

Development of literacy for Key Stage 4 pupils in the religious studies classroom

1 Introduction

Poor literacy in RS lessons led to research on supporting pupils' reading skills, aligning with school goals. Literacy—vital for success—requires comprehension and vocabulary. Teachers face challenges meeting diverse needs. Engagement improves with relevant texts, yet many 16-year-olds still struggle, highlighting the need for stronger school-wide literacy strategies.

2 Development for Literacy at KS4

Key factors influencing KS4 literacy for RS GCSEs include teaching essay structures, specialist vocabulary, and scripture use

3 Methodology

Interviews with examiners and educators, document analysis, and classroom trials with Year 10 pupils selected by ability, reading age, assessments, and PP, SEND, or EAL status.

5 Findings

Religious literacy supports success in RS and across subjects, preparing pupils for a diverse 21st-century world.

Hutton & Cox (2021): Use a hermeneutical approach to teach scripture context and interpretation.

RS curriculum should build foundational concepts to deepen understanding and engagement (Hutton & Cox, 2021).

4 Analysis

Coding process of identifying how many times pupils used key terminology within their answers across five tasks, with the progress of how they improved over the academic year.

	Key Terminology					Progress
	Times a key word was used throughout a piece of work.					
Pupils	Oct 23 Writing Impact Task	Dec 23 Assessme nt	April 24 5-mark Exam Style Question	May 24 Classwork 5-mark question	July 24 Mock Examinati on	
A	P (1)	P (6)	ABSENT	ABSENT	P (6)	0
B	P (5)	P (12)	ABSENT	P (2)	P (22)	+17
C	P (6)	P (9)	P (5)	P (2)	P (11)	+5
D	P (11)	P (9)	P (3)	P (4)	P (20)	+9
E	P (7)	P (7)	ABSENT	P (5)	P (13)	+6

How does my teaching support pupils' literacy development in preparation for GCSEs?

What changes can I make to better align KS3 and KS4 literacy expectations?

What opportunities exist in my subject to embed literacy more meaningfully, beyond surface-level tasks?