



Religious Studies Policy 2025-2026

At Waddesdon Church of England School, Religious Studies (RS) plays an important role in expressing the Christian vision of the school – “I have come that they may have life, and have it in full”. RS reflects the ethos and values that are held and promotes understanding of people of all faiths and worldviews, whether religious or not. It has a high status within our school, contributing to the overall academic and spiritual development of our pupils from all backgrounds and traditions.

RS Curriculum Vision

Religious Studies at Waddesdon is driven by a profound commitment to truth, compassion and wisdom. Rooted in the Christian vision of the school, our curriculum invites students to explore life’s deepest questions with curiosity, integrity and a spirit of respectful dialogue. We aim to nurture not only informed minds but also reflective hearts. We believe that Religious Studies is essential in shaping young people who are morally courageous, theologically literate, and globally aware. Through rigorous and thought-provoking engagement with religious and non-religious worldviews, students are challenged to grapple with complex beliefs, ethical dilemmas and philosophical ideas that shape human experience.

Our intent is to empower every learner to encounter the Christian faith with depth and understanding, while also engaging meaningfully with other religious traditions and secular perspectives. We aim to cultivate in students the ability to reflect critically on their own beliefs and values, and those of others, within a climate of dignity, respect and open-mindedness. Through this process, students will develop the skills of critical thinking, empathy, and ethical reasoning - equipping them to navigate life in a diverse, complex and ever-changing world.

Dialogue, debate and reflective enquiry are central to our classrooms. We create space for students to voice their thoughts, listen deeply and grow in confidence as thoughtful participants in society. In doing so, Religious Studies becomes more than an academic subject - it becomes a formative experience that contributes to the moral and spiritual flourishing of every student.

Our ambition is simple yet bold: to inspire the next generation of thinkers, leaders and peacemakers.

Legal Position

Every maintained school in England must provide a basic curriculum (RS, sex and relationship education and the National Curriculum). This includes provision for RS for all registered pupils at the school (including those in the sixth form), except for those withdrawn by their parents (see paragraph below). Following advice from the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, religious studies in our school is based on “[Challenging RE IV The Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education 2022-2027](#)” at Key Stage 3, while also reflecting the requirements of the Statement of Entitlement for Religious Education published by the Education Office of the Church of England in February 2019.

Curriculum Intent and Provision

KS3 (Years 7 and 8)

- To enable students to explore and reflect on religious and philosophical beliefs, values and concepts

- To develop higher order thinking skills of argumentation, questioning, evaluation and analysis in looking at ultimate questions
- To enable students to have a deeper understanding of beliefs and practices in more than one religion so that they can better understand the world and develop their own sense of place within it.

All students have 1 hour a week of Religious Studies

KS4 (Years 9-11)

Focus on 2 contrasting religions (Christianity and Buddhism).

- These provide contrasting approaches to questions of meaning and the nature of religion as well as cultural differences. Buddhism engages the interest of students as an alternative approach to the one with which they are more familiar.
- The curriculum further builds on the KS3 foundation, enabling a deeper understanding of theological and philosophical concepts
- Ethical issues are explored fully
- Skills of debate, analysis and evaluation continue to be central.

All students in Year 9 have 2 hours per week of Religious Studies.

All students in Year 10 and Year 11 have 3 hours per fortnight of Religious Studies.

KS5

The A Level course ensures a deepening of the KS4 experience via exploring theological, philosophical and ethical concepts with a focus on Christianity, alongside further development of higher order thinking skills including evaluation, analysis and argumentation. Students are also required to show how these interact with each other in a form of 'dialogue'. Themes such as the impact of feminism and atheism on religion are also explored and broaden the scope of the student experience.

All KS5 students follow the Moral, World and Religious Views Programme which continues to develop understanding of Christianity and other world religions and non-religious worldviews; explores themes of meaning, purpose, morality, and what it means to be human; encourages reflection on personal beliefs and attitudes; promotes an understanding of diversity in Britain and globally.

All students in Year 12 have 1 hour a week of the Moral, World and Religious Views Programme.

Students in Year 12 and Year 13 who study A Level Religious Studies have 9 hours per fortnight.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The RS subject leader and LMT will monitor teaching and learning in RS in accordance with school policy. The RS subject leader will observe teaching, conduct book and planning reviews and pupil interviews when appropriate to assess the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher and governors will ensure that adequate monitoring takes place and that the impact of such activity is assessed. Examination results will be monitored in accordance with school policy.

Attainment and progress of students will be recorded SIMS, where progress throughout each year can be monitored. A report is sent to parents three times a year.

The Right to Withdrawal

Religious Studies forms a fundamental part of the broad and balanced curriculum at Waddesdon. Parents (and young people over 18) have a legal right to ask to withdraw (their child) from some or all of this part of the curriculum in accordance with Schedule 19 to the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Parents who wish to withdraw their child(ren) are asked to first contact the subject leader, Mrs Khan, and must provide suitable activities for their children.

However, we hope that all parents and teachers will feel comfortable with the type of religious education being taught at this school.