



Religious Studies and collective worship

“Vast oceans of truth lie all undiscovered before me.” Isaac Newton

At Isaac Newton Academy our aim is to equip every student with the knowledge, learning power and character necessary for success at university and beyond. We place an emphasis on ensuring that all students flourish and become confident individuals, who value themselves and others. A key aspect of this is the promotion of students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which provides a vital foundation for life (see INA SMSC Policy). The RS curriculum prepares students to live and work in a diverse society, to understand and respect the cultures, faith and backgrounds of others.

Religious Studies

Religious studies (RS) contributes to students’ understanding of and respect for religious and cultural diversity. It helps them to understand the beliefs and perspectives of others. It provides numerous opportunities for personal reflection and discussion of moral, spiritual and ethical issues. RS promotes students’ spiritual development by allowing students to investigate and reflect on the implications of religion and belief for their personal lives.

At Isaac Newton Academy RS is taught as part of the Humanities curriculum. The school works with the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE). During Key Stage 3, students’ knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs in contemporary society and the significance of religion in the life of others are explored.

The RS curriculum provides opportunities for students to:

- explore how different beliefs, religious or otherwise, inform their own perspectives about life and their interest in and respect for different people’s feelings and values
- appreciate diversity
- develop a sense of wonder about themselves and the world around them
- explore and reflect on their experiences, including the more intangible aspects .

Collective Worship

At Isaac Newton Academy assemblies, tutorial sessions and the numerous other occasions when groups from the Academy come together, are opportunities for a shared experience and personal reflection. They are occasions when the community can focus on and re-affirm the core values of the Academy which include mutual respect and hard work and the BRIDGES dispositions of bravery, resourcefulness, integrity, discovery, grit, emotional intelligence and self discipline. They reinforce and celebrate the cohesive, harmonious character of the Isaac Newton Academy community.

These important shared events encourage students to:

- show an interest in and empathy for members of the Academy and wider community
- celebrate significant occasions and events as a community
- mark and acknowledge the significance of key religious festivals
- reflect upon events and issues in the local community and wider world
- show appreciation of meaningful activities such as charity fund raising and citizenship activities undertaken by members of the Academy community
- explore and reflect upon the diverse values, attitudes and beliefs of the wider society
- develop and apply an understanding of right and wrong in their life
- develop a feeling of belonging to a community.

SMSC

Our approach to the delivery of SMSC includes:

- providing opportunities for the development of SMSC in every scheme of learning
- SMSC forming an integral part of the tutorial and assembly programme
- an emphasis on the vital importance of enrichment activities, with the expectation that all students participate in at least two extra-curricular activities a week
- teaching that encourages participation, creativity, reflection and independence
- quality assessment and feedback that places value on students' effort
- an Academy-wide emphasis on developing students' BRIDGES dispositions
- opportunities to develop teamwork, leadership skills and self-reliance
- opportunities for students to participate in a range of artistic, cultural, sporting, dramatic, musical, mathematical, scientific and technological events that promote aspects of SMSC development
- opportunities for reflection and feedback across the curriculum
- a range of opportunities for students to be involved in active citizenship.

Prayer and Contemplation Room

Isaac Newton Academy is a secular school but the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the school community are respected. The opportunity is provided for individuals to pray outside of the structured timetabled school day. At Isaac Newton Academy there are two single sex prayer and contemplation rooms. They are quiet spaces for use by students and staff of any faith or none. The guidelines for their use are in place to ensure that those from all backgrounds feel equally welcome and able to use these rooms for prayer and/or reflection.

Right to withdraw a child from Religious Education

Isaac Newton Academy recognises the right of withdrawal from Religious Education or collective worship under Section 71 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Parents/carers are informed of the aims and subject content of the RE curriculum and their right to withdraw their child

from all or part of it through the INA website. In this way, parents/carers can make an informed decision.

Parents/carers should make it clear whether they wish to withdraw their child from the whole of the curriculum or specific parts. Where parents have requested that their child is withdrawn, their right will be respected, and the Academy will discuss with them how their child's withdrawal can be best accommodated. If students are withdrawn from RE, the Academy has a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Students will remain on school premises. The Academy may also choose to review such a request each year, in discussion with the parents/carers.

The right of withdrawal does not extend to other areas of the curriculum when, as may happen on occasion, spontaneous questions on religious matters are raised by students or there are issues related to religion that arise in other subjects such as history or citizenship.

Further information about parents/carers right to withdraw a child from RE can be found in the DFE guidance 'Religious Education in English schools'.

Related INA Policies/ Documents

Equal Opportunities Policy

SMSC Policy

Year 7 & 8 Humanities Schemes of Learning

Year 9 R.E Schemes of Learning

Year 10 and 11 Cultural Studies Schemes of Learning

Teaching and Learning Policy

Reviewed June 2018