



Philosophy and Ethics (Religious Education) Policy *June 2025*

1. Introduction and rationale

Religion and beliefs inform our values and are reflected in what we say and how we behave. RE is an important subject in itself, developing an individual's knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs which form part of contemporary society.

Religious Education (*usually referred to as 'Philosophy and Ethics' at LGS*) provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human. It can develop students' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, of other principal religions, other religious traditions and worldviews that offer answers to questions such as these.

RE also contributes to students' personal development and well-being and to community cohesion by promoting mutual respect and tolerance in a diverse society. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development, deepening the understanding of the significance of religion in the lives of others – individually, communally and cross-culturally.

RE makes an important contribution to the school's duty to promote community cohesion and equality. It provides a key context to develop young people's understanding and appreciation of diversity, to promote shared values and to challenge racism and discrimination. RE subject matter gives particular opportunities to promote an ethos of respect for others, challenge stereotypes and build understanding of other cultures and beliefs. This contributes to promoting a positive and inclusive school ethos that champions democratic values and human rights.

[Adapted from the latest guidance on Religious Education from the DfE]

2. Aims

Philosophy & Ethics contributes to spiritual, moral, cultural, social and intellectual development of students through the two strands of learning about religion and learning from religion.

Philosophy and Ethics aims to:

- **Provoke challenging questions** about the meaning and purpose of life, beliefs, the self, issues of right and wrong, and what it means to be human.
- **Encourage students to explore their own beliefs** (whether they are religious or nonreligious), in as they examine issues of religious belief and faith and how these impact on personal, institutional and social ethics.

- **Enable students to build their sense of identity and belonging**, which helps them flourish within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society
- **Teach students to develop respect for others**, including people with different faiths and beliefs, and helps to challenge prejudice
- **Prompt students to consider their responsibilities** to themselves and to others, and to explore how they might contribute to their communities and to wider society

The Philosophy & Ethics curriculum does this through the study of the main world religions, secular views and by making this study relevant to the students' own experiences.

3. Legal Requirements

As required by legislation and the school's Funding Agreement as an academy trust, Religious Education is provided for all students in accordance with Slough Agreed Syllabus (2020-2025). The School's Philosophy & Ethics curriculum is aligned to the advice and guidance contained in the Agreed Syllabus.

4. Content and approach

- **In Years 7- 9**, Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and secular views, are all studied. Teaching is aligned with the Slough Agreed Syllabus.
- **In Years 10-11**, all students study religious and secular attitudes from different world religions through a variety of modern ethical dilemmas e.g. euthanasia. Students may also opt to follow the GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies course (referred to as Religious Studies to distinguish it from the non-GCSE curriculum) which will earn them a qualification at the end of Year 11. This specification focusses on Christianity, Ethics and another of the world's major religions.
- In **the Sixth Form**, a general Philosophy & Ethics program is in place, as part of the Culture and Curiosity Enrichment program. Students cover the required 10 hours of study over the two years via taught lessons and whole year group activities including debates and visiting speakers. An A Level in Religious Studies is also available in years 12 and 13 for those who opt for it.

The curriculum time available for Philosophy & Ethics is broadly shared evenly across the 6 main world religions, with each one being given a half term of the curriculum time across years 7-9. The remaining time is taught thematically, e.g. beliefs about the afterlife, so at least 4 of the 6 main religions will be studied with reference to the theme. By the time students reach the Sixth Form all the principal religions represented in Great Britain will have been studied. For each religion studied, the areas and concepts studied include symbolism, worship and celebration, authority, values and lifestyles, questions of meaning.

Two key skills will be developed at all stages. These are **reflection**, which includes reflecting on feelings, relationships, experiences, beliefs and practices and **empathy**, which includes consideration of others and their beliefs, feelings, thoughts, attitudes and values; development of the power of imagination in identifying feelings such as love, wonder, forgiveness and sorrow, and seeing the world through the eyes of others.

e) Teachers' Rights

The Governing Board and Headteacher appreciate that teachers have the right to withdraw from the teaching of Philosophy & Ethics and Religious Studies, apart from those appointed specifically to teach the subject. However, it is hoped that teachers will feel able to contribute to the teaching of the subject whatever their personal beliefs and commitments.

f) Parents' Rights

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Philosophy & Ethics lessons and students also have this right from age 16. Parents (or students if appropriate) are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher and Subject Leader for Philosophy & Ethics before notifying the school of their decision to be withdrawn.

Policy approval

This policy will be reviewed and approved in line with the LGS Policy Framework approved by the Headteacher.

Reviewed by	Assistant Headteacher and Subject Leader	May 2025
Approved by	Headteacher	June 2025
Next Review		April 2027