

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Religious Studies Department Aims**

Religion impacts all aspects of human existence. It is difficult to study history, sociology, political science, literature, music, art, theatre and psychology without understanding how religious and cultural views function in all our different cultures. The study of religion helps to think critically, listen empathetically, speak thoughtfully and write clearly – all skills that will be of great use no matter what students go on to do in life. We aim to develop students' spiritual wellbeing through a balanced introduction to contemporary religion which reflects the diversity that exists in our society. We encourage our students to think about their individual role and place in society, taking on the responsibility of being an active citizen in our modern age. We support students in developing their self-confidence and self-esteem, to aid them in making informed choices regarding personal and social issues; and to develop good relationships with other members of the school and the wider community.

### **Department Ethos**

- "If you're not careful, the newspaper will have you hating the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing." – Malcolm X (American civil rights campaigner).
- "Thinking is difficult. That is why people judge." - Carl Jung (Philosopher).
- "Be the change you want to see in the world." – Gandhi (Indian lawyer, anti-colonial nationalist).
- "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead (American Anthropologist).
- "It's not who you are underneath, but what you do that defines you." – Batman Begins.

### **Department Staff**

Mr H Gafar - Head of Department

Mrs C Hylton

### **Key Stage 3 Information**

In Year 7 students are taught about the six major religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, in order to give them a good grounding, and to try and tackle some of the misconceptions people have about other people's cultures and faiths. In Year 8 we are introducing the ethical matters that students will cover in their GCSE from Year 9-11. We believe it will be of great benefit to the students, to have been introduced to concepts prior to the start of their GCSE, such as prejudice, discrimination, gender equality, morality just to name a few, as they will be aware of what the GCSE will entail, and be more prepared.

### **Key Stage 4 Information**

All students take the GCSE RS exam. Students study the Eduqas Religious Studies Route A. The course has three components. The first being the study of contemporary moral issues, the second being a study of Christianity, and the third being a study of Islam. Teachings and views discussed are non-denominational, with students encouraged to compare and contrast the different viewpoints, for example Roman Catholic and Protestant views on divorce or Sunni and Shia views on abortion; in addition, we also look at and discuss Humanist views. Students are encouraged to develop their analytical skills throughout the course, taking on board and understanding, different religious and social views on topics covered. The course has no coursework, with students taking three exams at the end of year 11; one being 1hr45 and two being 1hr, with the whole grade range open to all students. GCSE skills are introduced in Key Stage 3, and subsequently developed

during Key Stage students are encouraged to develop their analytical skills throughout the course, taking on board and understanding, the different religious and social topics covered.

### **Any other Information**

Students are:

- Expected to read newspapers/watch news reports or listen to new bulletins on the radio, and, keep up to date on issues both within the UK and abroad.
- Encouraged to supplement their classroom learning, through wider reading on the topics covered. Supported in using and developing their literacy skills in order to develop their learning, and progress within the subject.
- It is expected that students arrive at lessons on time, and with all the necessary equipment they require for the lesson. Students are encouraged to think outside of the box!
- In the upper school planner (Years 9-11), students will find a Religious Studies section from pages 245-254. Students should refer to these often, in order to learn the key vocabulary for each of the 8 units of work that they will be studying over the 3 years. Additionally, there is an exam writing frame explaining how to answer each question, and also a paragraph writing frame to assist pupils in structuring their paragraphs.

### **Homework**

RS homework is generally set twice a half term, and recorded in planners and on Sims. Homework tasks are set by individual teachers, determined by the individual needs of the class. Alongside this, students may find that their class teacher may give them small tasks to supplement their learning.