

The Importance of Religious Education

Religious Education 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 develops students' knowledge and understanding of Christianity, other principal religions, other religious traditions and other world views that offer answers to the ultimate questions. It offers opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances students' awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, as well as of the influence and impact of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.

Religious Education encourages students to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions while exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. Through Religious Education students are encouraged to develop their sense of identity and belonging. It enables them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community. It challenges students to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of faith, truth, belief, and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Religious Education has an important role in preparing students for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables students to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables students to combat prejudice. *

*Adapted from the NSNF for Religious Education 2004