Curriculum Statement - RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Our Intent:	
What is the vision (big picture) for your subject?	Students at Budmouth Academy will develop an awareness of the world and their local communities, promoting empathy and respect. By studying RS they will develop religious literacy and be able to make informed judgements about important matters of religion and belief in the 21st century.
What are the key concepts that underpin your subject?	Substantive knowledge - Our vision is that all students have a depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of the world religions and worldviews outlined by the Dorset locally agreed syllabus. This enables students to develop the ability to comprehend the beliefs, teachings, and practices of the religious traditions of the world. This supports student awareness of the world and their local communities, promoting empathy and respect Disciplinary knowledge - As academic RS is not itself an individual academic discipline, students will understand the different disciplinary perspectives and methods used when studying religion so they do not experience a biased point of view and develop a breadth and depth in order to become well rounded and free-thinking participants of discourse, who can make academically informed judgements about important matters of religion and belief in the 21st century. Personal knowledge - Religious Studies is unique in the sense it is an academic subject with the opportunity to contribute so much to the personal development of students. In addition to substantive content and the disciplinary methods used to study religion, students will be encouraged to develop personal knowledge. This includes the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural capital (SMSC), British Values, and an awareness of the
Which key themes are repeated over time?	1. Views on the existence of God; 2. Origins of the universe and responsibility for the environment; 3. The nature of humanity; 4. The afterlife; 5. The relationship between belief and practice
What knowledge and skills will students have at the end of each key stage?	KS2: In Key Stage 2, students deepen their knowledge of a wider range of world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. They explore beliefs, practices, sacred texts, and festivals in more detail, and start to make comparisons across different faiths. Pupils are encouraged to consider moral questions and the role religion plays in everyday life and communities. They develop the ability to describe and explain religious practices, ask deeper questions, and show empathy towards diverse beliefs and experiences.
	KS3: By the end of Key Stage 3, students are expected to demonstrate a more critical understanding of religions and worldviews. They explore complex philosophical and ethical issues such as the existence of God, suffering, and justice. Studies often include both religious and non-religious perspectives, such as Humanism. Students enhance their analytical skills, using religious vocabulary to discuss beliefs and practices, evaluate different viewpoints, and begin to construct reasoned arguments based on evidence and reflection.
	KS4: At Key Stage 4, students undertake a more structured and in-depth study of two major religions—commonly Christianity and one other—through a formal GCSE syllabus. They examine key beliefs, teachings, practices, and sources of wisdom in detail, and apply this understanding to thematic issues such as relationships, war, morality, and justice. Students are expected to critically evaluate religious and secular arguments, write extended responses, and develop well-informed, balanced views on ethical and theological questions.
	KS5: During Key Stage 5, students engage in advanced studies of religion, philosophy, and ethics. They explore complex theological and philosophical ideas, such as arguments for and against the existence of God, theories of morality, and the role of religion in contemporary society. Textual analysis, scholarly debate, and critical thinking are central at this stage. Students develop the skills to construct sophisticated arguments, interpret primary sources, and evaluate perspectives with depth, coherence, and intellectual independence.
Does your curriculum intent match or exceed the breadth of the National Curriculum/Subject specification?	The Dorset locally agreed syllabus recommends: Key Stage 3: 45 hours per year Key Stage 4: 40 hours per year. Budmouth Academy 2025-2026 is providing: max of 20 hours in Yrs7 and 9; max 40 in Yr8 and Yr10 max of 20 hours. Therefore Budmouth Academy cannot currently meet the recommendations from the 2024 Ofsted RE Syllabus Review.
How do you ensure that learning is sequenced effectively over time in your subject?	Learning in Religious Studies is sequenced effectively over time by starting with foundational knowledge and gradually introducing more complex concepts and skills. A spiral curriculum revisits key themes—such as belief, morality, and worship—at increasing levels of depth, ensuring progression in both knowledge and critical thinking. Core disciplinary approaches (theological, philosophical, and social) are interwoven to build a broad and balanced understanding. Skills such as analysis, comparison, and evaluation are developed systematically, while content is interleaved to make meaningful connections across topics. Regular assessment informs planning, and sequencing aligns with national curriculum goals and exam specifications to ensure continuity and challenge.
How have you decided what knowledge and skills you want students to learn in your subject?	In Religious Studies, the knowledge and skills we want students to learn are shaped by a balance of substantive knowledge (what people believe), disciplinary knowledge (how we study religion), and personal knowledge (how students relate their learning to their own lives). This is complemented by the key academic disciplines of theology, philosophy, and the social sciences, which help students develop a rich and critical understanding of religion and worldviews. Our curriculum is carefully designed in line with the Dorset Locally Agreed Syllabus and relevant exam board specifications, ensuring both academic rigour and local relevance.
How do you plan to cater for cultural capital e.g. trips, visits, enrichment, careers, applied learning, real word application & power skills development?	To develop students' cultural capital in Religious Studies, we provide a range of enriching experiences that bring learning to life and connect it to the wider world. These include trips to places of worship, such as churches, mosques, and temples, as well as visits to museums and cultural exhibitions that deepen understanding of religious traditions and histories. We also invite guest speakers from faith communities and external organisations to share real-world perspectives and lived experiences. Enrichment is further supported through applied learning opportunities, such as debates, ethical case studies, and discussions around current events. We link learning to careers in areas like education, social work, law, and international relations, while also developing students' power skills, such as critical thinking, empathy, respectful dialogue, and ethical reasoning—preparing them to thrive in a diverse and global society.
What are your main instruments of the curriculum used to implement, deliver, and assess your curriculum effectively? (Materials should privilege thinking over task completion - memory is the residue of thought)	Our main instruments for implementing, delivering, and assessing the Religious Studies curriculum include centrally planned and carefully sequenced lessons, alongside formative and summative assessments designed by the RS department. These resources ensure consistency, clarity, and high expectations across all teaching. Lessons are built to privilege thinking over task completion, encouraging students to grapple with big questions, evaluate diverse perspectives, and engage in meaningful discussion. Assessments are thoughtfully designed to promote retrieval, reflection, and higher-order thinking, in line with the principle that "memory is the residue of thought." Knowledge organisers, discussion prompts, model answers, and structured tasks are used to support cognitive challenge and long-term retention, ensuring students develop both subject mastery and critical thinking skills.
How is homework used to encourage, enthuse and develop pupils' skills and understanding?	Online platforms are strategically used at both KS3 and KS4 to support flipped learning, retrieval practice, and to provide opportunities for stretch and challenge beyond the classroom. These digital tools enable students to consolidate prior learning, revisit key concepts, and extend their thinking through independent tasks and enrichment activities. At KS5 (A Level), students are provided with a wide range of additional resources, including academic reading, podcasts, and articles, to deepen their subject knowledge, support critical engagement with complex ideas, and develop independent study skills essential for higher education.
How are you ensuring that each teacher has the requisite subject knowledge to teach effectively?	Non-specialist teachers are supported with centrally created lessons and resources. Guidance is also provided in the notes to the individual slides. Within each lesson the tasks are broken down into R, A, G and M (Red, Amber, Green and Mastery) to provide further guidance and support about complexity and pace.
Our Implementation:	
What will we see when we drop into your subject lessons and why?	When you drop into a Religious Studies lesson, you will see engaged students thinking critically, exploring big questions, and participating in respectful, purposeful discussions. Lessons are built around challenging concepts, encouraging students to reflect on different worldviews, evaluate beliefs, and apply their learning to ethical and philosophical issues. You'll notice structured routines, such as retrieval starters and questioning, used to reinforce prior knowledge and build long-term memory. Classrooms will show a clear focus on thinking over task completion, with activities designed to promote analysis, empathy, and debate rather than passive learning. This approach ensures students not only retain knowledge but also develop the skills to interpret, evaluate, and express ideas thoughtfully—which is central to the purpose of RS education.
How do you adapt or tailor your curriculum to meet the needs of students with different starting points (KS2 data)?	The Religious Studies curriculum is carefully adapted to meet the diverse needs of students with different starting points, using a combination of KS2 data, baseline assessments, and ongoing teacher observation. While most students arrive at Budmouth with some prior knowledge of Christianity, in line with the Dorset Locally Agreed Syllabus and national requirements, we recognise that understanding and confidence vary. To address this, lessons are differentiated, with tasks scaffolded to ensure accessibility for all while still providing challenge for higher-attaining students. Not all students are expected to complete every task (e.g. "M tasks"), and support is built in through targeted questioning, sentence starters, visual aids, and grouped support. More advanced learners are extended through enrichment activities, evaluative questions, and greater depth discussion, ensuring that all students are appropriately challenged and able to make meaningful progress from their individual starting points.
How do you stretch students who are high prior attainment?	The Mastery tasks within each individual lesson provide stretch and challenge, and at GCSE there is no tiered entry, i.e. on every assessment, questions are set to allow students to achieve throughout the levels. This is replicated in our KS3 assessments.
How do you support and scaffold (visual, verbal & written) for students who are SEND?	Students with SEND are supported through a range of carefully planned scaffolds that cater to different learning needs and styles. Lessons routinely include a Frayer model slide to build and reinforce key vocabulary, supporting both literacy and concept clarity. Writing tasks are scaffolded using sentence starters, writing frames, and model answers to help structure responses and reduce cognitive load. Visual stimuli such as images, diagrams, and videos are used to support comprehension, alongside audio materials to aid processing and retention. Where appropriate, students also engage with physical artefacts, making abstract concepts more concrete and accessible. Verbal support is provided through targeted questioning, repetition, and clear instructions, ensuring students are included in class discussions and can access core learning. These strategies work together to create an inclusive environment where all students can engage meaningfully with Religious Studies content.
How do you support students who are disadvantaged?	Data from Arbor is used to inform seating plans, provision of resources and invitation to additional support, especially for those preparing for exam qualifications.
Our Impact:	
How are you monitoring implementation in your subject area?	Implementation in Religious Studies is monitored through a combination of lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutinies, and student voice. These activities help ensure that teaching is consistent with the planned curriculum and that students are engaging with the intended knowledge and skills. We also use data from assessments to track progress and identify any gaps in understanding, which informs responsive teaching and intervention. Regular departmental meetings provide a forum for reviewing curriculum delivery, sharing best practice, and refining resources. This ongoing cycle of monitoring and reflection ensures high-quality implementation and supports continuous improvement in teaching and learning.
How do you check the rigour in planning and resourcing in your subject area?	Lessons have been reviewed and revised in the light of the 2025 Dorset Locally Agreed Syllabus for RE. At KS4 and KS5, particularly in the areas of Ethics and global events, lessons are adapted to stay relevant and sensitive to ongoing developments and issues.
How do you use assessment in your subject area?	Assessments are used to test knowledge and skills, and to measure students' progress against their targets. Assessment results inform teacher's future planning and reviews. Embedded in each lesson are interleaved 'Do Now' retrieval tasks, and 'Show Me' hinge checks before the extended writing task.
How do assessments identify gaps in students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge fluently and accurately?	At KS3 DIRT provides students with the opportunity to review and re-draft their answers against model answers. At KS4 and KS5 DIRT provides students with the opportunity to review both their knowledge and their skills against the examboard specification, criteria and markschemes. Individual question level analysis identifies specific areas of knowledge and skill for future development.
How is knowledge remembered in your subject?	Students are provided with the opportunity for knowledge retrieval in every lesson, and topics are sequenced to cumulatively build upon students' prior learning. Key knowledge is introduced and interleaved across KS4, KS4 and KS5.

BUDMOUTH ACADEMY WEYMOUTH

Curriculum Overview: RELIGIOUS STUDIES

		Autumn Term 1	Autumn Term 2	Spring Term 1	Spring Term 2	Summer Term 1	Summer Term 2
Year 7		**Introduction to Philosophy: Does God exist?** This unit explores the difference between evidence and belief to begin to learn the critical analysis skills for religious studies.	**How did Christianity begin?** This unit focuses on the Old Testament with a focus on Creation, the importance of Abraham and how Moses was significant for Christian ethics.	**Do miracles prove God's existence? (New Testament - Christian beliefs)** This is focusing on the New Testament and how it began. This will focus on the birth of Jesus, miracles and how Christians put their faith into action.	**What is a Humanists worldview?** Explaining a non-religious worldview: Humanists in history; The Humanist view of life.	**Sanatana Dharma (2/3 lessons)** Explaining the concepts, rituals and practices of a Dharmic religion: Worship in the home; Different groups; Pilgrimage.	**Sanatana Dharma (2/3 lessons)** Explaining the concepts, rituals and practices of a Dharmic religion: Worship in the home; Different groups; Pilgrimage.
Year 8		**What is ethics?** Explore ethical theories and apply religious beliefs onto these.	**How did the universe begin? (6 Lessons)** Exploring the inquiry questions: 1. How do religions and non-religious worldviews explain the origin of the universe? 2. What responsibility do humans have for the environment?	**Do all religions involve God? (6 lessons)** Explaining beliefs in Buddhism and exploring how the belief system works without God	**Why do Christians believe Jesus was God on earth and what was radical about him?** Key Question: Why do Christians believe Jesus was God on earth and what was radical about him?	**What is Sikhi?** Exploring the beliefs and practices of the Sikh religion.	**Does everyone believe in life after death?** Exploring different worldviews perspectives on life after death, with reference to religious experiences.
Year 9		**What is Islam?** Exploring the key beliefs in Islam and how this impacts Islamic practices.	**What is Islam?** Exploring the key beliefs in Islam and how this impacts Islamic practices.	**How do religious believers value life? (3 Lessons)** Religious beliefs and responses to: animals; the sanctity of life; abortion.	**How do religious believers value life? (2/3 Lessons)** Religious beliefs and responses to: euthanasia; origins of the universe; origins of humanity.	**How should we punish criminals? (3 lessons)** Exploring why people commit crimes, what are the aims of punishment and what are the different views in different religions?	**How should we punish criminals? (3/4 lessons)** What is corporal punishment, what is the death penalty, what are the ethics behind these punishments?
GCSE	GCSE Year 10	**Paper 1 - Christian Beliefs** The nature of God God as omnipotent, loving and Just The oneness of God and the Trinity Different Christian beliefs about creation The incarnation and Jesus, the Son of God The Crucifixion The resurrection and ascension Life after death Sin and Salvation The role of Christ in salvation		**Paper 2 - Theme A (Relationships and Families)** Christian teachings about human sexuality Sexual relationshops before and outside of marriage Contraception and family planning Religious teachings about marriage Divorce and remarriage Teachings about the nature of families Teaching about the purpose of families Beliefs about gender equality	**Paper 1 - Islam Beliefs** The oneness of God and the supremacy of God's will Key beliefs of Sunni and Shi'a Islam The nature of God Angels Predestination Life after death Prophethood and Adam Ibrahim Muhammad and the Imamate The Holy Books in Islam		**Paper 2 - Theme B - Religion and Life** The origins of the universe The value of the world The use and abuse of the environment The use and abuse of animals The origins of human life Abortion Euthanasia Death and the Afterlife
CORE RS	CORE Year 10	**3/4 lessons: Human Rights and Social Justice** What are human rights? Religious views on human rights and social justice Prejudice and Discrimination	**3 lessons Christianity: Human Rights and Social Justice** The human right of education Poverty The exploitation of the poor	**The Problem of Evil and Suffering (3 Lessons)** The nature of evil Do you agree with existentialist accounts? How have Jewish people thought about G-d after the Holocaust?	**The Problem of Evil and Suffering (2/3 Lessons)** Theodicy: Does God need defending against evil? Does theodicy fail? Can we reduce evil?	**What does it mean to be spiritual but not religious?** The idea of 'SBNR' - The context of Great Britain Is Buddhism a religion? What makes the Buddha's way unique? SBNR in practice	**What does it mean to be spiritual but not religious?** Spiritualities of music, sport, nature Is Britains future SBNR? What is my view? How does this impact our generation?
	CORE Year 11	**What are the main beliefs in Buddhism?** The birth of the Buddha The four sights Asceticism The Buddha's enlightenment	**What are the main beliefs in Buddhism?** Places of worship How do Buddhists worship? The five moral precepts Wesak and Parinirvana day	**What is real? (Philosophy)** What is reality? Can we trust our senses? Plato and the cave	**What is real? (Philosophy)** Dreams, illusions and virtual reality Does God make reality? What is real? - Philosophical debate		
A Level RS	Year 12	**9 per fortnight (36 lessons =12 per paper)** **Philosophy of Religion:** Ancient Philosophical Influences; Soul, mind and body; Arguments from observation (teleological) **DCT:** **Religion and Ethics: Utilitarianism**	**9 per fortnight (27 lessons=9 per paper)** **Philosophy of Religion:** Arguments from observation (cosmological); Arguments from reason; **DCT:** The person of Jesus Christ **Religion and Ethics:** Natural Moral Law	**9 per fortnight (27 lessons=9 per paper)** **DCT:** The person of Jesus Christ (continued); Liberation Theology and Marx; Gender and theology; **Religion and Ethics :** Situation Ethics	**9 per fortnight (27 lessons=9 per paper)** **DCT:** Gender and society **Philosophy of Religion:** Religious experience **Religion and Ethics:** Situation Ethics cont. and Kantian Ethics	**9 per fortnight (27 lessons=9 per paper):** *including EOY exams & students off timetable for INSET & 6th form events)* **DCT:** The challenge of secularism **Religion and Ethics:** Kantian Ethics cont. and Euthanasia	**9 per fortnight (27 lessons=9 per paper):** *including 6th form trips, UCAS day, DofE, finance day, INSET)* **DCT:** Christian moral action **Religion and Ethics:** Business Ethics
	Year 13	**9 per fortnight (36 lessons =12 lessons per paper)** **Mock 1: week 8** **Philosophy of Religion**: The Problem of Evil **DCT**: Christian Moral Action **Philosophy of Religion**: The nature or attributes of God **Religion and Ethics**: Business Ethics	**9 per fortnight (27 lessons= 9 per paper)** **Mock 1: week 1** **Philosophy of Religion**: Attributes of God **DCT**: Religious pluralism and theology Religious Pluralism and Society **Philosophy of Religion:** Religious Language: Analogy, Negativa and symbolic **Religion and Ethics:** Sexual Ethics	**9 per fortnight (27= 9 lesons per paper)** **Mock 2: week 6** **DCT:** Gender and Society **DCT:** Gender and Theology **Philosophy**: Religious Language: 20th Century Perspectives **Religion and Ethics:** Conscience	**9 per fortnight (27= 9 lessons per paper)** **Mock 2: week 1** **DCT:** The Challenge of Secularism **DCT:** Liberation Theology and Marx **Religion and Ethics**: Meta Ethics		