

RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT WADDES DON

Who am I? Why am I here? What do I desire? How then shall I live?

The Religious Studies Department at Waddesdon Church of England School is successful and flourishing. We are a team dedicated to ensuring that each pupil achieves his/her potential and develops a profound understanding of religious, moral and spiritual concepts and issues.

All students in Key Stage 3 receive one lesson of RS a week. GCSE courses begin in Year 9, in line with the school's accelerated curriculum and all students take the full course GCSE examination, which has been very successful over many years. We follow the AQA course and students explore Christianity and Buddhism in depth, as well as the four Ethical Themes. At A Level, students study Philosophy, Ethics and Christianity. This is a well-established course with consistently high results.

The Schemes of Work aim to deepen the students' understanding of the Christian faith. At the same time an open-minded approach is encouraged through the exploration of a variety of religious traditions including Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. Learners are encouraged to express both their own ideas and relate the ideas of others to themselves through

GCSE

Year	Number in year group	Number of Entries	% A* - C (9-4)	% A* - G (9-1)	Progress measure
17-18	143	143	87.4%	99.3%	+0.63
18-19	140	138	81.2%	100.0%	+0.80
19-20	140	138	88.4%	100.0%	+0.46

A Level

Year	Number in year group	Number of Entries	% A* - C	% A* - E	Progress measure
17-18	23	23	73.9%	100.0%	-0.32
18-19	35	35	74.3%	97.1%	-0.08
19-20	26	26	80.8%	100.0%	+0.11

evaluation. Questioning and debating has been a strength of the department with a focus on developing higher order thinking skills and argumentation. Consideration of moral codes is another major theme of the entire Scheme of Work.

The Department is well resourced with a wide variety of up-to-date textbooks for all levels. Classrooms have projectors, television, DVD player and a varied collection of DVDs. Religious Studies is taught in three classrooms.

We are a dynamic department, constantly evaluating our practice and reflecting on strategies for further improving the learning experiences and chances of the students. The teaching was

judged 'Outstanding' by a recent SIAMS inspection (see website for details) and the department was described thus:

"The effectiveness of the religious education is outstanding".

Religious Studies at Waddesdon are a beacon of outstanding teaching and learning. As a result of expert teaching by talented subject specialists, students are inspired and motivated to learn. One confirmed this by stating 'I don't want RS lessons to end'. RS gives students vital life skills. The ability to discuss, debate, agree and to disagree well, feature in many lessons. Students from different year groups give a consistent message

that they like the challenge of the subject, the skill with which the different teachers deliver learning and the fact that RS 'helps us find ourselves as we grow up'.

We enjoy strong links with the Department of Education at Oxford, supporting the training of new teachers each year and contributing to research. We are currently involved in a joint project with Science to explore "Big Questions in the Classroom" and in less socially restricted times have also participated in the RS Ambassador programme working with children in Primary School. We have previously organised visits to support students' understanding of sacred places and their role in collective worship.

The RS Department plays a major role in contributing to the whole-school expression of an ethos of dignity and respect for all, and an awareness of the spiritual and moral values pertaining to all aspects of life. We are a collaborative and happy team and look forward to meeting you and working with you.

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