

POLICY STATEMENT

Number 29	Date Approved by SLT December 2024
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RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

Ethos statement (taken from the Instrument of Government)

Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Christian faith. The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of non-denominational Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all pupils.

Legal Requirement

“The Academy Trust shall make provision for the teaching of religious education and for a daily act of collective worship at the Academy. The Academy Trust shall ensure that provision shall be made for religious education to be given to all pupils at the Academy in accordance with the requirements for agreed syllabuses in section 375(3) of the Education Act 1996 and paragraph 2(5) of Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.”

Aims

The curriculum for RE aims to ensure that all pupils:

- A. Know about and understand a range of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
 - Describe, explain and analyse beliefs and practices, recognising the diversity which exists within and between communities and amongst individuals;
 - Identify, investigate and respond to questions posed, and responses offered by some of the sources of wisdom found in religions and worldviews;
 - Appreciate and appraise the nature, significance and impact of different ways of life and ways of expressing meaning.
- B. Express ideas and insights about the nature, significance and impact of religions and worldviews, so that they can:
 - Explain reasonably their ideas about how beliefs, practices and forms of expression influence individuals and communities;
 - Express with increasing discernment their personal reflections and critical responses to questions and teachings about identity, diversity, meaning and value, including ethical issues;
 - Appreciate and appraise varied dimensions of religion or a worldview
- C. Gain and deploy the skills needed to engage seriously with religions and worldviews, so that they can:

- Find out about and investigate key concepts and questions of belonging, meaning, purpose and truth, responding creatively;
- Enquire into what enables different individuals and communities to live together respectfully for the wellbeing of all;
- Articulate beliefs, values and commitments clearly in order to explain why they may be important in their own and other people's lives.

The following version of those aims is shared with pupils for REP (Religion Ethics and Philosophy), RS (Religious Studies) and Philosophy - from the departmental Intent, Implementation and Impact statement:

This is what REP will help you to do:

- To understand different worldviews, perspectives and beliefs and how they influence people's lives
- To appreciate and respect a viewpoint that is different from your own
- To gain the ability to formulate rational and well-supported arguments
- To be unafraid to tackle life's big questions

This is what RS will help you to do:

- To understand Christian and Buddhist beliefs, practices and how they influence their lives
- To understand the diversity of belief within religious traditions and how they interpret their scripture
- To appreciate and respect a viewpoint that is different from your own
- To gain the ability to formulate and evaluate rational and well-supported arguments
- To be unafraid to tackle life's big questions

This is what Philosophy will help you to do:

- To think rigorously about fundamental questions of truth and human understanding
- To introduce learners to the academic study of philosophy and theology
- To develop the ability to identify, select and apply ideas and concepts through the use of examples and evidence from recognised sources of authority
- To gain the ability to formulate and evaluate rational and well supported and convincing arguments

Curriculum Delivery

(a) Lower and Middle School

Religious, Ethics and Philosophy is part of the curriculum for each boy in years 7 – 9. In years 10 and 11 it is an optional subject to GCSE level. Religious, Moral and Ethical Issues form part of the Values course for all middle school boys including discussions surrounding forgiveness, abortion, euthanasia and ethical moral theory. Schemes of Work follow the recommendations of the non-statutory national framework for Religious Education and statutory guidance for SRE. For further information on curriculum delivery and content, enquirers are invited to consult the Schemes of Work.

(b) Sixth Form

Religious Studies (Philosophy and Ethics) is offered as an A-level option in the Sixth Form. In addition, students will experience cross-curricular themes (see below) and the week's Assembly and Values theme.

Collective Worship

All pupils attending the school take part in regular collective worship. A single act of worship for all pupils is impossible given the limitations of space.

- (a) School assemblies are held in the Hall and in Christ Church or online via Microsoft Teams. Assemblies are conducted by the Headmaster and other staff; outside speakers are also welcomed. Hymns are included in assemblies for the Lower School in Christ Church and musical or dramatic performances incorporated from time to time. The spiritual content is made relevant and enables a regular pattern of worship and reflection to be established as an essential part of school life.

In addition, collective worship takes place outside the school premises on 'special' occasions. It is a long standing tradition of the school that pupils attend the Founders' Day Service at the end of the Summer Term and the Carol Service at the end of the Michaelmas Term.

- (b) Form tutors lead pupils in form periods on other mornings, which will often cover relevant pastoral issues as well as discussions of contemporary social and cultural events. The length, form and content of these vary according to the year group and at the Form Tutor's discretion.

Rights of Withdrawal

The 1944 Act and subsequent legislation gives parents the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship. Parents are informed of this via the school website. The school encourages participation and an inclusive approach to religion on the basis that an understanding and appreciation of another's beliefs enriches the life of individuals and communities alike.

Boarding Pupils

Provision for weekly worship can be made for boarding pupils of any denomination who remain at school over the weekends. The school benefits from close links with the Vicar of Christ Church who also acts as one of our "independent listeners" for boarders. Arrangements are also made to accommodate boarding pupils of other faiths and account is taken of particular denominational observances and requests.