

Religious Education

At Sir James Smith's School, Religious Education enables students to understand the diverse religious and non-religious worldviews that shape local, national and global communities. In line with the Cornwall Agreed Syllabus and national guidance, Religious Education is compulsory in all registered state-funded schools.

Our curriculum is designed to secure substantive knowledge while developing disciplinary thinking. Students engage critically with questions of belief, meaning and morality, examining how religion and worldview influence individuals and societies.

Through Religious Education, students:

- Think critically about religious, philosophical and ethical questions.
- Understand the cultural and social impact of belief in contemporary society.
- Develop informed understanding of Christianity and other major religions.
- Develop informed understanding of non-religious worldviews.
- Communicate clear, balanced and evidence-based arguments.
- Reflect thoughtfully on beliefs, values and differing perspectives.

Religious Education is delivered once every two weeks from Year 7 to Year 11. Although there is no external examination requirement, the curriculum is academically rigorous and sequenced to build knowledge, conceptual understanding and analytical skill over time. In accordance with the Education Act 1996, parents have the legal right to withdraw their child, wholly or partly, from Religious Education.

The curriculum is structured around three complementary strands, ensuring coherence and progression across key stages:

- **Beliefs and Theology**, exploring religion through personal and collective beliefs, teachings and religious texts.
- **Religion and Society**, analysing religion's influence on culture, identity and contemporary life.
- **Philosophy and Ethics**, evaluating moral questions through reasoned and structured debate.

Across all strands, Religious Education strengthens critical thinking and discursive writing. Students learn to analyse sources, weigh perspectives and construct sustained, reasoned responses, skills that underpin success in English and across the curriculum, preparing them to become informed, articulate and reflective members of society.