

GCSE Religious Studies – course information

Religion is a significant force in the contemporary world. It motivates human ideas and behaviours, shaping societies and cultures both for good and ill. Religion is at the heart of many local, national and global acts of generosity and community building. It can also be a source of conflict and division, particularly where prejudice, ignorance and intolerance exist. Understanding how religion works can help you to understand current events. Understanding religion also helps you to understand people and what inspires them.

To study RS at RMGS is to look into the fundamental ethical questions which frame human existence, such as: When does life begin? When is it ever just to start a war? What are the aims of punishment? Is euthanasia ever right? How did the universe begin? Why is there terrorism? These are questions at the heart of GCSE Religious Studies. These questions are studied through the perspective of Buddhism and Christianity, following the AQA syllabus A.

Buddhism is a major world faith which encompasses a philosophical way of life. It involves 'right thought' as well as 'right action' and addresses the individual holistically. Christianity has been a major influence on British culture and thinking over many years. This course examines some key teachings and practices, identifying similarities and differences from the three major Christian traditions (Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox). Through the applied study of Buddhism and Christianity, students will develop their critical thinking skills.

A qualification in Religious Studies is a real asset for many careers and is of particular benefit to anybody working with people and ideas.

The 'Themes' studied are as follows:

1. Relationships and families
2. Religion and life
3. Religion, peace and conflict
4. Religion, crime and punishment

The examination consists of two papers, each 1 hour 45 minutes long. Each area examined is divided into five questions, with a variety of shorter knowledge and understanding based questions and a longer more evaluative essay response.

If you would like to know more, please talk to Mrs Housden, Mrs Wood or Ms Hay.