



**KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL,
SOUTHAMPTON**

Worship and Religious Education Policy

Rationale:	King Edward VI School was originally a Church of England Foundation. Today it is a non-denominational school shaped by its Christian heritage welcoming pupils of all faiths and none. This policy sets out the Schools approach to worship and religious education.
Owner:	Assistant Head (Pastoral)
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King Edward VI School was originally a Church of England Foundation. Today it is a non-denominational school shaped by its Christian heritage welcoming pupils of all faiths and none. It is the expectation that pupils and staff will attend school assemblies and services including the annual Thanksgiving Service. Exemptions can be made with the permission of the Head; this will be on a case-by-case basis according to the circumstances.

All members of the School, as a part of their core academic studies, follow a Religious Studies curriculum in the first two years and undertake a GCSE Short Course in Religion and Citizenship in the Third and Fourth Years.

The aims of assemblies and collective worship are:

- To foster a sense of community in which individuals flourish while learning to respect the values of others;
- To reinforce the core values which underlie all School activities whether curricular or co-curricular;
- To develop reflective individuals with a sense of their own worth and that of others;
- To be a forum for informed debate about contemporary issues in both the School and the wider community;
- To introduce pupils to the spiritual dimension of life in ways appropriate to their age group;
- To celebrate the depth and richness of the life of the community by acknowledging achievements of all kinds, in academic work, in the arts, in service to the community and in sport;
- To keep pupils informed about events and developments in the life of the School.

These aims will be achieved by:

- The presence of a part-time School Chaplain;
- The appropriate use of the School Hall and the Dobson Theatre for assemblies;
- The provision of section assemblies;
- The provision of regular Christian services for the whole School;
- The provision of special services at Romsey Abbey and Winchester Cathedral to mark important School occasions;
- Involving a wide range of staff and pupils in delivering assemblies and services;
- Using visiting speakers to talk about issues of particular importance.

The School Chaplain is licensed within the Diocese of Winchester and thus is accountable not only to the School but also to the Bishop. The Chaplain seeks to encourage pupils to develop their own religious beliefs and faith traditions. He is able to support those seeking guidance and those preparing in their worshipping communities for Confirmation or similar rites of passage; no attempt is made to evangelise those of a non-Christian faith.

The pattern of assemblies is as follows:

Monday	Notices and Thought for the Day
Tuesday	Full School Assembly
Wednesday &	
Thursday	Section Assemblies

A number of special services mark particular occasions, such as the Remembrance Service (Nov), Carol Service (Dec) and Thanksgiving (March). There have also been occasional services to focus the thoughts of the community at times of crisis, collective grief or rejoicing.

Provision is made for personal voluntary devotion and reflection in the form of Quiet Time, Muslim Prayers and Communion.

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Religious Studies

Religious Studies aims to help pupils gain a clear understanding of the significance of religions and beliefs in the world today. It also helps them to learn about the ways different faith communities relate to one another. Pupils who attend King Edward VI School come from a wide range of religious and indeed non-religious backgrounds. As Religious Studies is concerned with “interpreting religion in relation to human experience” it is not the practice of the Department to preach to or convert the pupils. The faith background of the pupil and the staff is respected at all times.

The Schemes of Work are designed to encourage and develop pupils’ understanding of the significance of religions and beliefs today. They relate to the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Studies, “Living Difference”, which enables the Department to forge links with local examples of good practice and to support the conviction that students will only develop a coherent pattern of beliefs and values of their own if they can interpret and respond to the different religious and cultural experiences of others. In an increasingly secular and yet multicultural society, it is hoped that this ability will in turn foster mutual understanding between pupils of differing religious and cultural backgrounds.

Pupils in the First Year explore the concept of religion and then they study the religions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. In the Second Year, pupils examine the concept of religious beginnings before going on to study Judaism, an introduction to Islam and the figure of Jesus. Religious festivals are also covered. This forms a strong foundation in terms of content, experience and skills for the pupils to be able to access the GCSE courses studied in the Third and Fourth Years.

Third and Fourth Year students undertake an examined Short Course GCSE in Religious Studies (AQA9-1) which enables them to gain an academic qualification whilst also studying the beliefs of Christianity (as the main religious tradition in Britain and according to government guidance) and Islam. The themes of Human Relations and Peace and Conflict are examined in light of these faiths. Pupils are also able to opt to top up this course to a full GCSE which also involves studying Christian beliefs and Muslim beliefs alongside religion and life and crime and punishment. Pupils can also choose to study Religious Studies (Philosophy of Religion, Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought) at A Level (OCR). Aspects of Religious Studies are also included within the Extended Studies programme in the First Year and within Open Forum and Foundation Studies in the Sixth Form.

It is hoped that all members of the community are thus introduced to a range of religious ideas and faiths and a reflective critical approach to spiritual, philosophical and ethical issues, equipping all to lead constructive lives in the modern world.

Religious Studies is taught by specialist teachers.