

Religious Studies is taught by Mrs Thoppil. We aim to give students to gain an understanding of the fundamental questions of life such as: Where do we come from? Why are we here? What happens when we die? What is the meaning of life? These questions will be explored through a systematic study of Christianity and Hinduism, looking at beliefs and practices as well as how the religions respond to some key ethical issues such as relationships; war; crime & punishment, and life issues such as abortion and euthanasia. Furthermore, Religious Studies is designed to engage the students with current issues that encourage debate and discussion and will appeal to students from any belief system. Students will explore key aspects of each religion and will be able to show their knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills.

Key Stage 3

During Year 7 and 8 students have two lessons a fortnight. As well as studying major world religions students have opportunities to explore ethical issues and aspects of PSHE within Religious Studies.

Year 7 areas of study

- How is identity influenced by religion, belief and culture?
- What is a good life?
- Why do Christians believe Jesus is God on Earth?
- Why is Christianity the way it is today?
- How do Hindus make sense of the world around them?
- Is it reasonable to believe in life after death?

Year 8 areas of study

- How do Muslims understand the Nature of God?
- How do Sikhs interact with culture and society? belief affect the lives of believers today?
- How is belief put into practice?

At the end of KS4 the students will sit two exams, one on each of the units 'Study of Religions' and 'Thematic Studies', with a view to achieving a full GCSE. The lessons will give the students the opportunity to debate and discuss. 50% of the examination requires students to know and understand religion and belief systems, and 50% allows the students to analyse and evaluate aspects of religious belief.

Key Stage 4

Full Course (Edexcel Spec B)

Students will study two world religions in depth and then learn about a range of moral and philosophical issues including the religious perspectives on them.

What sort of work is done?

Paper 1: Religion and Ethics through Christianity

Section 1 (24 marks):

Beliefs, teachings, and practices of Christianity

Section 2 (27 marks):

Marriage and the Family (marriage, sexual relationships, families, divorce and remarriage, equality of men and women, gender prejudice and discrimination)

Section 3 (24 marks):

Living the Christian Life (worship, nature and purpose of prayer, pilgrimage, future of the church, religious celebrations, the local church, the worldwide church)

Section 4 (27 marks)

Matters of life and death (sanctity of life, abortion, death and afterlife, euthanasia)

How is it examined?

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

102 marks (plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))

100% of GCSE

Paper 2: Religion, Peace and Conflict through Islam Section 1 (24 marks):

Beliefs, teachings, and practices of Islam

Section 2 (27 marks):

Crime and Punishment (justice, crime, Muslim attitudes to good, evil and suffering, capital punishment, forgiveness.)

Section 3 (24 marks):

Living the Muslim Life (the 5 pillars of Islam, 10 obligatory Acts, celebrations and commemorations.)

Section 4 (27 marks)

Peace and Conflict (Muslim attitudes to peace, pacifism, Just war theory, holy war, weapons of mass destruction, issues surrounding conflict.)

How is it examined?

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

102 marks (plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG))

100% of GCSE

What qualification will I get? What could it lead to?

A GCSE in Religious Studies grade 9-1.

Religious Studies shows employers and higher education institutions that you can understand the views of others, argue a point convincingly and evaluate an argument.

Any career working with other people would regard it as beneficial, especially management where decisions have to be made in an analytical way.

Exam board- Edexcel specification B. Full details of the course content, specification and assessment can be found [here](#).

RS Curriculum Sequencing Rationale

1a.	<p>What are the key topics taught in Year 7?</p> <p>We teach the following learning questions as units: How is identity influenced by religious belief and culture, Why does God have so many names? Does the existence of evil prove that God doesn't exist? What does it mean to say God became human? Why is Christianity the way it is? How do Sikhs interact with culture & society?</p>
1b.	<p>Why is this?</p> <p>We want pupils to build on their KS2 knowledge and we also want to introduce RS at high school in a positive and as a "can do" approach. Our course starts with Identity and how it can be influenced by religious belief and culture. This works well at the start of year 7 and is relevant to pupils as majority of pupils are questioning their identity and who they are as they enter high school. This unit allow pupils to self- reflect on their own identity as well as see how other teenagers are influenced by their religious beliefs and culture in other religions. We then look at how God is viewed in Christianity, Sikhism and Islam. This allows pupils to understand how God is revered in other religions as well as look at their own opinions on whether God exists or not. This ties in well with the next unit on whether the existence of evil proves that God doesn't exist. We focus on Christianity here, we study the Fall and the origins of suffering in Christianity, the suffering and resurrection of Jesus as well as pain and suffering and the solutions for this according to Buddhists. This unit allows pupils to look at pain and suffering in both religions and compare them as well as give their own opinions on evil, pain and suffering in the world today. We then introduce pupils to God in Christianity. We teach them about the Incarnation of Jesus, who Jesus was, his role in salvation and his nature. Mark Pimlott, the Chaplain at Open Academy offers support and guidance in these lessons. He shares his experiences about God and pupils are able to ask him directly if they have any questions or not. We then look at the history of Christianity and the Early Church. We end the summer term studying Sikhism and how Sikhs interact with their culture and society in Britain today.</p>
2a.	<p>What order is this taught in and why?</p> <p>We teach skills together with knowledge across each unit. Pupils must be able to analyse and explore the knowledge that they learn about the different topics. They must be able to give their views or opinions on a topic as well as critically analyse why others may agree or disagree with their views. Our focus is mainly on Christianity in year 7 (as per Norfolk Agreed Syllabus) as well as Sikhism, Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism.</p>
3a.	<p>How do we build on these topics and rationale in Year 8?</p> <p>We start the course in Year 8 with Judaism and the Jewish response to suffering. We focus on the Holocaust, the suffering endured by Jews during the Holocaust, we also focus on case-studies of survivors and analyse whether their experiences affected their belief in God or not. We also look at the story of Job and how his belief in God allowed him to cope with his pain and suffering. Pupils also look at pain and suffering through their own personal lens and how they cope with it. We then study the sources of authority for Christians and Hindus. Pupils are able to study and investigate the roles of the Bible, the church and Jesus on Christians today and how it influences their lives. We also focus on the Hindu holy texts and the role of the Hindu priest within the Hindu community. We then integrate our unit on Creation Stories and how the different religions believe the world was created next. Pupils are able to compare this to the scientific explanations to the creation of the universe and give their own views on how they believe the world was created and why. We move on to studying Islam in more detail. We focus on the role and influence of Prophet Muhammad for Muslims today, the Muslim holy books, the divide between the Shia and Sunni Muslims and the challenges that Muslims face in Britain today. We introduce Humanism as a unit called "What does it mean to have a good Life? Pupils are able to use their</p>

	<p>reflective skills and determine what ingredients are needed to have a good life in the world today. They are also able to compare their definitions of a good life to that of their peers. We end the year with a unit on Christianity which focuses on Worship, Festivals and Stewardship. Pupils are able to develop care and respect for each other and the world that we live in. Through learning about the Golden Rule and equality within Christianity, pupils are able to develop their confidence in becoming courageous advocates who readily challenge any injustice that they face on a daily basis.</p>
3b.	<p>What order is this taught in and why? How do Jewish people respond to suffering? What are sources of authority for Christians and Hindus?, How do creation narratives shape what it means to be human?, Why is Islam the way it is?, What does it mean to have a good life?, How do Christians interact with culture and society? See 3a</p>
4a.	<p>How do we build on these topics and rationale in Year 9? In Year 9 we focus on more complex topics which allows pupils to delve deeper into key units and reflect, analyse and write in detail on the issues taught. We start of by studying religion and whether it is useful or outdated in the world today. We then focus on sacredness and places of pilgrimage around the world today. Pupils are able to compare the similarities and differences of these places of pilgrimage and understand in depth why a devout believer might want to go on pilgrimage. Through studying the units of life after death and later on the sanctity of human life pupils are able to explore what religious and non-religious people believe about the sacredness of life and how it impacts their interactions with others. In studying whether it is ever right to fight, we focus on pacifism, weapons of mass destruction and the causes and effects of war on humans today. In how Muslims interact with their culture and society we focus on the lives of Muslims in Britain today. We debate issues that they face on a daily basis which may impact their lives in a negatively. We also look at the struggles that they face by trying to intertwine their beliefs and culture with the communities in which they live.</p>
4b.	<p>What order is this taught in and why? What is religion - a useful category or outdated concept. What is meant by sacredness? Is it reasonable to believe in life after death? Can we put a price on human life? Is it ever right to fight? How do Muslims interact with culture and society? See 4a</p>
5a.	<p>Select one concept/theme you teach in your subject across more than one key stage How is this taught in each year? <u>Concept of Pain, Evil & Suffering</u> Year 7 – Key terms; developing understanding of moral evil and natural evil; How important religious figures suffered; why do we suffer Year 8 – The Holocaust – Jewish people and their suffering – more in depth, making comparison; empathy Year 9 – Suffering in war; pacifism Year 10 – Evil & Suffering – specific example of suffering (Christianity), and solutions Year 11 - Crime & Punishment; Peace & Conflict (Islam)</p>
5b.	<p>How does this become progressively more challenging? From the introduction of simple vocabulary and meanings in Year 7, through the study of different religions, students are exposed to ideas in greater depth and complexity until they work on the GCSE topics in KS4. They are able to give their own views, to understand opposing views, and then reach a justified conclusion on these topics. Pupils knowledge of key skills is repeated over the 3 years at key stage 3. Their knowledge of how to argue ‘for and against’, how to use quotations to support points etc is repeated and reinforced over the key stage. Key words and</p>

	definitions are also studied at KS3 so that pupils are not seeing the main concepts for the first time.
6.	<p>What exam boards do you use in KS4 and KS5 and why? How does this link to your KS3 curriculum?</p> <p>We follow the GCSE Edexcel 'B' specification. There are 2 papers written in Year 11. The Christianity paper consists of 4 units. These units are: Christian Beliefs, Marriage and the Family, Living the Christian Life and Matters of Life and Death. Many of these topics are taught in Year 7, 8 and 9. The Islam paper consists of 4 units. These units are: Muslim Beliefs, Crime and Punishment, Living the Muslim Life and Peace and Conflict. Many of these topics are also taught in years 7,8 and 9.</p>
7.	<p>What career opportunities does the study of your subject bring?</p> <p>Studying RS allows greater understanding of different culture, religions and people, so prepares our students to develop skills such as empathy which prepare them well for work in the care sector. Students may go on to study philosophy, religion and ethics at A level or university.</p>