

The Gryphon School

RE Policy



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The Gryphon School – Religious Education Policy

At the heart of The Gryphon School is our determination that our community experiences “life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).

Religious education at the Gryphon School

Religious Education at the Gryphon is firmly rooted in the belief in having life in all of its fullness (John 10:10). Students are able to develop the LIFE values of Leadership, Integrity, Fellowship and Exploration as spiritual values. We encourage students in the development of Leadership through fostering an excitement about learning and an ability to reflect thoughtfully on their place in the world and on theological and philosophical issues. We also believe that Religious Education plays an integral part in our community, this then feeds into the value of integrity as a fundamental aspect of RE is the understanding that it is acceptable to disagree, to understand and respect a view that may be different from their own and to treat all with respect. Fellowship is developed by looking at the world around us, understanding the need for change and being inspired by those who have made a difference in the world. Lastly, we believe that RE provides opportunities for Exploration, giving all students the opportunity to explore the spiritual diversity of the world and reflect for themselves on their own spirituality and world views. As a Church of England school, we believe that Religious Education has a central part to play in the development of each student. As a result every student gets the opportunity to take part in Religious Education. This is in line with the 1988 Education Act which states that ‘Religious Education has equal standing in relation to core subjects of the National Curriculum in that it is compulsory for all registered pupils’

Religious education – Aims and Intentions

‘The National Society Statement of Entitlement’ outlines the following aims for RE in a Church of England School.

- To know about and understand Christianity as a diverse global living faith through the exploration of core beliefs using an approach that critically engages with biblical text.
- To gain knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews appreciating diversity, continuity and change within the religions and worldviews being studied.
- To engage with challenging questions of meaning and purpose raised by human existence and experience.
- To recognise the concept of religion and its continuing influence on Britain’s cultural heritage and in the lives of individuals and societies in different times, cultures and places.
- To explore their own religious, spiritual and philosophical ways living, believing and thinking.

At the Gryphon school we aim to:

In Key Stage 3:

- Develop religious literacy - knowledge of, and ability to understand, religion. This will include Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and other world views such as Humanism.
- To understand Christianity as a living world faith and the connection that Christianity has on Britain’s cultural heritage and the lives of people worldwide.
- Have opportunities to engage with the theological, philosophical and human science aspects of religious studies, including engaging with a range of texts, art, music and other forms of evidence to support their knowledge.
- Be able to form reasoned options based on the ability to evaluate key questions. This includes understanding and empathising with a range of viewpoints, demonstrating open-mindedness and being willing to question.

- Consider the link between beliefs and behaviour to develop an understanding of the impact that beliefs have on individuals and communities. Whilst also becoming increasingly sensitive to the impact of their ideas and behaviour on other people.
- Be provided with a safe space for pupils to discuss religious, spiritual and/or philosophical ideas.

In Key Stage 4:

- Have a deeper understanding of the role of religion in the wider world.
- Be able to apply religious teachings to 21st century issues such as environmental issues and social justice.
- Develop skills of listening and a willingness to learn from others, even when others' views are different from their own
- Value difference and diversity for the common good and appreciate that some beliefs are not inclusive and consider the issues that this raises for individuals and society
- Develop a deeper theological understanding of Christianity, Hinduism and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and Humanism.
- Consider divergent views within these traditions on spiritual and moral issues.
- Build on existing skills of evaluation, impact and evidence to construct detailed analysis of religious belief and thematic issues.

This will be implemented by:

In Key Stage 3:

- All staff are RE specialists who are experts in their field. Staff encourage students to ask questions and discuss the broader issues raised by the lesson content.
- The design of the KS3 programme is built around questions which prompt students to explore how faith and action interact. Each topic is linked to a focus on Philosophy, Theology or Human sciences.
- Across KS3 the topics cover all major religious and world views.
- All assessments in RE are tied to one of 3 skills – Evaluation, Impact or Evidence. Each lesson sequence allows students to develop and practise these skills and the skills build throughout KS3. Each assessment has a set criteria by which students are assessed. These assessments also have a literacy focus tied to a particular skill.

In Key Stage 4:

- All students engage with a broad RE curriculum at KS4. These sessions explore a variety of world views and apply these to key philosophical or ethical issues that are relevant to students today.
- The sessions encourage students to consider their own views and those of others to consider the impact of these views on individuals and societies.
- Students are given opportunities to listen and engage with outsider speakers presenting views on moral and spiritual topics.
- Those who study the GCSE course will also:
- Visit places of worship and hear from speakers about their faith and the impact this has on belief
- Have opportunities to engage in wider debate and explore in more detail the impact of modern moral issues on society.
- Learn about the various denominational differences within Christianity and Hinduism and the impact that this has on belief and practice.

Assessment and Recording of RE

In line with the school policy on assessment and recording the RE department completes 3 assessments per year at Key Stage 3 and 12 at Key Stage 4 and 5. These assessments are marked and moderated according to department policy and marks are recorded on a shared mark book.

Arrangements for monitoring standards of teaching and learning in RE,

The Head of department will monitor RE within the school through analysis of assessment data, learning walks and book scrutiny. This will be done in collaboration with SLT who will support and monitor this process.

Responsibilities for RE within the school, (Headteachers and Governors)

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing body and head teacher should also make sure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the learning objectives of the RE curriculum
- The subject is well led and effectively managed and that standards and achievement in RE and the quality of the provision are subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- Those teaching RE are suitably qualified and trained in the subject and have regular and effective opportunities for CPD
- Teachers newly appointed to church schools are provided with support offered by the diocese to enable them to become effective teachers of RE
- Teachers are aware of RE's contribution in developing pupils' understanding of religion and belief and its impact as part of the duty to promote community cohesion
- Where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to take courses leading to an accredited qualification in the subject
- Teachers explore how new pedagogies and technology can be fully utilised to support RE learning objectives
- Clear information is provided for parents on the RE curriculum and the right to withdraw
- RE is resourced, staffed and timetabled so that the school can fulfil its legal obligations on RE and pupils can make good progress

The right of Withdrawal from RE

At The Gryphon School we wish to be an inclusive community but recognise that parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from religious education on the grounds of conscience. However, the right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasions, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by pupils or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

We would ask any parent considering this to contact the head teacher to discuss any concerns.

Managing the right of withdrawal

The RE syllabus is relevant to all pupils and respects their own personal beliefs. However, parents do have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education.

If pupils are withdrawn from RE, schools have a duty to supervise them, though they will not be provided with additional teaching. Pupils will usually remain on school premises.