**Information on the Religious Education Department**

**The Department**

There are eight RE teachers in the department who together make up a successful team with experience, enthusiasm and motivation to develop new and forward thinking initiatives to improve the learning of all pupils and students. Teachers deliver the curriculum across Key Stage 3, 4 and 5 play an active role in departmental development, enrichment and developing the spiritual life of the school. Staff work together closely on the preparation, production and evaluation of resources and collaboratively review schemes of work and assessments. The RE department work closely with the Chaplaincy team who support the work of the RE department both in classroom and non-classroom based learning.

**Accommodation and Resources**

The hub of the department is centred in the Nash block, which was opened in 2000. There are 5 dedicated Religious Education rooms, all of which have an interactive whiteboard, a PC connected to the school network and in-room storage. Staff within the department have built a large library of resources, including books, DVDs, videos and electronic resources which are centrally stored in the departmental office and therefore available for general use by all departmental staff. The department office has provision for staff to work during their non-contact time in addition to communal work areas. Staff also have access to the school Chapel in which they can timetable lessons.

**The Curriculum**

***Key Stage 3***

All pupils in Key Stage 3 are timetabled to receive five 1 hour lessons over a two-week timetable. Teaching groups are mixed ability and pupils are taught in tutor groups in years 7 and 8. All pupils in Key Stage 3 receive a broad and balanced RE curriculum based on the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales in the Curriculum Directory. The schemes of work are broadly based on the traditional ‘*The Way, The Truth and The Life’* model and all textbook editions of this programme are available for use within the department. Other key teaching resources are centrally coordinated for teacher reference. Pupils in Key Stage 3 are assessed each half term and at the end of the year.

***Key Stage 4***

All pupils in Key Stage 4 are timetabled to receive five 1 hour lessons over a two-week timetable. Teaching groups are mixed ability classes. The delivery of the GCSE content starts in Year 9 and all pupils in Key Stage 4 are studying Edexcel Specification A: Catholic Christianity, Judaism and Philosophy and Ethics

***Key Stage 5***

Students can opt to study Eduqas Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics at A Level. This comprises of the three components taught by religion, philosophy and ethics specialists. Students are timetabled to receive ten1 hour lessons over a two-week timetable.

All students in the Sixth Form are timetabled to receive two 1 hour lessons of ‘Core Religious Studies’ every two weeks. This is a compulsory course and is assessed by teachers across the course of the year.

**Enrichment**

There are a number of enrichment opportunities offered and supported by the Religious Education Department. There is an annual trip for each of the year groups at Key Stage 3:

* Year 7 Friendship Days early in the autumn term, ran by the Chaplaincy team
* Year 8 visit churches in Stevenage Old Town in the last half of the summer term
* Year 9 visit the Masorti synagogue, St Albans in the summer term to support their GCSE course

The department offers and directly supports a wide variety of enrichment opportunities for pupils and students within school. There are a number of visitors and groups we have welcomed to the school in recent years, including:

* Ten Ten Theatre for Years 8 – 10
* Members of the local mosque, Baptist church and Coptic church
* University Chaplains for students considering university application
* Grade booster revision days where the school hosts visitors from other schools in the region

After school sessions are offered to examination groups in both Key Stage 4 and 5 as a matter of course. These are coordinated with the support of the whole department.

Within curriculum time pupils and students from Year 7 to Year 13 have the opportunity to learn and worship together in the school chapel and the department works very closely with the school’s Lay Chaplain to support whole school worship and liturgy.

Pupils and students also have the opportunity to join a variety of groups, with which the RE department have close ties, including the student Chaplaincy teams, Fair Trade and the Young Philosophers’ group. Recent opportunities to travel with the school to Auschwitz, Lourdes, to Uganda and to World Youth Day have all been offered to students and pupils and coordinated by members of the department and Chaplaincy team.