GCSE: RELIGIOUS STUDIES (RS)

Examining Board: AQA

Subject Leader: Mr A Black

Teachers: Mr A Black and Mrs C Mincher

Course Overview:

You will delve into religious and non-religious beliefs that motivate people to act and behave in different ways. You will also tackle fundamental questions about human existence, and engage with modern ethical discussions.

The course is split into two areas:

1. Studying the beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam.
2. Ethical themes:
    - Relationships and families (Same-sex marriage, divorce, sex, contraception, gender equality)
    - Religion and life (Abortion, euthanasia, animal experimentation, life after death, origins of humanity)
    - Religion, crime and punishment (Death penalty, prison, forgiveness, causes of crime)
    - Religion, human rights and social justice (Human rights, human trafficking, status of women in religion, wealth and poverty, free speech)

This GCSE provides a modern approach to studying topics related to religion. You'll look at today's issues – perhaps including things you see or read about in the news: Should we test on animals? Should the UK bring back the death penalty? Should we be free to say whatever we want? Should same-sex marriage be allowed in churches? You'll learn skills in interpreting and evaluating pieces of information, communicating and applying your knowledge, and in solving problems. You'll also have an opportunity to develop your debating skills.

Religious Studies builds fantastic life skills that are beneficial for many careers and prepare students for the next stage in their education. It develops key skills of analysis, evaluation and decision-making which are essential in many workplaces. Ethics is a huge aspect to being involved in medicine, and technology companies are interested in RS, to make ethical coding decisions. It is also particularly beneficial for those interested in working with people, such as the police, counselling, social work, youth work, teaching and many others which involve understanding of people.

About the Exam:

You'll have two, 1 hour 45 minute exams at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1 = Beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Islam.
Paper 2 = 4 Ethical themes (relationships; life and death; crime and punishment; human rights).

Each exam is worth 50% of your total mark.

Each of the sections of the exam follow the exact same structure, with shorter knowledge questions (1, 1, 4 and 6 marks) followed by a piece of extended writing, debating a controversial statement (12 marks).