



Why we teach what we teach

Religious education is a statutory subject in the curriculum, and all schools are legally obliged to teach it. The subject provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human

At Dallam we feel that Philosophy, Religion & Ethics is one of the richest subjects in the school curriculum – tackling the big philosophical questions in life. As well as developing factual knowledge of moral and religious beliefs, it encourages students to ask questions about life and develops attitudes of confidence and thoughtfulness about themselves – skills which are needed to face common issues in the 21st century.

<p><b>Core concepts</b></p>	<p><b>Beliefs, teachings and sources</b> - Interpreting teachings, sources, authorities and ways of life in order to understand religions and beliefs; Understanding and responding critically to beliefs and attitudes.</p> <p><b>Practices and ways of life</b> - Exploring the impact of religions and beliefs on how people live their lives; Understanding that religious practices are diverse, change over time and are influenced by cultures.</p> <p><b>Expressing meaning</b> - Appreciating that individuals and cultures express their beliefs and values through many different forms.</p> <p><b>Identity, diversity and belonging</b> - Understanding how individuals develop a sense of identity and belonging through faith or belief; Exploring the variety, difference and relationships that exist within and between religions, values and beliefs.</p> <p><b>Meaning, purpose and truth</b> - Exploring some of the ultimate questions that confront humanity, and responding imaginatively to them.</p> <p><b>Values and commitments</b> - Understanding how moral values and a sense of obligation can come from beliefs and experience; Evaluating their own and others' values in order to make informed, rational and imaginative choices.</p>
<p><b>How our curriculum builds over time</b></p>	<p>At Key Stage 3, Philosophy, Religion &amp; Ethics is studied within the context of communities, sacred texts and philosophy. Each topic includes a formative and summative assessment which reflects 'GCSE style' exam questions. This allows students to develop their extended writing from year 7 and be fully prepared for the requirements of the GCSE course.</p> <p>At Key Stage 4, the GCSE for Religious Studies is a full course option and currently follows the AQA specification. The GCSE is split into two components: The study of religious beliefs, teachings and practices and four thematic studies. The beliefs, teachings and practices are taken from Christianity and Islam and the themes comprise of Relationships and families, Religion and life, Religion, peace and conflict and Religion, crime and punishment. Each religion has a common structure of two five-part questions of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks. Students are continually assessed throughout the course, with both formative and summative assessments reflecting the GCSE exam structure</p>
<p><b>Key ingredients of a lesson</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A safe environment where success is celebrated and less confident individuals feel brave enough to 'take a risk' without fear of getting it wrong</li> <li>➤ Passionate and enthusiastic teachers who love what they do and enjoy introducing students to breadth of geographical knowledge and understanding</li> <li>➤ Students who are inquisitive, eager to learn and enjoy exploring new concepts</li> <li>➤ Access to a curriculum that explores a wide range of concepts, religious beliefs and practices, and contexts</li> <li>➤ The opportunity to further and enhance knowledge and understanding through extra-curricular activity</li> <li>➤ Up to date pedagogy, including technology, to deliver the most relevant and engaging lessons at all key stages</li> </ul>

<p><b>How we assess the knowledge, understanding and skills of students</b></p>	<p>The number of formal assessments sits at around five per year for Years 7 to 11. We believe that this achieves the best balance between time allocated to learning and then lessons which are used to prepare for, sit, receive feedback, and improve assessments. Whilst most of the assessed work is based on full, written communication, there are also opportunities for students to demonstrate their understanding in other ways. Assessment results are recorded in the ARS and students given the opportunity to remind themselves of their targets using the ARS DIRT sheets. Less formal, formative assessment is ongoing and homeworks are marked and fed back at least twice a half term at Key Stage 3 and weekly at Key Stage 4 and Post 16.</p>
<p><b>How we provide cultural capital and extra-curricular opportunities</b></p>	<p>A range of experiences are planned into the units of work to help students understand and explore spirituality and sacred acts in a safe and secure environment. Students also have the opportunity to visit different religious groups and buildings to further develop their understanding of the different faiths around them.</p>
<p><b>How we provide stretch and challenge enrichment</b></p>	<p>In Philosophy, Religion &amp; Ethics, we urge teachers to make sure that challenge is at the heart of every lesson. The final activity is often to answer the key question for the lesson which is challenging for most students to do effectively and the 'stretch and challenge' is to explain how this answer in turn contributes to the over-arching question for the topic.</p>
<p><b>How we adapt our curriculum to meet the needs of all students</b></p>	<p>In Philosophy, Religion &amp; Ethics, we plan the lesson for all, and are committed to Quality First Teaching. Adaptations are made in line with the needs of the students in each class. We work closely with Learning Support (especially when there is someone assigned to the faculty) and offer lunchtime homework support and carefully crafted resources that are age appropriate.</p>
<p><b>How we link our subject knowledge to the world of work and further study</b></p>	<p>Knowledge of other cultures and world religious beliefs can be useful in many jobs where you are working with the public or communities. These include counselling and social services, marketing, sales and advertising, catering and hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism, retail sales and customer services, education and training, medicine and nursing, and service sector roles.</p>
<p><b>How we provide personal development for students</b></p>	<p>Philosophy, Religion and Ethics enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice. Philosophy, Religion and Ethics has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning.</p>