



**ILKLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

A MOORLANDS LEARNING TRUST SCHOOL

# Religious Education

	Position/Committee	Date
Prepared by	Head of RE and Philosophy	September 2023
Approved by	Deputy Headteacher: Quality of Education	November 2024
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## **Ilkley Grammar School Religious Education Policy**

### **Introduction**

At IGS, we are committed to creating an environment where students are tolerant, respectful, and understanding of a range of faiths, cultures, and backgrounds. As a school with no religious affiliation, we recognise and celebrate all world faiths and provide our students with a range of experiences as part of the importance of exposure to religious diversity, non-religious world views and social, spiritual, moral, and cultural development. We aim for a culture of kindness and respect and want our students to confidently articulate their knowledge and demonstrate in their outward behaviour and attitudes, their understanding of world faiths and Fundamental British Values. This is all done within the context of our Personal Best values, our RE curriculum and its alignment to the Bradford Local Agreed Syllabus and its fulfilment of the National Curriculum and our wider Personal Development curriculum.

Our curriculum is broad and balanced, and is an 'ambition for all' learners at IGS as a valued part of the core curriculum. We ensure that all six major world faiths are studied at Key Stage Three, taking the 'Worldviews approach'. At Key Stage Three, we prioritise RE, ensuring we give a curriculum allocation that meets the expectations for RE curricula, as we recognise the importance of providing a rich discourse about religious and non-religious views, preparing students to live in a world that is diverse and a society that is multi-religious and multi-secular. Our curriculum is in keeping with the National Content Standard and goes beyond providing core knowledge, integrating Fundamental British Values, Human Rights and all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus. Through their studies, students will learn core beliefs of believers and how these impact on attitudes, lifestyles, and worship, building from 'Beliefs and Origins' to religious practices and, later, ethical issues. Students will explore philosophical and ethical issues and a range of responses from a faith perspective, and from their own viewpoint, making comparisons to demonstrate their deeper understanding, appreciation and tolerance for differing views. Through reflection on their own beliefs and values in light of their learning, it is our aim that students will develop their own sense of morality and self, and grow in respect for themselves and others.

Key Stage Four students study a core religious studies and engage in a thematic approach, where they skilfully apply the knowledge they've gained from the six major world religions studied in Key Stage 3 to explore deeper and more complex religious themes and concepts, such as 'Environmental Ethics' and 'Ethics in war and conflict', as students apply differing world views to aspects of social justice and evaluating approaches to ethical dilemmas. In Key Stage Four, students also have further enhanced opportunities to study wider areas on tolerance and respect as part of assemblies, the PSHE curriculum, drop down days, 'PBT' and tutor activities, where they look at both world religions and Fundamental British Values. For example, in Year 11, students take a worldview approach to their study of medicine as an ethical issue and consider how different belief systems shape approaches to medical ethics., including Humanist views. All of these experiences provide a responsive wrap around curriculum, which is personalised to emerging contextual needs of the year group, as well as the 'core powerful knowledge' already identified and sequenced.

Key Stage Five students study core RE alongside their PSHE curriculum, in PBT and tutor activities through discrete RE modules, engaging in lessons on tolerance, respect. Students use their prior knowledge on world religions to develop viewpoints and discuss how different faiths consider wider world issues as part of their 'War and Conflict' theme, which has been coherently mapped to build and connect to the Key Stage Four curriculum. Again, students take a 'worldview' approach to answer big philosophical questions such as 'How does belief influence practice?', specifically drawing upon prior knowledge of Sikhism and Islam, Humanism and Christianity.

GCSE students are enrolled in the AQA Religious Studies course, which involves a comprehensive exploration of Christian and Buddhist beliefs and teachings and practices, ethics, and philosophical questions, equipping them with a well-rounded understanding of the role of religion in today's world.

Religious Education at Ilkley Grammar School also plays a key role in delivering Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural education to our students. Lessons create space for individual reflection, with a focus on wondering, who and why? Lessons identify the reality of injustice and suffering and explore how life for different groups can be affected positively by religious and humanistic values.

## **Aims and Objectives**

- To enable students to develop an understanding of the beliefs, practices, and values of different religious and non-religious worldviews, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Humanism, in accordance with the Bradford Agreed Syllabus.
- To encourage students to explore and reflect upon their own beliefs, values, and experiences and how these relate to the wider worldviews studied.
- To promote respect for diversity and an appreciation of the role of religion and belief systems in society and culture.
- To equip students with critical thinking skills, enabling them to evaluate and analyse religious and ethical issues.
- To enable students to articulate their knowledge of the different world faiths and non-religious world views, demonstrating their understanding and tolerance for people with difference faiths, beliefs, and cultural traditions.
- To encourage students to take responsibility for the society and community in which they live, so they can make a positive contribution to the local community and society as a whole.
- To enable students to develop their knowledge on the Fundamental British Values and have a broad knowledge and respect for public institutions and services in modern Britain.
- To prepare students for life in modern Britain and actively promote the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- To ensure that extremist or discriminatory opinions and behaviours have no place in any aspect of our school life.
- To ensure respect for others, paying specific attention to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act (2010)

- To ensure all students understand that they have the freedom to hold particular faiths and beliefs and that this is protected by law- including the acceptance that some people have no faith which should also be tolerated.

## **Curriculum**

Our RE curriculum is designed in accordance with the Bradford Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. It includes a balanced representation of religious and non-religious worldviews, including but not limited to:

- The beliefs, practices, and rituals of major world religions.
- Ethical and moral issues related to religion, including social justice, environmental responsibility, and human rights.
- The impact of religion and belief systems on society, culture, and history.
- Comparative studies to encourage critical thinking and respect for different viewpoints.

## **Withdrawal from Religious Education**

Whilst RE lessons at IGS are fully inclusive, parents can withdraw their children from RE for all or part of their lessons; pupils can only withdraw themselves once they are 18 years old. Schools have to teach RE as part of the curriculum.

Parents/carers wishing to exercise the right of withdrawal should note the following procedures which are designed to respect the rights of parents/carers whilst also ensuring the process is robust and fulfils all safeguarding responsibilities.

Parents/carers should write to the Headteacher to communicate formally that they wish to exercise the right to withdraw their child/children. Whilst there is no obligation to give a reason for requesting the withdrawal, it would help Ilkley Grammar School to understand the reasons and be assured that the school has communicated effectively about the teaching of RE.

In responding to requests for withdrawal from RE lessons, Ilkley Grammar School will:

- Contact the parents/carers and invite them to a meeting with a member of the Leadership Team and, where possible, the Head of RE or Curriculum Leader for

Humanities. This meeting will allow parents/carers to discuss their concerns and clarify whether the child/children should be withdrawn from RE lessons in their entirety or specific aspects of RE provision. It will also discuss the practical implications of withdrawal and the arrangements to be put in place to accommodate the request.

- Offer parents/carers an opportunity to look at RE Schemes of Learning [here](#) and resources to develop their knowledge of what happens in RE lessons. Should parents/carers continue to request withdrawal, then Ilkley Grammar School will accommodate this request and will fulfil its duty to supervise. Parents/carers should note that there is no obligation or resources to provide additional teaching as this would incur extra costs. Students who are withdrawn from RE will remain on site and will be supervised either in the library or at the back of another humanities lesson. They will be expected to complete appropriate work which has been set by parents/carers.

### **Assessment**

Assessment in RE is designed to gauge students' understanding, critical thinking skills, and their ability to engage with the subject matter.

- Assessment is also used to help students to embed knowledge and use it fluently.
- It enables teachers to responsively and provide appropriate feedback to students.
- Assessment also helps leaders to understand how well the curriculum is being taught and how securely it is being learned by students.

### **Inclusion and Respect**

We recognise the diverse nature of our student body and will take all necessary steps to ensure that RE lessons are inclusive and respectful of different beliefs and backgrounds. We encourage open and respectful dialogue and will not tolerate any instances of discrimination or bullying related to religious or non-religious beliefs.

### **Parental Engagement**

We welcome parents' input and engagement in their child's Religious Education. We will provide opportunities for parents to discuss the RE curriculum and share their perspectives.

Parents can play an active role in supporting their child's religious studies education at home by referring to the 'How you can help at home' section in the curriculum overviews found [here](#). These provides valuable insights and suggestions for reinforcing religious learning outside of the classroom.

### **Review and Amendments**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the school's leadership team and the RE department to ensure it remains in alignment with the Bradford Agreed Syllabus and the evolving needs of our school community. Amendments may be made as necessary.