

Westcliff High School for Girls

Religious Studies Department

The department follows the Southend Agreed Syllabus, adopting an approach to Religious Studies that uses a wide range of teaching techniques. The aim of the department is to stimulate philosophical enquiry amongst the students at all ages, relating this through creative means of expression. Students are encouraged to examine the very nature of belief questioning the reasons for holding to a specific belief system. As well as examining the ways in and extent to which the believers' lives are effected and shaped by their religious affiliations. The department is also committed to the use of 'experiential' and 'thinking skills' methods of teaching, and is against any form of confessional teaching in the classroom.

The Key Stage 3 course is taught in two years, and the scheme of work has been freely adapted from and relating to the Southend Agreed Syllabus. The course is fairly prescriptive being laid down in an explicit scheme of work, which members of the department have helped to develop. Students are expected to use a wide range of methods of communication including writing, discussion, ICT, and graphical representation. The course has distinct units of explicit religious study, where one religion is studied exclusively, it also has discrete thematic units such as 'The existence of God', or 'Rites of passage'.

At Key Stage 4 all of the students have two hours of lessons per fortnight. During this time they are following the AQA GCSE course (updated in 2015), which examines two papers, Thematic Studies and an in depth study of two religions: Christianity and Islam. All students are entered for the examinations, at the end of Year 11. The students will then gain a full course GCSE qualification. We have offered the full course to all students for many years, with a tremendous success rate. The results are excellent, students consistently achieving 100% 9 to 5, with over 80% of students attaining 8/9 grades. Recent success reflects and builds upon many years success prior to this.

A level is very well established in the school, with uptake consistently high, comprising of two classes in Year 12 and two classes in Year 13. The students are following the AQA specification, studying for papers in; Ethics, and Philosophy, and Religion and Religious Dialogues. The A2 course is well supported by students and once again results are good. Students are following the new specification and the course concludes with two lengthy examinations at the end of Year 13. There is no coursework for this A Level.

We are looking for an enthusiastic, versatile person, who has a passion for the subject, as well as teaching and learning, and who is able to teach all aspects of the syllabus, continuing to encourage an academic approach.

September 2018