

Key Stage 3 Rationale

Question Understand Accept

- Religious Studies allows students to respectfully **question** the views of others and their own.
- Religious Studies provides students with a good **understanding** of the thoughts, values and practices of others.
- Religious Studies encourages students to **accept** people and the diverse communities in which we live in.

Throughout KS3, students are taught through a thematic and systematic approach so that they have a good foundation of the six largest world faiths, which will enable them to make links between the religions. Each unit explores the phenomenology of religion, understanding how people practice their faith and how people identify within a particular group. In addition, the way the curriculum has been designed allows students to understand how people develop as humans and as spiritual beings, for example there is a mix of purely philosophical topics (Questions of life, Can people Ever Change?, and Human Rights and Social Justice) and theological topics (Why is the Covenant important to Jews? And, Is Islam based on 5 Pillars?).

Skills

Throughout every lesson, we have a range of skills that will develop students both academically and socially. Our curriculum is designed to draw on memory skills by recalling knowledge from lesson to lesson and year to year. Each lesson will require an element of comprehension through; religious text, sociological data or philosophical teachings. We use the text studied to teach students how to apply the beliefs of others to their practices and encourage students to introspect on their own application of the moral codes etc. We also allow students to analyse the text and the doctrine created by a variety of faiths and create their own justification for the purpose, usefulness and relevance of the teachings today.

Topic and description	Rationale
<p>What is religion?</p> <p>Students will study the practicalities of the religions we see today. They will explore what it means and “looks like” to belong to a certain religion. They will analyse the 7 dimensions of faith, religious teachers and consider what makes a place sacred.</p>	<p>This topic is placed here as it offers a foundation to KS3, 4 and 5. Using Ninian Smart to look at concrete and abstract phenomena expressed by religions.</p>
<p>Questions of life</p> <p>Students will explore philosophical questions concerning the ultimate nature of reality. They will ask questions such as: why are we here? Is there a purpose to life? What happens when we die? In addition, they will analyse arguments for the existence of God.</p>	<p>This topic is placed here as a building block to the previous topic. Students will use what they now know from the study of what makes a religion to pose and answer questions about the nature of reality.</p>
<p>Sikhism</p> <p>Students will study the origin and development of Sikhism. They will study the importance of Guru Nanak and how he founded Sikh beliefs and practices as we see them today. This topic will equip students with the skills to analyse religion through a thematic approach.</p>	<p>This topic is placed here as the first opportunity to study the nature of one religion; from its origins to modern day practices. This topic also builds on the previous topic as students will be able to identify what features are.</p>
<p>Are Christian values more than basic values?</p> <p>Students will study core Christian values found within the Gospels with focus on Agape love and the actions of Jesus.</p>	<p>This topic is placed at the end of the year to enable students to meaningfully reflect on what it means to be a Christian. They will use their foundation in religion to work out what is distinctly Christian about Christian values.</p>

Topic and description	Rationale
<p>Why is the covenant important in Jewish life?</p> <p>Key themes that are refreshed at GCSE are introduced to students. This enables students to become familiar with Jewish concepts of G-d, festivals, law and holy books.</p> <p>Students investigate Judaism through the following subject areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of G-d, • The Covenant at Sinai, • Promised Land, • Festivals, • Rituals • Law 	<p>This topic is placed at the beginning of Year 8 to give students a continuation from the Christianity topics studied in Year 7. They will establish links between Judaism and Christianity, understanding that Christianity was the product of Judaism.</p>
<p>Is Islam supported by 5 pillars?</p> <p>Students will study the origin and development of Islam. They will be able to compare and contrast teachings found in the Bible, Torah and Quran. Students will study the importance of Muhammad and how he founded Islamic beliefs and practices. This topic will equip students with the skills to analyse religion through a thematic approach.</p>	<p>This topic is placed here as it one of the religions students will study at GCSE. It gives students a chance to build on the Islam that they have studied in Year 7 and prepares them for GCSE study.</p>
<p>Can people ever make a change?</p> <p>Students will study the revolutionary work of Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi and Malcolm X. They will explore concepts such as prejudice, segregation and empowerment. Once they have a strong foundation and understanding of how these men have fought for the rights of many, they will begin to assess how they can make a difference.</p>	<p>This topic is at the end of Year 8 so that students have a good foundation prior to studying activism. They need to make links between what we have explored within Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. This topic makes essential links between the worlds of these important men and our world today. This topic requires students to have a strong knowledge of current affairs, but it also allows teachers to inform them of the great works of activists at an early stage in their study of religion.</p>

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<p>Buddhism</p> <p>Students will study the origin of Buddhism and explore how Siddhartha Gautama's four sights involved one of the world's biggest philosophies. Students will explore the meaning of live through concepts such as dukkha, enlightenment and the middle way.</p>	<p>This is placed here as it gives the students a chance to understand a religion that is perceived as a philosophy and of great importance to our society, before we start GCSE topics.</p>
<p>What is so radical about Jesus?</p> <p>Students will explore who Jesus was. They will analyse the portrayal of Jesus from the Gospels to construct their own understanding of Jesus. They will analyse His relationship with His disciples and the practises and teachings He encouraged them to spread worldwide..</p>	<p>This topic is placed here as it will allow students to have additional knowledge and a context behind the study of religion at GCSE. By exploring the nature of Jesus they will secure the understanding of the time in which Christianity was created and the fundamental aspects of the faith.</p>
<p>The existence of God</p> <p>Students must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and non-religious beliefs such as atheism and humanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visions. • Miracles. • Nature as general revelation. <p>Students will study philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God, such as The Design, The First Cause argument, The argument from miracles, Evil and suffering as an argument against the existence of God and arguments based on science against the existence of God.</p> <p>Students will also study the nature of the divine and revelation such as, special revelation as a source of</p>	<p>This topic is placed here to allow students to explore key GCSE skills without being a component that will be tested on.</p>

<p>knowledge about the divine, enlightenment as a source of knowledge about the divine, general revelation.</p>	
<p>Religion, human rights and social justice</p> <p>Students must be able to explain contrasting beliefs on the following three issues with reference to the main religious tradition in Britain (Christianity) and non-religious beliefs such as atheism and humanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of women in religion. • The uses of wealth. • Freedom of religious expression. <p>Students will study, prejudice and discrimination in religion and belief, with predominant focus on race and gender.</p> <p>Students will also study wealth and exploitation focusing on; the right attitude to wealth, the uses of wealth and people-trafficking.</p>	<p>This topic is placed here to allow students to explore key GCSE skills without being a component that will be tested on.</p>