



Rickmansworth School

Religious Studies Policy

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Religious Studies Policy

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1. OVERVIEW.....	3
INTENT.....	3
REFERENCED DOCUMENTS	3
REVIEW PROCESS	3
PART 2. POLICY.....	5
1. INTRODUCTION	5
2. PURPOSE.....	5
3. SCOPE	5
4. ASSESSMENT	8
5. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/CLUBS.....	8

Religious Studies Policy

PART 1. OVERVIEW

Intent

This policy governs the provision of religious studies in the School.

Rickmansworth School aims to ensure that students develop informed opinions about different life situations; empathise with opinions which differ from their own, and acquire skills in thinking and citizenship so they are equipped to contribute to the world in which they live. We believe that providing religious studies is an important component of delivering these aims.

A reference copy of this document is kept on the shared drive and it will be brought to the attention of all members of staff

Referenced Documents

Curriculum; Collective Worship; Recording, Reporting and Assessment

Review Process

This policy will be reviewed ever 3 years or on the introduction of new or amended relevant legislation

John de Braux
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Keith Douglas
HEADTEACHER

Religious Studies Policy

Religious Studies Policy

PART 2. POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Religious Studies at Rickmansworth School is provided by the Religious Studies Department and reflects the cultural, philosophical and religious backgrounds of our students. Through religious studies, students can come to a more developed understanding of their own identity, their cultural background and their local community. The role of Religious Studies in the curriculum enables the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of students. Moreover, it promotes an understanding of, and hence dialogue with, members of different faith communities.
- 1.2. Religious Studies addresses ultimate questions, concerning the nature of God and explores the six major world religions, which form the basis of religious understanding. Students study particular religions in detail to develop an awareness of the background to those religions and the ideas which they encompass. Finally, pupils look at how religious conviction might affect the individual and the social and moral values of members of faith communities.
- 1.3. Based on the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus, our programme of study is of six major world faiths: Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. However, the integrity of members of other faith communities, including atheists and agnostics, is similarly recognised and students are encouraged to express their own understanding of religious issues by engaging in discussion with their teacher and with their fellow students.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. We aim to ensure that students develop informed opinions about different life situations; empathise with opinions which differ from their own, and acquire skills in thinking and citizenship so they are equipped to contribute to the world in which they live.

3. Scope

- 3.1. KS3 Curriculum Summary
 - 3.1.1. Topics of Study in **Year 7** include:
 - ‘What’s the point in RS?’ - An introduction to Religious Studies.
 - Does God exist? - A study into the existence of God.
 - ‘Why would someone follow a religious leader’ - An exploration of religious leaders from the past and present.

Religious Studies Policy

- 3.1.2. Topics of study in **Year 8** include:
- ‘If Britain was a Jewish country, how would life be different?’ - A study of Judaism in the modern world.
 - Islam in the modern world- understanding the role of Islam in the modern world and the history and culture of the religion.
 - ‘What are Rites of Passage?’ - Exploring the nature and significance of Rites of Passage from different religions and cultures.
- 3.1.3. Topics of study in **Year 9** include:
- ‘What can Eastern religions teach me about the world’ - exploring and analysing the impact of Eastern religions on one’s life.
 - ‘What happens when we die’ - A study of life after death.
 - ‘What is right and wrong’ - An introduction to ethics (focus on KS5 content. Ethical theory and applied ethics).
- 3.1.4. Each topic of study provides opportunity for a variety of assessment tasks.

3.2. KS4 Curriculum Summary: GCSE

- 3.2.1. The following topics are generally studied from a number of religious and non-religious perspectives.
- 3.2.2. Year 10
- Early life
 - Animal rights
 - Planet earth
 - Prejudice and discrimination
 - War
- 3.2.3. Year 11:
- The existence of God
 - Revelation
 - The problem of evil and suffering
 - Immortality
 - Miracles
 - Science and religion

Religious Studies Policy

- 3.2.4. The law requires all maintained (state) schools to provide religious education (RE) for all registered pupils in Key Stage 4.
 - 3.2.5.
 - 3.2.6. The School regards religious education as important and we will put in place the staffing and resources to enable all pupils to follow a course in GCSE Religious Studies. This will both meet the legal requirements and provide an academic qualification.
 - 3.2.7. All pupils must follow a course in GCSE Religious Studies **unless their parents or guardians exercise their right to withdraw their child from the course.**
 - 3.2.8. As the School remains responsible for the supervision of any child withdrawn from religious studies, we will discharge our responsibilities by requiring such pupils to follow another subject to GCSE.
 - 3.2.9. If a parent wishes his or her child to be excused from attending any religious education or collective worship at the school, the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. The right of withdrawal was established in the Education Act 1944 and re-enacted in the Education Reform Act 1988. We recommend that parents consult the syllabus for GCSE Religious Studies before making any decision about the religious issues to which they may object. However, parents are not obliged to explain their reasons for seeking withdrawal and will not be asked to give their reasons.
 - 3.2.10. Parents are advised that should they subsequently change their view and exercise their right for their son or daughter to receive religious education during Years 10 and 11, it may be difficult to accommodate their wishes.
- 3.3. KS5 Curriculum Summary
- 3.3.1. Students taking AS and A2 in religious studies follow the OCR specification, studying the Philosophy of Religion, Religious Ethics and Religious thought. Students are introduced to some of the key ideas in religion, theology and philosophy which are of perennial

Religious Studies Policy

interest. Students' knowledge is broadened in the context of the diverse approaches to received traditions, beliefs and practices.

- 3.3.2. Provision for other students in religious education is made through General Studies, Citizenship, religious study days and assemblies.

4. Assessment

- 4.1. Assessment methods employed by the RS Department are summative, formative and diagnostic across all Key Stages, reflecting best practise in assessment for learning (AfL). Peer and Self assessment opportunities are provided for each topic studied at KS3 in order to develop pupils' responsibility for learning, as well as giving a clear structure of the topic content. Target sheets are also used to help pupils plan and chart their progress. KS3 pupils are assessed twice per half term, this is then marked using the Eight Level Scale of Attainment as set out in the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus.
- 4.2. KS4 and KS5 pupils have the opportunity to practise examination techniques, as well as tackling question papers in examination conditions. This is supported by general formative assessment employed during lessons.

5. Extra-Curricular Activities/Clubs

- 5.1. The RS Department boasts two trained Philosophy for Children (P4C) teachers and a number of extra-curricular classes are held for pupils from different year groups. Any pupil who is interested in joining a P4C group should speak with a member of the RS Department.
- 5.2. Students may, with prior permission, make use of the RS rooms for project or presentation work.
- 5.3. There is an independently organised Christian Union which during the year and facilities are available for Muslim students to perform daily prayer.