority faith groups in the school.

At Key Stage 5 we are teaching the Eduqas (WJEC) A level specification. We cover Philosophy, Ethics and the study of Christianity.

Accommodation; Events and Activities; Current links with other depts.

The RS department is housed in a suite of 5 rooms, comprising of: 4 general classrooms (one of which is equipped with 15 computers), one smaller teaching room. All classrooms have a data projector, in-built sound system and interactive whiteboards. The RS office is in the same area and has an excellent collection of resources.

In addition to class based learning we are keen to expose students to a range of religious environments, so for instance the Year 8 students visit a local church in the Summer Term and a visit for Year 10 to a local mosque. We have also over recent years organised trips to the Wintershall open-air production of the “Life of Christ” and Philosophy and Ethics 6th form conferences in London.

Whilst many of our students come from Christian families or those of other world faiths, there are many who do not have this type of background. We believe that it is our duty to make students aware of what it means to follow a faith and to develop a respect and tolerance for the beliefs of others.