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# RELIGIOUS STUDIES POLICY

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## 1. Policy Statement – Religious Studies Policy

*We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10).*

It is the firm commitment of the Cranmer Education Trust (CET) that all our students enjoy a rich and ambitious curriculum that provides a platform for progression, aspiration and social mobility. There is no ceiling on students' experiences or aspirations. Expectations are the same for all and all routes will lead to recognised qualifications.

The curriculums of our schools reflect their individual communities, identities and histories. Social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development (SMSC) is the golden thread running through all aspects of provision, designed to foster resilience, self-worth, cultural capital, social cohesion and integration. The curriculums of our schools seek to empower our young people

## 2. Religious Studies at Brian Clarke

Brian Clarke Academy is a Church of England school with a distinctive Christian ethos that welcomes young people of all faiths and none.

Religious Studies plays a central role in supporting pupils to understand religion, belief and worldviews in modern Britain, and to develop the skills of empathy, respect and critical thinking that are essential for life in a multicultural society.

This policy outlines the aims, structure and delivery of RS at Brian Clarke Academy and reflects the statutory duty for all schools to teach Religious Education (Education Act 1996; School Standards and Framework Act 1998).

Religious Studies is taught by subject specialists.

## 3. Key Stage 3

Students study 3 hours per fortnight of RS throughout years 7-9.

Religious Studies is a core subject at Brian Clarke. All students study Religious Studies up to GCSE. The Diocesan guidelines for Religious Studies are followed with an aim to affirm, encourage, and challenge students on their own spiritual journey. The curriculum develops students' self-awareness, self-reflection, empathy and tolerance. Students are empowered to reach informed opinions that demonstrate an understanding of others' beliefs.

The curriculum encourages students to explore 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. Students examine these key ideas from a theological, philosophical or Social Sciences lens.

Our curriculum develops students' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other world religions and worldviews. When studying the major world faiths, students consider the diversity in experience of religion by examining the similarities and differences within and across religions.

The curriculum directly addresses differences in opinion and thought to develop a mutual understanding of faith and values. In doing so it promotes a students' personal development and well-being and contributes to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse community and society.

For details and sequencing of curriculum content please see the link to the curriculum page on the school website.  
[Key Stage 3 - The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy](#)

## 4. Key Stage 4

Students have 4 hours per fortnight in years 10 and 11.

Religious Studies is a core subject at the Brian Clarke Academy due to the religious nature of our school, the heritage of our students and our recognition that in order to live well as a functioning citizen of the United Kingdom, our students need to understand and interact with the beliefs and practices of those around them.

We follow the AQA Specification A course and our chosen religions for focus topics are Christianity and Islam as these allow us to build on and enhance the current understanding of our students.

Throughout the course our students are challenged with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth and will be supported to develop their own attitudes towards religious issues. They also gain an appreciation of how religion, philosophy and ethics form the basis of our culture. They develop analytical and critical thinking skills and will improve their ability to work with abstract ideas. This course is great preparation for further academic study.

The content covered is split into three sections:

- **The beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity**

Students gain an understanding that Christianity is the main religion of the UK. They use sources of wisdom and authority such as sacred texts to ascertain the beliefs and practices of Christians and how these may differ between Christian groups. They also consider how key teachings impact the life of religious believers.

- **The beliefs, teachings and practices of Islam**

As with Christianity, students study the beliefs, teachings and practices of Islam, understanding that it is one of the main faiths in the UK. They use sources of wisdom and authority to establish the basis of teachings and practices, and then analyse the impact of these sources on the life of a believer. Students must consider both Sunni and Shi'a perspectives on key issues.

- **Thematic Studies**

Students study different religious perspectives on issues faced by religious believers such as whether to go to war and attitudes to crime and punishment. Students also incorporate philosophical and ethical arguments related to the issues studied.

Students are expected to apply their knowledge of the religions studied to these issues and to make reference to specific sources of wisdom and authority when making recommendations on the right course of action.

This unit allows students to apply the knowledge gained earlier in the course and show how it would be used in the modern world.

For details and sequencing of curriculum content please see the link to the curriculum page on the school website.  
[Key Stage 4 - The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy](#)

## 5. Assessment and Reporting

At Brian Clarke we see assessment as integral to teaching and learning and inextricably linked to curriculum design. Carefully constructed assessment enables the classroom teacher to diagnose what students know and understand during lessons/over time and critically provides support through feedback to move the learning on.

Assessment and meaningful feedback are also crucial to students who need to be able to master key content and make progress through their various curriculum journeys.

The assessment and reporting of Religious Studies reflect the whole school approach. Please see the Policies section of the school website [Policies - The Brian Clarke Church of England Academy](#)

## 6. Wider Curriculum and Partnerships

The school has worked closely with the Diocese and the Trust through the Teaching and Learning Communities in designing and quality assuring its curriculum provision.

The Head of Religious Studies is vice Chair of Oldham SACRE and works closely with external religious leaders/ faith organisations to enrich and enhance the school's core and extra-curricular provision.

## 7. Staff Training and Professional Development

All staff at Brian Clarke access Friday Professional Development. This is either whole school or focused on curriculum areas.

The Head of Religious Studies also accesses subject specific CPD through the various partnerships and Trust Teaching and Learning Communities.

## 8. Monitoring and Self Evaluation

The Head of Religious Studies follows the school's approach to quality assuring all aspects of provision.

The Head of Religious Studies is line managed by the Deputy headteacher for Quality of Education.

Termly, they assess and review the subject's strengths and areas for development through the annual Religious Studies School Development Action Plan.

External sources of evidence from SIAMS and Ofsted are utilised to inform provision.

## 9. The Right to Withdraw from Religious Studies

The studying of Religious Studies at Brian Clarke Academy is expected in that parents have applied for their child to attend a Church of England school and in doing so subscribe to the school's curriculum policy, ethos, values, and day to day practises. Religious Studies is part of the core curriculum at Key Stage 3 and 4.

Should a parent/carer wish to withdraw their child from Religious Studies this must be made in writing and following a parental discussion with the Headteacher.

## 10. Policy Links

- [Worship Policy](#)
- [Spirituality Statement](#)
- [Curriculum Policy](#)
- [Assessment and Reporting Policy](#)