



Hutton Church of England Grammar School and Sixth Form

Religious Studies Policy

Author:	Laura Watson - <i>Head of Religious Studies and Director of Spirituality</i>
Reviewed by:	Curriculum Committee
Date Reviewed:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2028
Adopted by Full Governors:	November 2025

Religious Studies Policy

Our School Vision

“In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.” **Philippians 2:5**

At Hutton Church of England Grammar School and Sixth Form, our vision shapes every aspect of school life. Inspired by Philippians 2:5, we encourage every member of our community to live with humility, empathy, and service; to relate to others as Christ would. We seek to develop young people who are compassionate, hopeful, just, and committed to living well together in a diverse world.

We believe that our Christian distinctiveness is not confined to assemblies or worship, but lived out daily in classrooms, relationships, and learning. Religious Studies is a vital expression of this vision and central to the formation of character, knowledge, and spiritual development in our students.

The Purpose of Religious Studies

Religious Studies at Hutton exists to help students:

- Explore their own beliefs, whether rooted in faith or non-religious worldviews.
- Understand the beliefs and practices of others in a spirit of respectful curiosity.
- Grow into individuals who live well with others through compassion, justice, and mutual respect.

RS provides an inclusive, safe space where students are equipped to ask life’s big questions, reflect on personal and shared values, and learn how beliefs influence identity, morality, and society.

The Christian value of *koinonia* (a shared sense of belonging and community) is at the heart of Religious Studies. Students are encouraged to develop a deep awareness that they are part of something bigger than themselves, and that they have a responsibility to contribute positively to the communities they inhabit.

Our Core Values in RS

We nurture relationships marked by generosity, participation, and a sense of belonging. RS encourages collaborative dialogue, respectful disagreement, and shared learning.

Koinonia

We equip students with the language, skills, and mindset to navigate difference and build relationships across belief systems. RS empowers them to engage peacefully, listen deeply, and participate constructively in a pluralistic society.

Justice

We explore the role of faith in promoting fairness, equality, and human dignity. Students are taught to challenge injustice and reflect on what it means to live as global citizens shaped by ethical and moral responsibility.

Hope

In a world often marked by challenge and uncertainty, RS provides a space for students to imagine and work toward a better future, grounded in the Christian belief in redemption, transformation, and purpose.

Compassion

RS develops emotional intelligence, empathy, and care for others. Through the study of sacred texts, ethical teachings, and lived experiences, students are challenged to “love their neighbour” through action as well as understanding.

Curriculum Intent and Implementation

We mostly follow the Illuminating Pathways programme at KS3, informed by the Blackburn Diocesan Framework. At KS4 and KS5, we follow nationally accredited specifications (AQA and Edexcel) that support rigorous, thoughtful engagement with religion, ethics, and philosophy.

Our curriculum:

- Reflects our Anglican foundation (approx. 80% Christian content in KS3).
- Engages with major world religions, especially Islam, as this reflects the local demographic.
- Integrates theology, philosophy, and ethics across all key stages.
- Supports deep engagement with both learning about and learning from religion.
- Encourages students to apply beliefs to real-world issues.

Schemes of work are approved by the governing body and reviewed regularly to ensure they are inclusive, academically ambitious, and rooted in Christian values.

Pedagogy and Ethos

Our RS classrooms are places of hospitality, curiosity, and challenge. Every student is valued as a child of God and welcomed into a learning community that values truthseeking, dialogue, and diversity.

We believe that:

- **Every student can succeed:** academic and spiritual growth are for all.
- **Every voice matters:** we listen, respect, and respond thoughtfully.
- **Every lesson counts:** learning is meaningful, purposeful, and transformative.

The Way Ahead (Archbishop's Council 2001)

Behaviour in RS is shaped by positive relationships and a shared ethos of compassion and dignity. Teachers model curiosity, fairness, and integrity. Lessons are creative, relevant, and inclusive; drawing on literature, film, music, lived experience, and contemporary issues.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

Religious Studies makes a distinct and powerful contribution to SMSC development through:

- **Spiritual development:** exploring awe, wonder, reflection, and meaning.
- **Moral development:** evaluating ethical dilemmas and forming moral judgments.
- **Social development:** learning how beliefs shape communities and responsibilities.
- **Cultural development:** celebrating diversity and recognising faith as a source of identity and heritage.

Cross-Curricular Contributions

Collective Worship

Staff in RS actively contribute to planning and delivering worship. One member of the department serves as **Director of Spirituality**, ensuring strong links between RS and spiritual formation across school.

Citizenship and Character Education

Through RS, students explore the role of faith in public life, consider human rights, justice, and peace, and respond to issues such as war, poverty, and prejudice. They are encouraged to act in ways that reflect our Christian values, especially through initiatives like the Huttonian Award.

Literacy and Numeracy

RS supports literacy through extended writing, reasoning, and debate. Pupils are taught to express complex ideas with clarity and precision. Numeracy is embedded through data interpretation, charts, and ethical statistics.

Assessment and Progression

Assessment is informed by the two attainment targets which we merge into one grading:

- **AT1: Learning about religion**
- **AT2: Learning from religion**

At KS3, we follow the **Lancashire Banding Framework**. At KS4, pupils complete the **AQA Religious Studies A** course. At KS5, we offer **Edexcel A Level Religious Studies** (Philosophy, Ethics, and New Testament).

A small number of pupils may be withdrawn from GCSE RS in exceptional cases, with parental agreement and leadership oversight. All Year 12 pupils receive **Core RS** as part of Personal Development, based on *Illuminating Pathways* and current news issues.

Curriculum Time

Key Stage	Curriculum Time
KS3	2 hours per fortnight
KS4	4 hours per fortnight (GCSE Full Course)
KS5 A Level	9 hours per fortnight
KS5 Core RS	18–20 hours annually (Year 12 only), 10 hours annually (Year 13)

Resources and Staffing

The department is staffed by **three subject specialists**, with support from two trained nonspecialists for Core RS. We are resourced with:

- Three dedicated classrooms with AV equipment
- A wide range of artefacts, books, films, and multimedia

Hutton Church of England Grammar School and Sixth Form Religious Studies Policy

- Strong links with clergy, local faith communities, and Blackburn Diocese
- Digital resources including Pinterest YouTube content and revision aids and materials

The Right to Withdraw

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from Religious Studies. However, given the character of our school and sixth form, the Governors expect all parents and guardians to respect the Christian ethos of our Church School and Sixth Form and would express concern if any parent who had accepted a place in this Church of England School and Sixth Form were to do so. Any parent who does wish to exercise that right should contact the Headteacher.

School and Sixth Form will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of students and pupils withdrawn from Religious Studies. However, no additional work is set or followed in this time and parents are asked to provide suitable material for reflection, appropriate to their child's needs.

Conclusion

Religious Studies at Hutton Church of England Grammar School is more than a subject. It is a cornerstone of our Christian identity and our shared commitment to form young people of character, faith, and wisdom.

Through the lens of koinonia, we seek to build a community where all belong. Through the pursuit of justice, we empower students to speak and act with courage. Through the promise of hope, we encourage them to shape a better future. And through everyday compassion, we guide them to live well together.

We aim for every student to grow; in knowledge, in integrity, and in their contribution to the world, as someone proud to be called a **Huttonian**.

Policy Review

Reviewed: September 2025

Approved by Governing Body: November 2025

This policy is reviewed every 3 years, any personnel changes will be implemented immediately

Next review date: September 2028