

# KS3 Religious Studies

In today's multi-cultural society it is more important than ever that students have an understanding of the people around them and that we ensure that students have a tolerant and open mind when confronted with views that may be different to their own. The Religious studies department at St James offers students a varied and engaging curriculum. In KS3 students will learn about World Religions through a range of thematic and religion-specific schemes of learning. Important skills are embedded and these are further built on at KS4. Religious Studies allows students the opportunity to explore a range of big questions and provides the forum for discussion that can help them form and express their own opinions.

Students will start the year with a topic on Philosophy and Thinking Skills, which will focus on 'Big Questions', identity, moral decisions and creation stories. This topic allows students to explore difficult questions in an open and safe environment and gets them discussing their own views in a more meaningful way. Next students will study the topic entitled 'Jesus: Man or God' which will look at the historical evidence on Jesus and his life as well as Christian beliefs. This topic allows students to explore different types of evidence, miracles, parables and the resurrection, all with a focus on evaluation and answering the title question at the end. The final half term will be split into two sections, the first half term students will explore Sikhism; beliefs and practices and how these help to shape the Sikh community and the final half term will be spent on the NATRE Spirited Arts competition where students will be guided through a set theme (this changes every year) and then create a piece of art work, which could be submitted into the competition to win a prize. This is an excellent way to end the year as students are given a little more freedom to express their interests within a given theme.

**Skills:** Students will develop important skills within Religious Studies that will also be transferrable across other subject areas. Students will learn to describe and explain religious and philosophical beliefs and analyse the impact of these beliefs on a person's everyday life. They will begin evaluating beliefs and looking at how to form detailed arguments supported by evidence. It is also important that students are skilled in expressing their own opinions while respecting the opinions of others.

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed in a range of ways involving both pupil and peer assessed tasks as well as teacher led and marked work. Tasks and activities assessed will be varied and range from group presentations to traditional tests to model making, all designed to cater for every learner's strengths. In Religious Studies students will have three formal assessments a year that are modelled on GCSE style assessments. These allow students to become familiar with the structure of a formal assessment and also means that the skills needed later on are fully embedded before beginning GCSE studies.

**Parental support:** Parents are encouraged to use Class Charts to monitor students' out of class learning. Parental support is key when maintaining a student's positive attitude towards Religious Studies as it is a thought provoking subject that can, at times, lead to the discussion of some difficult or sensitive topics so it is essential that students are able to extend their learning and understanding at home by continuing these discussions with the people closest to them.