



Malmesbury School

RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Religious Studies (RS) at Malmesbury School is a subject with purpose, aiming to develop students' knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, practices, and traditions and their influence on individuals, communities, societies and cultures. The Department focuses on enabling students to consider and respond to a range of important questions related to their own beliefs and views, by investigating a range of fundamental questions concerning the meaning and purpose of life.

The Religious Studies Department consists currently of three full time subject specialists, an SLT subject specialist and the support of a small number of Humanities members of staff at Key Stage 3. The success of the Department stems from the commitment of the teachers to work together to make a strong and supportive team.

The Department benefits from three classrooms that are well equipped with appropriate specialist resources and an interactive whiteboard. There is also an office which we share with Geography, History and Sociology.

The Religious Studies Department at Malmesbury School has an excellent track record of high-quality teaching and learning and the examination results are consistently strong. In 2022, 89% of GCSE students received a grade 9-4, 25% of these students achieving a level 9. At A Level, 100% of students received an A*- C grades. Student numbers are very strong at GCSE and A Level, making Religious Studies a popular option for students.

At Key Stage 3, students are taught one hour per week of Religious Studies. We aim to develop students' understanding and empathy of the six main religions. GCSE skills are incorporated into all Key Stage 3 schemes of work in order to prepare students for their future examinations. In Year 9, students also begin to explore key philosophical and ethical issues, enabling them to experience what GCSE Religious Studies will be like. At GCSE, students are taught two and half hours a week of Religious Studies. We follow the AQA Specification A course, where we examine the beliefs, teachings and practices of both Christianity and Hinduism. This is alongside their Thematic Studies on a range of topics. At A Level, students have five hours of contact time with their teachers. We follow the specification set out by Eduqas. Here, we examine Hinduism in greater depth alongside the Philosophy of Religion and the Ethics of Religion.

The Religious Studies Department offers many opportunities for students to work outside of the classroom and experience events with outside agencies. School trips include opportunities for GCSE students to experience worship at two different Hindu Mandirs in London. There are often external visitors who speak to the students from a range of organisations including, Animal Aid, NFU, The British Humanist Association and a Holocaust survivor. In Year 9, we work alongside the History Department in providing an in-depth scheme of work on the Holocaust. The Religious Studies department also annually runs 'Interfaith Week' across the school in November, where we focus the week on an ethical or moral event that is occurring in the world. In 2022, we focused the week on the question 'Do we treat animals ethically?' and in 2021, we investigated the question 'How can religion and spirituality influence physical and mental wellbeing?'

We are recognised in the school as being a faculty that initiates and develops a variety of approaches to learning and have embedded engaging Teaching and Learning alongside 'Retrieval Practice', 'Interweaving Curriculums', 'Afl' and 'DIRT' within our Schemes of Learning.

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