



## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The teaching of Religious Education at Upper Wharfedale School reflects current legislation as outlined in relevant Education Acts, DFES circulars, and the North Yorkshire Agreed Syllabus for R.E. As per the 1988 Education Reform Act, Religious Education remains a core subject taught to all year groups, and hugely contributes to promoting Spiritual, Moral, Cultural and Social development of pupils. Through provoking challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God and the issues of right and wrong, pupils are given the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding through an 'enquiries' approach in line with the SACRE recommendation.

### **The aim of RE**

In North Yorkshire's schools, Religious Education is concerned to help pupils develop open, sensitive reflective and critical approaches to understanding humankind's varied religions and beliefs, exploring practices, values, beliefs and lifestyles, relating these to their own experiences and to questions of their everyday life. This aim has five elements to it:

- Acquire and develop knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions and beliefs represented in the UK and globally.
- Develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures.
- Develop positive attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own, and towards living in a society of diverse religions and beliefs.
- Develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious and moral issues with reference to the teachings of the principal religions and beliefs represented in the UK.
- Enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education by developing awareness of fundamental questions of life, responding to such questions with reference to religions and beliefs and reflecting on their own beliefs values and experiences.

### **Key Stage 4**

Pupils are taught the Religion and Life Specification of the Edexcel exam, learning primarily about Christianity and Islam as a secondary religion. The exam specification allows pupils to compare and discuss non-religious beliefs with the beliefs of Christians and Muslims. Students are encouraged to debate and suggest reasons for changes in Society by looking at Belief in God, Life and Death, Marriage and the Family, as well as Community Cohesion.

Most pupils will undertake the short course examination in RE at the end of the two year programme of study. Those students who are not entered into the examination will follow the entry level Edexcel qualification, completing coursework throughout the year based on the content of the course. Some students will undertake the full course examination in RE, which will incorporate additional topics such as Rights and Responsibilities, Environmental and Medical issues, Peace and Conflict, as well as Crime and Punishment.

### **Key Stage 3**

Pupils are given the opportunity to explore the biggest questions of human life in the light of religious, philosophical and spiritual ideas. Learners are encouraged to make connections between religions, beliefs and experiences that all humans share. RE aims to develop clear, broad and deep thinking about religions and beliefs. Through a thematic and enquiry based approach, students look at the following religions in depth:

Year 7 - Christianity, Islam and Sikhism

Year 8 – Christianity, Islam and Multi-Faith Societies

Year 9 – Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism

Other belief systems are also briefly looked at during key stage 3 including non-religious beliefs and Buddhism.

Across the 11-14 age range, pupils will be enabled to:

**Learn about religion and belief (AT1) *Knowledge, skills and understanding in investigating:***

*Beliefs, teachings and sources*

*Practices and lifestyles*

*Expressing meaning*

**Learn from religion and belief (AT2) *Engaging with, reflecting on and responding to questions of:***

*Identity, diversity and belonging*

*Meaning, purpose and truth*

*Values and commitments*

### **Parental Rights**

As outlined in the 1944 Education Act and the North Yorkshire locally agreed syllabus, parents have the right to withdraw their child from Religious Education either in whole or in part. Parents who wish to do so, should discuss this with the R.E teacher and/or the Headteacher.