



Queen  
Elizabeth's  
— ACADEMY —

# Curriculum Rationale

## Religious Education

Mrs Smart – Head of RE

April 2021



Diverse  
Academies

## **Introduction**

Religious Education enables students to investigate, question and reflect on the big questions of life. Here at the Queen Elizabeth's Academy students are given opportunities to consider the "Big Story" (Understanding Christianity) of human existence. Students reflect on how they contribute to the local and worldwide community as caring, respectful and spiritual beings.

At the Queen Elizabeth's Academy varied opportunities are provided for individuals to develop a sense of wellbeing to fulfil their potential to live "life in all its fullness" by giving our all for the love of God. The Christian ethos of the Academy family offers a stimulating, caring and loving environment where all are valued to live the principle "Learning and loving together forever- Semper Eadem."

Students experience a wealth and depth of knowledge whilst exploring Christianity as a living faith. Students are immersed in the knowledge of selected major world faiths and worldwide views. Religious Education follows the New Agreed Syllabus for Nottinghamshire and Diocesan initiative "Understanding Christianity". The choice of focus is a decision based on the fundamental messages of the Abrahamic faiths and also the beliefs of students within our Academy family, to ensure Religious Education is respectful and inclusive to all. Our studies consider the varied strands of disciplines within Religious Education where students reflect on Theological, Philosophical, Social Sciences and Ethical questions.

Students have opportunities to reflect on the impact a living faith has on the individual and the community. Woven into our studies, students are also encouraged to reflect and develop a sense of their own spiritual understanding as well as expressing their own beliefs with respectful confidence. It embraces the nurturing of individuals to understand their purpose and place in the world. Religious Education enhances the Church of England values and concepts of Wisdom, Hope, Community and Dignity. Students learn about religion to enhance their appreciation of learning from religion. This is achieved through the three elements of Religious Education in the New Agreed Syllabus aims (embedded by September 2021).

## **Christian Distinctiveness**

At the Queen Elizabeth's Academy varied opportunities are provided for individuals to fulfil their potential to live "life in all its fullness" by giving our all for the love of God. The Christian ethos of the Academy family offers a stimulating, caring and loving environment where all are valued to live the principle "Learning and loving together forever- Semper Eadem." Relationships between staff and students are built upon respect and an inclusive learning environment.

Throughout the Religious Education curriculum, the Christian Distinctiveness of the Academy and the Nine Core values are embedded. Each area of study embraces the Nine Core values (empathy, nurture, joy matters to us, good manners, justice and equality, togetherness, forgiveness and reconciliation truthfulness, knowledge and wisdom) as documented on the Fine Level Sequencing of each unit of work, student booklets and homework tasks. They are also overtly referenced within lessons for students to appreciate that the Nine Core Values enrich and provide learning experiences to explore their meaning in a modern context for example the core values expressed in Romans 12 and selected Proverbs (Year 9 Wisdom unit).

Specific areas of study explore the Nine Core Values in depth and forms the basis of concrete learning to encourage students to be able to understand, express, explain and articulate how these values add meaning and purpose to their lives (Year 7 Genesis, People of God, Gospels and Good News, Inspirational People).

Religious Education makes an important contribution to a school's responsibility to promote respect for all and provides a context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity. Students are encouraged to promote our shared values and to challenge racism, discrimination and extremism. The Academy community celebrates different cultures, beliefs and

values through a variety of mediums, of which Religious Education supports. Links are growing with local church leaders. Religious Education also provides opportunities for enrichment.

## **Knowledge in Religious Education**

The curriculum is designed to gain knowledge to understand the variety of belief systems locally, nationally and worldwide considering monotheistic religions, polytheistic religions and worldwide views. The curriculum is delivered in chronological order of the Abrahamic faiths beginning with Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These religions are connected. This is stressed throughout Key Stage 3 and constantly interlinked and interleaving concepts support students to commit this knowledge to their long term memory. The curriculum builds on the knowledge of each religion in order to fully understand how they evolved from Judaism. Religious Education is a rich knowledge based curriculum where students are immersed in gaining appropriate knowledge to ensure they build confidence to apply to the big questions of life within a carefully planned spiral curriculum.

Biblical literacy forms a growing focus to enable students to access the divine words and to allow students the space to understand their own spiritual being and development.

At Key Stage 3 students consider three overarching questions to help provide coherence, direction and purpose to our curriculum. They seek to make explicit the wider narratives so that students are able to identify significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within periods and growth of faith.

The three questions sit behind our five-year plan and determine the stories, narratives and concepts that students learn across the curriculum and not just in individual units. As students' progress through the curriculum, they are expected to know and understand more about the big questions with concepts becoming increasingly complex and problematized. Units of work explore modern dilemmas and worldwide issues.

RE offers a knowledge rich curriculum which is overarched by 3 Big Questions:

- 1 What do you learn about God?
- 2 Why are sources of wisdom so important?
- 3 What does a living faith look like?

There will be review lessons of which students can explore these big questions within RE and from other curriculum areas. For example to further aid cohesion to the Five Year Plan Religious Education interleaves with English and Humanities where common Big Questions relate to power, morality, motivation democracy and the influence of religion within British culture. These are designed to allow students to identify links between texts, historical contexts and events. These questions are included in our lessons via visual prompts on the lesson slides and as each student progresses through the curriculum to provide a deeper understanding of Learning about religion to Learning from religion leading to a possibility of learning to live religion.

At Key Stage 4, GCSE content of Edexcel Unit B is taught. The challenges of Christian and Islamic belief systems within a modern society is learned as well as how these two religions continue to express their religious lifestyles in the UK. It involves analysing Biblical/ Quranic literacy and other sources of wisdom and authority to fully appreciate their deep held beliefs. This builds on the previous KS 3 curriculums. Scripture is critically analysed and applied to Christian and Islamic beliefs. Catholic and Protestant beliefs are taught as well as Humanist, Atheist and Muslim beliefs.

Specialist language and terminology are embedded, linking cross- religious beliefs is also an integral part of the GCSE course.

## **Careers and Aspirations**

Religious Education prepares students for the world of work and raising aspirations through the Nine Core values. The overt explorations and discussion through schemes of work considers how students can be the best versions of themselves. For example when studying Proverbs in the Wisdom unit, students reflect on the messages of Proverbs and how they are relevant to their own lives “Do not be lazy”, “A joyful heart is good medicine”, “A kind word bring cheer”. The subject celebrates togetherness by making progress academically and ethically. The subject nurtures students to be responsible, thoughtful and caring adults throughout their studies. The many professional career opportunities are usually of a caring nature, therefore it is important for students to develop the values of empathy, equality, good manners and forgiveness. It is essential that students are encouraged to flourish. It is important that students critically consider and articulate thoughts in a respectful manner within the world of work- Religious Education offers a platform for such values.

## **Overview of curriculum plan**

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	Beliefs and the Abrahamic faiths	Genesis and Holy Scripture	People of God and Biblical Literacy	Incarnation of Jesus	Good News	The kingdom of God
Year 8	Inspirational People	Inspirational People	Worship	Worship	Islam	Islam in Society
Year 9	Growth of Christianity	Growth of Christianity	Wisdom	Wisdom	Christianity in Action	Christianity and Islam in Action
Year 10 Short course	Christian Beliefs	Christian Beliefs	Marriage and the Family in Christianity	Marriage and the Family in Christianity	Muslim Beliefs	Muslim Beliefs
Year 10 Full Course	Christian Beliefs	Christian Beliefs	Living the Christian Life	Marriage and the Family in Christianity	Matters of Life and Death in Christianity	Muslim beliefs
Year 11 Short course	Muslim Beliefs	Crime and Punishment in Islam	Crime and Punishment in Islam	Revision	Revision	
Year 11 Full Course	Muslim beliefs	Living the Muslim life	Crime and Punishment in Islam	Peace and Conflict in Islam	Revision	