

Religious Studies – Developing an awareness of global religions” and beliefs

Religious Studies is taught once a week to all students at Key Stage 3 and, in addition, we offer it as an option at GCSE.

As part of the Curriculum 2025 working paper, AS Religious Studies will be offered as a +1 to Y12 students, to start from September 2025.

Each student participates in a chapel service each week and PSHE is taught from Year 7 through to Year 13, including a bespoke unit of work in our Key Stage 4 rotation which encourages students to explore and discuss cultural issues in contemporary Britain, as well as debating ethical issues.

The school places a significant emphasis on developing awareness of comparable world religions”. The audit below shows how all students from Years 7 to 13, both residential and day, benefit from the exposure to world religions”. The audit also explores how these areas might develop their provision as part of the Curriculum 2025 working paper.

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September 2024

Area of the School	Staff i/c	Activities to facilitate an awareness of global religions”
Boarding	SMF	A large percentage of our residential boarders are Nepalese. Thus, this year we celebrated Diwali with painting lights and decorations. This coincides with Tihar, a Nepalese Festival analogous to Diwali. The Culture Society, a period 7 initiative, have also arranged cultural exchanges with the sharing of food and cultures. In Woolwich we have also run a cultural cooking exchange whereby students cook food from their cultures and share.
Careers	AuK	Careers support to understand skills and career pathways linked to Religious Studies, including philosophy and ethics.
Catering	LoP	Food is a central part of the Gordon’s experience for our students. Mealtimes provide the opportunity to share experiences, build relationships and appreciate individual perspective. This, along with the culturally diverse food we deliver, creates inclusivity that fosters a sense of belonging for students of different ethnicities and religions”. Included within our menus are dishes from a variety of cultures and on a day-to-day basis we ensure special dietary requirements (including religious requirements) are always available. Throughout the year we have several theme days exploring food from various countries and cultures and religions” to bring students and staff together and to further create a sense of community which extends throughout the school.

Central Curriculum	JVP	<p>In English lessons, the study of English literature includes reading and exploring numerous texts that have religious themes, while biblical literature and Christian mythology underpin many works of English literature. The decline of religion is an aspect of nineteenth and twentieth-century texts that are studied. Moral and ethical questions are also experienced in the study of English literature and in English Language lessons as well in the study of non-fiction texts, where topical issues are examined.</p> <p>History covers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crusades covered in Year 7. • Tudor and Stuart religious issues esp. the Reformation, the English Civil War and Elizabeth I covered in Years 7, 8, 10 and 12. • Persecution in Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and genocide covered in Year 9. • Partition of India, covering religious divisions covered in Years 10 and 11. • Migration of Jews to Britain in 19th century covered in Years 10 and 11. <p>In Drama we study a range of plays (both in the curriculum and through theatre visits) which explore different culture, religions”, and beliefs. When planning theatre visits, we endeavour to select content that exposes students to a range of perspectives, including different religions”.</p> <p>In Food and Nutrition - In KS3 we discuss how religions may have different dietary requirements. Year 9 more detail on religious diets and explanation of each. Halal method of slaughter is discussed. KS4 more detail is covered in each religion which has dietary requirements.</p> <p>In Geography – Y9 conflict topic covers some aspects of religious reasons for conflicts. Year 13 – geopolitics issues in the health, human rights and intervention topic cover some aspects of religion and conflict.</p> <p>In Modern Foreign Languages, we look at festivals at KS4 which often have a religious or pagan base and explore some of the elements linked to religion and these festivals. At KS5, we look in depth at how religion has impacted France/Germany/Spain, and how it has been influenced in history by other religions” (Islam, Judaism) and what impact other religions” play in present day multiculturalism and the debate around immigration and integration.</p> <p>In Media Studies we do study semiotics which looks at the importance of signs and symbols in Religion for example and we also look at religious context when studying Media texts such as the stereotypes of some representation of religious groups in The Daily Mail close study product.</p> <p>In Psychology obedience studies such as Milgram's and the impact of Social Influence and Nazi Germany are covered. Key psychological Issues and Debates such as Culture Bias, Ethnocentrism and Eugenics</p> <p>In Sociology we cover beliefs in society: Theories of religion, secularisation, ideology, and science.</p> <p>In PE, more specifically in A-Level PE, we talk about the British Empire and how this influenced sport. We also discuss how the church influenced sport through Sunday school teams and other aspects.</p>
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Chapel	GrW	<p>Daily Chapel Services are of a Christian nature, but the talks and themes are inclusive of those of other religions' or of no faith.</p> <p>The opportunity to be Confirmed in the Church of England is offered to students annually. The Alpha Youth Course is run each term. There is a weekly student-led senior school Bible Study, and the Chaplain leads a weekly meeting (Easy Chapel) for boarders on a Friday evening.</p> <p>The festivals of the major world religions' (within the appropriate week of Chapel Services as they fall) are highlighted and explained.</p> <p>Staff and students of other religions come to the Chapel Quiet Room for prayer. Transport to the local Mosque (or another place of worship) is available for boarders, if requested. The Chaplain meets with those of other faiths for support, discussions, and encouragement.</p>
Creative Arts	EAP, LMC, AST	<p>Creative Arts as a whole Complete Culture and Arts Day each year, where different practitioners from different Creative Arts Area come in to work with Year 12 students for them to experience different cultures and religions in an artistic and creative way.</p> <p>Drama KS3 – where plays and performances are explored within lessons the department is committed to seeking to provide students with a breadth of experience and selects texts that expose students of different cultures and viewpoints. Year 10 Brecht – Exploring Brecht's Epic theatre with a focus on how it can be used to examine ideologies, cultures, and historical and current events. Year 10-13 there is a range of trips planned to support the department's diversity and inclusion commitment. Students are exposed to a range of viewpoints, religions' cultures and beliefs in the variety of plays they are taken to see on trips and in the live theatre streaming opportunities offered at school.</p> <p>Art Year 7 – look at history of art with medieval art/religious art being an early example. Year 8 – specific SOW on 'pattern and culture'. Study mandalas and the link to Buddhism and create their own through polytile printing. Learn about different artists from different cultures and look at how their work differs based on their influences. Year 9 – Places and architecture – artist Ian Murphy creates artwork from his travels exploring culture and heritage – Ian ran a workshop with year 9 students 06/07/22 Year 10 Art and photography students study artists from different cultures, some students then opt to create more culture-based projects as they progress into year 11. Students at A Level often select Personal Study topics which are related to own culture and religion and are encouraged to do so.</p>

		<p>Music</p> <p>Year 7 – look at Samba music with reference to South American Catholic beliefs and culture</p> <p>Year 8 – look at music of Africa and how it intersects with other aspects of African cultures and religion</p> <p>Year 9 – Explore Reggae, with a focus on Rastafarianism</p> <p>KS4 – Explore sacred church music of the 17th to 19th centuries (Protestant and Catholic)</p> <p>KS5 – Learn about Lutheran church music</p> <p>Choir members participate in religious services and Evensongs</p> <p>Trips to hear church choirs in services e.g. St. George's Chapel, Windsor</p> <p>Arches Band perform hymns for Remembrance Parade</p>
Curriculum Development	JVP	The school is consulting on its Curriculum 2025 working paper. There are elements relating to RE within this paper including the intent to introduce an AS Level qualification, available to all Y12 students, in Philosophy and Ethics. This is scheduled to launch to students in the Autumn of 2024 and begin teaching in September 2025.
Development Office	JeM	Once a year the Development team take several Year 10 students to Holy Trinity Church where we clear and clean the tomb stone from boys and teachers who sadly died while at Gordon's Home for boys. These boys did not have families so were buried close to the school. To this day we still look after these and ensure they are well kept. This is a very spiritual and grounding experience for our students as many of the boys that passed away were either their age or younger than those we take to visit.
Key stage 4 tutor programme	JBU	A weekly 'Think Tank' of topical current and affairs including religious and philosophical questions.
Liberal Arts	WJO	Students in Year 13 study a non-examined Liberal Arts programme. This is designed to extend their awareness of a variety of general knowledge matters. The development of ethics, religion, beliefs, and morality is included in this course.
Library	TJC/CKL	There are a selection of books relating to comparable world religions.
Pastoral Structures	HMC	The Houses encourage students to follow their faith should they wish to do so. There have been evening meetings for residential boarders. One of our Y13 students runs a Bible Study Group for students in all year groups.
PSHE	JBU	Social awareness is also raised through the Y9 'First Give' project. Lessons are diverse and inclusive in their nature In Key Stage 4 there is new unit of work on the carousel exploring themes of 'religion in the modern-day United Kingdom'. We reference the Equality Act 2010 and British Values and themes of discrimination in its various forms and how this may be challenged. Religious themes and issues are covered within the citizenship and RSE strands of our Personal Development (PSHE) curriculum in KS5.
RE Department	FSL	Y7 and 8 learn about the 6 main world religions, other worldviews and explore the philosophical question, 'Does God exist?' Y9 consider ethical issues of global relevance and religious responses to them. They also consider influences on their own and others' personal identity. Students discuss how prejudice and discrimination can be challenged. KS4 GCSE focuses on the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam and ethical themes. (exam spec) KS5 – Y12 Culture Day KS4: As part of the KS4 PSHE programme, there is a 5-lesson unit in Y10 and a 3-lesson unit in Y11. These lessons are looking at ethical issues using different debating techniques. For example, animal experiments.

		There is a stand-alone lesson as part of the Liberal Arts programme in Y13 which considers a current issue with links to a religious theme which is discussed / debated. Currently, it is an issue linked to crime and punishment KS5: In Y12 we offer a Cultural Arts Day in the summer term - please see the relevant section of this document for details.
Sixth Form	WJO	Some assemblies focus on cultural and religious key events and contributions. Holocaust Memorial Day assembly Y12 and Y13 Weekly chapel service led by Reverend Wright for Y12 and Y13, includes a sermon, singing a hymn and a prayer International Women's Day assembly Y12 and Y13 Culture and Arts Day Y12 multi-faith representation Culture society
Societies	AED/JBU/MJG	The LINK Society is a pre-school student led group that brings together students from Y7 up to Y13 and gives them a forum to discuss ideas on how to make Gordon's a more inclusive place for everyone to work and study in. Discussions, fundraising, raising awareness for issues to do with neurodiversity, LGBT, and culture. The Culture Society is a student led group that promotes and celebrates the diversity of cultures and religions within the school, delivering fundraising, competitions, and assemblies. UNITY – The Unity project is a new initiative with a key focus to further educate the school community on all matters of race; to talk openly about race and to encourage discussions to support change and appreciate others. Students are encouraged to feel confident to come forward and know that they will be listened to. UNITY works with the Culture Society to help celebrate our diverse range of cultures within the school community.
Staff Development	KHU	PTi subject knowledge courses. All new staff complete the Equality and Diversity training. We are encouraging all other current staff to complete this too.
Year 10 speakers	JBU	Introduction of annual "God and the Big Bang" drop down day for Year 10 – a keynote speech followed by workshops and panel Q and A discussing whether God and science are compatible. Year 10 Humanist and Church of England panel discussion on religions' role in society