

Religious Studies Department End of Year Round-Up

By Mr J Bragg-Welling (Team Leader for RS & PSHE)

As we reach the end of a successful academic year, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on the fantastic achievements of our students across the Religious Studies department. This year has seen students engage with challenging questions, respectful debate and thought-provoking ideas, all of which sit at the heart of the Religious Studies department. It has been a year filled with curiosity, personal growth and academic development, and I am incredibly proud of what our students have accomplished.

Key Stage 3

Year 7

Our Year 7 students are finishing their unit on Sikhism, and it has been wonderful to see how much they have matured throughout their first year at Westbourne Academy. Starting secondary school is a significant milestone, and our Year 7s have adapted brilliantly to the expectations and routines of academy life. We are incredibly proud of the young people they are becoming.

Year 8

In Year 8, students have been exploring a range of alternative worldviews, considering how different people make sense of the world around them. These lessons encourage students to think critically while developing compassion, empathy and understanding for others.

Year 9

Our Year 9 students have recently selected their GCSE options and are beginning to look ahead to the exciting journey that Religious Studies offers. Through the study of ultimate questions, students have explored how religion influences modern debates and discussions on some of society's most important issues. Recent lessons have explored questions such as *Why do we celebrate the dead?* and *Should assisted suicide be legal?* These discussions have encouraged students to consider different viewpoints, develop reasoned arguments and engage respectfully with complex issues.

Key Stage 4

Year 10

Year 10 students are nearing the completion of Theme B: Religion and Life, an important component of the GCSE Religious Studies course. This strong progress leaves plenty of time next year for revision and examination preparation. We would encourage all students to begin revisiting key knowledge from this year in preparation for their end-of-year assessments, and we have been delighted by the commitment shown by students attending our weekly after-school revision sessions on Mondays.

Later this year, we look forward to welcoming representatives from Ipswich Crown Court (date to be confirmed), who will speak with students about careers in law and provide an opportunity to ask questions linked to their studies of crime, punishment and religion.

Year 11

Finally, we say our goodbyes to Year 11. It has been an absolute pleasure to get to know this year group and support them throughout their GCSE journey. Their character, resilience and contribution to academy life have been greatly appreciated, and their presence around the academy will be missed dearly.

As they move on to the next stage of their education, we encourage them to remain inquisitive, continue asking questions and aim high in all that they do. The ability to think critically, consider different perspectives and engage thoughtfully with the world around them will serve them well wherever their future takes them. We wish them every success and look forward to welcoming them back on Results Day.

Looking Ahead

Thank you to all our students, families and staff for your continued support throughout the year. I would particularly like to thank the parents and carers who take an active role in their child's education; the difference this makes is immeasurable, and we greatly value the partnership between home and school. We wish everyone a restful summer break and look forward to another exciting year of learning, discussion and discovery in September.

Mr Bragg-Welling

Head of RS and PSHE