

Curriculum - Overview						
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Students engage with the Religious Studies curriculum primarily through the Derbyshire Locally Agreed Syllabus. Topics have a deep Philosophical, Religious or Ethical focus. Each unit has an overarching enquiry question to enable the systematic study of a variety of religious and non-religious world views. In Year 7 we ask ‘What is Hinduism? Should religious buildings be sold to feed the poor? What is good and challenging about being a teenage Muslim in Britain today?’ Through this learners develop important skills such as critical thinking,	In Year 8 the main topics ask ‘Do Buddhism and Christianity have the answers to evil and suffering? What is good and challenging about being a Sikh teenager in Britain? Can we prove the existence of God?’ The Sikhism unit explores what it means to live as a Sikh teenager, including core beliefs and how Sikh values are expressed in daily life. The other two topics have a more philosophical focus, enabling students to develop a coherent response to some of life’s most fundamental questions.	In Year 9 we explore the topics ‘How should we treat the environment? How should those who break the law be treated? How is religion shown in the media?’ These topics have been chosen because they provide a strong foundation for ethical discussion and critical thinking. The environment unit explores different values and beliefs, particularly regarding the treatment of animals and the natural world. This is followed by an examination of crime and punishment, including debates on justice and whether the death penalty can ever be justified. The course concludes with an exploration of	We follow the AQA Religious Studies GCSE and students will explore a range of themes that will help them to gain a wider understanding of debate around some of the key issues that face humanity! These include units on peace and conflict, the environment, crime and punishment, matters of life and death and human rights issues. Students will explore a range of both religious and non-religious arguments in addition to considering their own views on the matters discussed.	Students will explore two of the world’s major religions and will be aware that Buddhism is one of the diverse religious traditions and belief systems in Great Britain today. We will also explore Christianity and study the beliefs, teachings and practices of both religion and their basis of sources of wisdom and authority. Students will also study the influence of the beliefs, teachings and practices studied on individuals, communities and societies.	We follow the OCR Religious studies A-Level course and students will develop an understanding and appreciation of Religious and Philosophical thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies. Students will learn to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to the study of religion and reflect on and develop their own values, opinions and attitudes in the light of their study. There are three main course components. The majority of the ‘Philosophy of Religion’ and ‘Ethics and Religion’ are taught in Year 12.	In Year 13 students complete the remaining ‘Philosophy’ and ‘Ethics’ topics and then move onto the final component ‘Developments in Christian thought.’ This explores Christian beliefs, values and teachings, how they vary historically and in the contemporary world. We explore sources of religious wisdom and authority and practices, which shape and express religious identity, and how these vary within a tradition. Students also explore significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought and key themes related to the

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reasoned argument and analysis.		how religion is portrayed in the media, encouraging discussion around freedom of expression and respect for religious beliefs.				relationship between religion and society.
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Curriculum – Topic Sequencing						
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Students begin with a brief introduction to Religious Studies, and explore the key terms 'Philosophy, Religion and Ethics.' We encourage students to see the benefits of RE, in terms of being able to ask important questions about life and existence, and developing skills such as communication, critical thinking, and reasoned argument. We study topics through a variety of religious and non-	In Topic 1 we ask the enquiry question ' Do Buddhism and Christianity have the answers to evil and suffering? ' This topic has much more of a philosophical approach and students begin to expand their skills in analysing different religious and non-religious views in order to form their own opinions with supported reasoning.	In Year 9 we aim to give students more stretch and challenge in terms of the types of units chosen and by trying to enhance their ability to critically assesses and evaluate different points of view. In Topic 1 we ask ' How should we treat the environment? ' This unit primarily focuses on the ethical issues surrounding the testing of medicine on animals. Students examine	Half Term 1/2 Religion and life: Students explore the origins of the universe from religious and scientific viewpoints. This unit also considers the value of the world and explores debate around stewardship and issues facing the environment. Discussion on matters of life and death, euthanasia, abortion and beliefs about the afterlife are covered.	Half Term 1/2 Buddhist Beliefs: In this unit students will cover key Buddhist beliefs and teachings including the life of the Buddha, his enlightenment and the importance of his key teachings, such as The Four Noble Truths. Students will also explore different schools of Buddhist thought. Half Term 2/3 Buddhist Practices:	Half Term 1: Philosophy and it's Methods. Discussion of what is and different types of argument along with key skills and key terms. Students then go on to study Ancient Philosophical Influences Including Plato and the theory of forms Aristotle and Causation. The Issues of Ethics, Ethical life and Theories of ethics. Beginning with a study of Utilitarianism and	Half Term 1: In Philosophy of Religion students explore key philosophical debate about the nature of God. Students examine the area of 'religious language' and the work of Wittgenstein and Ayer. In the ethics part of the course students complete their ethics by examining 'meta' ethics. This examines what we mean by terms such as 'good,

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religious views where appropriate. In Topic 1, we ask the enquiry question ‘What is Hinduism?’ We begin with this focus because Hinduism is one of the most ancient of the six main world religions, and has a vibrant and rich tapestry of beliefs and practices. Students carry out a systematic study into the use of vivid colour and symbolism in the many images which can portray God. They consider if it is helpful to use images in order to understand the nature of God in Hinduism. Students find it engaging to consider how Hindus can seek to live a good life and how this relates to key beliefs,	Students begin by exploring the nature and purpose of suffering within Christianity. They analyse key biblical passages, such as Genesis 3, to consider what these texts may reveal about the origins of suffering. The unit also examines different Christian perspectives on sin as a possible cause of evil and suffering, encouraging students to reflect on theological interpretations and their implications. The unit then moves on to a focus on Buddhism and the life of the Buddha. Students explore how key events in Siddhartha Gautama’s life shaped his understanding that	current laws and consider whether animal testing is necessary before human trials. The unit explores the relationship between humans and animals, including debates on human significance and the ethical factors shaping our decisions. It examines religious teachings on environmental responsibility, exploring how different faiths interpret humanity’s duty to care for the natural world and the continued relevance of these teachings in addressing today’s ecological challenges. Formal Assessment In Topic 2 we ask ‘How should those who break the law be treated?’ This engaging topic	Half Term 2/3 Religion crime and punishment: Students explore debates around how we punish those who break the law, including the use of custodial sentencing and debates around the death penalty. This unit also looks at the ‘forgiveness’ and how it is central to the Christian faith. Half Term 3/4 Religion peace and conflict: In this unit students look at reasons for war and ask is it ever right to go to war? Other topics covered include the possession and use of weapons of mass destruction. Students also explore pacifism as an alternative to conflict.	In this unit students explore Buddhist worship, including types of meditation. They then consider how Buddhists put their beliefs into action through ethical conduct following the Five Precepts and showing loving kindness (metta) and practicing compassion (karuna) towards others. Half Term 3 Christian Beliefs: In this unit students explore key Christian beliefs and explore the nature of God, the Holy Trinity and beliefs about Creation. The incarnation of Christ, the Crucifixion and Resurrection are all explored. Christian beliefs about the afterlife are also investigated. Half Term 3/4 Christian Practices:	Situation Ethics, and their application in society. Half Term 2: Includes a study of Kantian Ethics and Aquinas’ theory of Natural Law. Students also investigate life after death in the unit Soul Mind and Body and ask ‘Is the soul a thing?’ There is debate on Substance dualism vs Materialism. Half Term 3: The Existence of God. Arguments based on observation, where students consider a range of arguments surrounding the existence of God. This includes ‘proof’ arguments such as the Teleological and Cosmological arguments, and arguments based on reason, such as the Ontological	bad, right or wrong’ and if the language we use has importance. Half Term 2: Students begin Developments in Christian Thought. This is the remaining unit which looks at the values, beliefs and teachings of Christian thought in the contemporary world. Students will explore sources of wisdom and authority within the Christian faith and examine practices which shape and express Christian identity. For example, the role of Christianity in shaping gender roles, and the different Christian responses to feminist views about gender. Half Term 3: Students complete a full mock exam and reflect on strengths and areas for development.
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such as Karma and Reincarnation. We end with an exploration of Ahimsa, which is a principle of non-violence and how this could be applied practically. Formal assessment In Topic 2 we move onto a more Ethical investigation question ‘Should religious buildings be sold to feed the poor?’ Students can begin with an exploration of the role and importance of Christian and Sikh buildings. We can consider locally and nationally what is happening in terms of attendance and use of buildings. It is important to consider how these buildings can be spiritual in nature and may differ	suffering is a fundamental part of human existence, and how it might be overcome. Central to this exploration are the Four Noble Truths, which outline the nature, causes, and potential solutions to suffering. Students also examine the Eightfold Path, considering how following this path might help individuals reduce or overcome suffering in their lives. Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to compare and evaluate how both Buddhism and Christianity respond to the problem of suffering and evil, reflecting on the strengths and limitations of each	explores the human capacity for both harm and remorse. Students begin by examining the main aims of punishment, enabling them to critically evaluate their effectiveness and relevance in today’s society. The unit addresses key moral issues surrounding prisons and the death penalty, encouraging students to construct reasoned arguments about their appropriateness in Britain and beyond. Building on this, students undertake an in-depth study of religious and non-religious perspectives on punishment. In Christianity and Islam, they engage with a rich selection of quotes from the Bible and Qur’an,	Half Term 5/6 Human rights and social justice: In this unit students consider our rights and responsibilities as humans. Social justice explores the idea of fairness in society and looks at the issues of prejudice and discrimination. The causes of poverty and exploitation of the poor are also covered. The local community and the role of the worldwide Church are also discussed. Half Term 5/6 Consolidation of learning and preparation for exams.	In this unit students explore the importance of different forms of worship, the sacraments and festivals within the Christian faith. The role of the Church in the local community and the role of the worldwide Church are also discussed. Half Term 5/6: Consolidation of learning and preparation for exams.	argument. In Ethics students look at applied ethical issues, such as issued raised by Euthanasia. This includes issues of voluntary and non-voluntary euthanasia and consideration of the importance of the sanctity of life views vs the quality of life arguments. Half Term 4: Religious Experience. Students study the nature of religious experiences including miracles and visions and consider a range of debates . The Problem of Evil is also covered during this term and a range of theodicies are discussed, as well as how the argument represents a challenge for religious believers. In ethics we consider different views about	Students also consider Jesus Christ’s authority and Jesus the teacher of wisdom, the liberator and The Son of God. Half term 4: The Religious pluralism and society topic examines if there are many ways to salvation, of which Christianity is one path. Half Term 5: Considers the challenges of secularism and the role of Liberation Theology, a modern interpretation of justice in society. Half term 6: Christian Moral Principles and Action. Students look at the life and relevance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. What is the role of the Church and the state? Should people rise up against tyrannical leaders?
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from ordinary buildings. We also explore how Christians and Sikhs are already supporting those in need, for example through the Salvation Army and the Langar community meals. As this unit has a more Ethical focus students will then critically assess the idea that buildings could be sold to help those in need, giving reasons to support their judgments. Formal assessment In Topic 3, we ask ‘What is good and challenging about being a teenage Muslim in Britain today?’ This is an important topic because we consider people’s beliefs and identity from a teenage	tradition’s teachings. Formal assessment In topic 2 we ask ‘What is good and challenging about being a Sikh teenager in Britain?’ This unit offers a systematic exploration of the Sikh faith and its relevance in contemporary society. Students begin with the core teachings of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, with a particular focus on equality, service, and charity — values that continue to inspire significant Sikh contributions to wider society. We also examine when and why some Sikh communities migrated to Britain, and why it is important for many	investigating the roles of humans and God in administering and justifying punishment. Central concepts such as forgiveness, reconciliation, and the sanctity of life are explored to provide a nuanced understanding of these faiths’ approaches to justice. Formal assessment In topic 3 we ask ‘How is religion shown in the media?’ This unit explores the nature and influence of the media, examining how it can shape public perceptions and attitudes to religion. Students consider how religious people and beliefs are portrayed across news, television, and film, reflecting on			sexual ethics. This explores differing religious views towards a variety of sexual relationships. Half Term 5: Students focus on ethical issues raised in business such as globalisation and if ‘good ethics is good business?’ We finish by examining role of ‘conscience’ in decision making, by comparing the religious views of Aquinas with the psychological approach by Freud. At this stage in the course, students complete a mock examination to assess their progress, identify their strengths, and reflect on areas for further development.	There is also a large focus on Exam technique and preparation. The course is 100% exam based and students complete three 2 hour exams at the end of the course.
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perspective which often makes it more accessible to students of a similar age. We explore how it might feel to be part of a religion in a contemporary society here in the west. This topic is very helpful in addressing different issues which might arise in society, such as the concept of Islamophobia and how the media might portray Islam. Students have an opportunity to identify ways in which it can be challenging to identify as a particular faith and explore potential misconceptions that may arise. These can be discussed and analysed in a fair and constructive environment. Knowledge test	Sikhs to express both their religious and national identities. Throughout the unit we reflect on some of the challenges faced by young British Sikhs today, as well as common misconceptions about Sikhism, encouraging thoughtful discussion and greater understanding. Formal assessment In Topic 3 we ask ‘Can we prove the existence of God?’ This gives students an opportunity to explore some of the classical philosophical arguments for the existence of God. The first focus is on William Paley’s Design argument. The Design argument studies different evidence which appears to show that	whether all religions are represented fairly. The topic also encourages debate on the acceptability of making fun of religion, the extent of freedom of speech, and whether certain content should be restricted or censored—and if so, how those decisions might be made. Knowledge test During Year 9 students explore the benefits of choosing to continue to study Religious Studies at GCSE level.				
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HOMEWORK YRs 7-9: Every half-term KS3 students complete a literacy-based homework and follow up quiz in class. This helps to embed specialised vocabulary and deepen learning.	things that exist have been designed in a specific way for a specific purpose and that an intelligent designer, God, is responsible for this. This can be contrasted with scientific theories such as the Big Bang Theory and Evolution. The scientific theories may show elements which encourage or disprove the existence of God. Students are encouraged to evaluate whether we have any proof for God or if proof is needed. Knowledge test					
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