

Religious Education at Key Stage 5: KLS Talks

2026-2027

KINGS LANGLEY SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM
READY FOR YOUR FUTURE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AT KS5

Contents

Overview 1
Statutory Context 1
Time allocation and quantitative compliance 2
Pedagogical Rationale for KLS Talks 2
Curriculum Design 3
Conclusion 5

Overview

Institution type	Single Academy Trust (11-18 Secondary School)	**Local Authority**	Hertfordshire
Programme Title	KLS Talks (Sixth Form Core RE)	**Target Cohort**	All Year 12 and Year 13 students
Delivery Model	Weekly 30-minute structured debates	**Annual Provision**	18-19 hours per year group

This document sets out the statutory, pedagogical, and curriculum justification for fulfilling Key Stage 5 (Sixth Form) Religious Education (RE) requirements through **KLS Talks**, a compulsory weekly 30-minute structured debate and dialogue session for all Year 12 and Year 13 students.

Statutory Context

Although single academy trusts are not directly governed by the Local Authority, our Academy Funding Agreement legally requires the provision of Religious Education for all registered pupils on the school roll, including those in the Sixth Form, unless formally withdrawn by parents (or by the student once aged 18 or over).

- **Alignment with Hertfordshire SACRE Benchmarks**: Under the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education (2023–2028), schools are expected to provide a minimum of 10 hours of RE per year in both Year 12 and Year 13. Adopting this local benchmark demonstrates robust governance and best practice
- **Ofsted Inspection Framework Readiness**: Ofsted inspectors evaluate whether a school meets its statutory RE duties across all key stages and whether the Sixth Form curriculum prepares students for life in modern Britain through spiritual, moral, social, and cultural (SMSC) development
- **Complementing Examined Pathways**: Students enrolled in A-Level Religious Studies (PRE) satisfy statutory requirements through their examination course, while KLS Talks ensures universal, high-quality entitlement for every non-specialist Sixth Form student

Time allocation and quantitative compliance

Delivering a dedicated 30-minute session every week across the standard 38-week academic calendar exceeds both local Hertfordshire expectations and wider national recommendations.

Metric/Benchmark	Herts SACRE minimum	National Good Practice Benchmark	KLS Talks Provision
Session Structure	Flexible (modules, days, or tutor sessions)	Regular timetabled or tutor-time delivery	Weekly 30-minute structured debate
Annual Contact Time (Year 12)	10.0 hours	18.0 hours	18.0 – 19.0 hours (36–38 weeks)
Annual Contact Time (Year 13)	10.0 hours	18.0 hours	16.0 – 17.5 hours (prior to study leave)
Total KS5 Entitlement	20.0 hours	36.0 hours	34.0 – 36.5 hours across KS5

Even accounting for mock examination weeks, UCAS preparation days, and Year 13 summer examination study leave, the weekly 30-minute KLS Talks model reliably delivers 60% to 90% more taught time than the 10-hour annual minimum stipulated by the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus.

Pedagogical Rationale for KLS Talks

At Key Stage 5, students possess the cognitive maturity to engage with complex philosophical, ethical, and sociological questions without the pressure of terminal examination grading. A structured 30-minute weekly debate format offers distinct educational advantages:

- **Character Education**: As a School of Character, we intentionally build and integrate moral, civic, ethical, spiritual and performance virtues into every part of our culture and curriculum
- **Dialogic and Worldviews Approach**: Modern RE pedagogy emphasises disciplinary lenses—theology, philosophy, and human/social sciences. KLS Talks trains students to evaluate religious and non-religious worldviews critically, examining how beliefs shape public ethics and lived experience
- **Oracy and Academic Discourse**: Structured weekly debate develops high-level oracy, active listening, and evidence-based reasoning, directly supporting university interviews, apprenticeships, and Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) skills
- **Sustained Engagement Over One-Off Events**: Rather than relying solely on a single annual drop-down day, a weekly rhythm allows students to revisit ethical frameworks consistently, reflect on contemporary news events in real time, and build a respectful community of enquiry
- **British Values & SMSC Integration**: Facilitated debate on contested moral and religious issues actively embeds mutual respect, tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty, and the rule of law

Curriculum Design

To ensure KLS Talks constitutes genuine Religious Education rather than unstructured general discussion, the programme is underpinned by clear curriculum design and leadership oversight:

The table below provides a framework for KLS Talks sessions across a two-year cycle. All Year 12 and 13 students will follow the same cycle at the same time, to encourage consistency of focus. The questions are indicative of content but a degree of flexibility is built-in to the programme to allow sessions to respond to relevant current affairs.

Cycle 1

Term	Core Enquiry Themes
Autumn Term	**Foundations of Belief & Truth: Religious vs. secular worldviews, epistemology, science and faith, and the problem of evil.** Are religious and secular worldviews compatible? How do we know when something is true? Is faith a reliable way of gaining knowledge? Does science make religious belief unnecessary? If God is omnipotent and loving, why does evil and suffering exist? Is moral evil easier to explain than natural evil? Should religious beliefs be judged on whether they are true, useful or both? Can we ever achieve certainty about the ultimate questions?
Spring Term	**Religion, Justice & Society: Human rights, wealth and poverty, pacifism vs. just war theory, and religion in modern British politics.** Are human rights universal? Do religious or secular approaches provide a stronger foundation for human rights? Is extreme wealth morally justifiable? What responsibility do we have towards those living in poverty? Charity or social reform: which is more effective in addressing poverty? Is pacifism a realistic response to aggression and conflict? Does Just War Theory balance the needs for justice with the desire for peace? Should religion influence political decision-making? Does religion have a significant role in modern British politics? Should religious teachings or human rights legislation take priority?
Summer Term	**Environmental & Global Ethics: Stewardship, dominion, climate justice, and Eastern vs. Abrahamic ecological perspectives.** Does 'dominion' imply a right to use nature for human benefit? Is stewardship a stronger ethical basis for environmental action than dominion? How should humans treat animals? Is climate change an environmental issue or a matter of social justice? How do religions differ in their understanding of human's relationship with nature? Are individuals and societies obliged to make sacrifices to protect our environment?

Cycle 2

Term	Core Enquiry Themes
Autumn Term	**Applied Medical & Bioethics: Sanctity vs. quality of life, genetic engineering, organ donation, and end-of-life care across traditions.** Is the sanctity of life more important than quality of life? Should doctors always preserve life? Does genetic engineering cross an ethical boundary? Should genetic engineering be allowed to enhance human traits? Is organ donation a moral duty? Is it ever acceptable to withdraw life-sustaining

Term	Core Enquiry Themes
	treatment? How do different religions approach end-of-life care? Should patient autonomy be the most important principle in medical ethics?
Spring Term	**Identity, Pluralism & Freedom: Freedom of speech vs. religious sensitivity, secularism, gender, and interfaith dialogue.** Should freedom of speech ever be limited to protect religious beliefs? Is there a difference between criticising a religion and showing disrespect? Does secularism marginalise religious voices? How far is a person's identity shaped by religion, culture, gender and personal choice? Should gender be understood as a biological reality, a social construct or a personal experience? Is tolerance enough in a diverse society? What is the purpose of inter-faith dialogue? Can complete freedom ever exist?
Summer Term	**Legacy, Purpose & Adulthood: Meaning-making, secular humanism, ethical leadership, and navigating pluralist workplaces.** Is it possible to live a meaningful life without believing in a god or the afterlife? How do people create meaning in their lives? Does leaving a legacy give life purpose? What responsibilities come with adulthood? How is success best measured? What makes someone an ethical leader? Should ethical leaders ever compromise their values for the greater good? In a pluralist workplace, how should we respect different moral or religious beliefs? Does a pluralist society strengthen or weaken a sense of purpose? Is the ultimate purpose of adulthood to become autonomous, or to serve something greater than oneself?

- **Subject Specialist Oversight**: All session stimulus materials, religious source texts, and discussion prompts are authored or quality-assured by the Head of Religious Studies / Philosophy & Ethics
- **Staff Support**: Staff (Sixth Form Tutors) have access to session resources including teacher guides with suggested model answers
- **Consistent Session Format**: Each 30-minute session follows a structured sequence: Stimulus & Religious/Worldview Perspectives (8 mins) → Guided Group Deliberation (15 mins) → Plenary Synthesis & Reflection (7 mins)
- **Monitoring & Student Voice**: Attendance is logged via Sixth Form registers, and half-termly learning walks alongside annual student voice surveys evaluate engagement, ideological balance, and depth of theological/philosophical literacy

Conclusion

KLS Talks provides a rigorous, sustainable, and inspection-ready model for Sixth Form Religious Education. By dedicating 30 minutes every week to structured, specialistdesigned debate on religion, philosophy, and ethics, the school exceeds Hertfordshire's 10-hour annual benchmark while equipping Sixth Formers with essential critical thinking and civic literacy skills.