

The purpose of the RE curriculum is for students to know and understand a range of religious and non-religious worldviews and be able to critically engage with those views. Students should gain an appreciation for how these worldviews have impacted the world they live in at a local, national and global level. The following principles have informed the planning of our curriculum across all subjects:

- **Coherence:** Our curriculum is carefully sequenced so that powerful knowledge builds term by term and year by year. We make meaningful connections within topics and between topics that student's study, so students can make explicit links between different areas of the curriculum.
- **Mastery:** We ensure that foundational knowledge, skills, and concepts are secure before moving on. Pupils revisit prior learning and apply their understanding in new contexts.
- **Representation:** All pupils see themselves in our curriculum, and our curriculum takes all pupils beyond their immediate experience. We aim to enable students to understand both the racial and religious diversity and inclusion locally, nationally, and globally, so students understand the role that religious and non-religious worldviews have impacted on the community. We also aim to challenge any pre-conceived notions of race and religion that students may have.

For example, In Year 7 in 'Does Religion Affect Everyone' which is the first topic, students use statistical census data from Greater Manchester and across Britain, to look at the percentage of other religions aside from Christianity within the area and the nation. We also look at the importance that Christianity has in a more secular world, using the local religious schools to show students that Christianity does have a place in the modern world. On a global basis, in Year 10 and 11 students will gain an understanding of pilgrimage to places like Jerusalem and Mecca, so students are aware of how religion affects people across the world.

- **Adaptability** – We have used the United Learning RE curriculum as a base for our curriculum, Also, teachers will adapt lessons to meet the needs of the students within their class.
- **Education with character:** Our curriculum aims to enable students to progress in RE as a discipline, but also help students with their spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. We intend to spark curiosity, so students can learn about religion but also from religion.

Here we explore these principles in the context of the RE Curriculum:

- **Coherence:** The RE curriculum is planned with carefully sequenced lessons and aims to provide a narrative to religious and non-religious views. The RE curriculum considers the disciplines which sit underneath the subject and makes powerful links to English, History and Geography in particular.
- **Mastery:** Students are expected to 'get better' at RE as they progress through the curriculum. The sequencing of the curriculum allows students to develop their understanding of key concepts, so that they can develop an understanding of RE as an academic discipline.
- **Representation:** The RE curriculum is planned with diversity and inclusion in mind. All students should see themselves within the RE curriculum as it covers a great variety of

traditions and perspectives. We also explicitly deal with issues of equality within the curriculum.

- Education with character: Through exposure to the big ideas of religious and non-religious belief, students have explicit opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We also allow students to consider a range of differing religious and non-religious beliefs about ethical issues, such as abortion and euthanasia, before then reaching their own justified conclusions about those issues.

'Why This, Why Now?'

In our planning, we have asked ourselves 'why this, why now?' Here we provide some examples of the curriculum choices we have made, and why the units have been placed in the order we have chosen:

- Example 1: Year 7 starts with a unit on the Origins of Abrahamic faith. This is done to give the historical and theological background to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This should help students see the distinctions and connections between these faiths, which they study later in the curriculum. Here we aim to provide substantive knowledge on the development of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to study the traditions in themselves in more depth.
- Example 2: The study of each religion is studied with a narrative in mind, to try to explain what the religious tradition means to those who belong to it. We draw heavily on theology to tell this narrative and expose students to key scriptures, giving them the tools to interpret those scriptures and to see how religious believers may see them, as well as being critical of them.
- Example 3: In the third topic of Year 8, students begin to look at Philosophy of Religion and engage with key arguments for and against the existence of God. The unit begins by unpacking key language i.e. 'The God of Classical Theism', 'Theism', 'Atheism' etc. then analyses arguments for and against God's existence in depth. It is here where students will be introduced to skills of argumentation as earlier in the curriculum the focus is on the building of substantive knowledge, description, and explanation skills. This means that students should have a rich knowledge of religious beliefs and traditions before moving onto the higher-order thinking around the philosophical debate. This will also set them up well for ethical issues studied in Year 9 where they will debate issues such as abortion and euthanasia.
- Example 4: We have held the unit on Equality until Year 9 as this is when students should have the substantive knowledge to understand differing religious and non-religious approaches to issues around equality and why it is important. For example, in the unit on Judaism, students have ample time to explore anti-Semitism and the Holocaust and understand how people have been persecuted based on their religion and ethnicity.
- Example 5: Dissimilar to many RE curriculums, our curriculum has a unit that explicitly explores atheism at the end of Year 8. Through the study of religions, students see the multi-faceted nature of religious belief, however often non-religious viewpoints are not explored in the same way. This unit sits at the end of Year 8 and allows students to engage with the thoughts of those who have been critical of religion and helps students form a balanced view on the nature of religious and non-religious belief.