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Religion and Worldviews Curriculum Intent	Year 8

Year 8 Religion and Worldviews builds upon the foundations established in Year 7 by encouraging students to think more deeply about the relationship between religion, morality, identity, and society. Through an enquiry-based curriculum, students investigate how religious and non-religious worldviews influence the choices people make, the way societies respond to injustice, and how individuals seek meaning in life. Students are encouraged to analyse evidence, compare different perspectives, and develop increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills whilst recognising that many religious and philosophical questions have no single correct answer.

Across four enquiries, students explore whether religious teachings remain relevant within modern Britain, how religion and worldviews can challenge racism and prejudice, beliefs surrounding death and the afterlife, and how societies should respond to crime and punishment. Throughout the curriculum, students encounter a range of religious and non-religious perspectives including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Humanism, developing an understanding of how beliefs shape values, identity, and everyday life.

The curriculum is carefully sequenced to reflect the Kent Agreed Syllabus, placing emphasis on lived religion, sacred texts, philosophical enquiry, ethical reasoning, diversity within and between religions, and the influence of belief on individuals and society. Students strengthen both substantive knowledge and disciplinary understanding by interpreting religious teachings, evaluating ethical issues, comparing worldviews, and constructing balanced arguments supported by evidence.

Year 8 also makes explicit links with Citizenship and the statutory RSHE curriculum. Students investigate themes including equality, diversity, discrimination, justice, human dignity, respectful relationships, identity, emotional wellbeing, community responsibility, and active citizenship. They are encouraged to reflect upon their own values whilst developing empathy, resilience, and respect for people whose beliefs and experiences may differ from their own.

Throughout the year, students develop transferable skills including critical thinking, communication, interpretation, discussion, and evaluation through debates, philosophical enquiry, source analysis, and extended writing. These disciplinary skills prepare students for the more philosophical and ethical enquiries explored in Year 9 and provide strong foundations for the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course, where students study Christianity, Islam, Families and Relationships, and Religion, Peace and Conflict.

Ultimately, the Year 8 curriculum encourages students to become thoughtful, compassionate, and intellectually curious young people who are able to engage confidently with challenging ethical questions, appreciate the diversity of beliefs within modern Britain, and contribute positively to an increasingly diverse and interconnected society.

Topic 1 Topic		**Can religious teachings still guide modern life?**

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Big Picture

What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This enquiry explores whether religious teachings continue to influence the lives, values, and decisions of individuals and communities within modern Britain. Students investigate how Christianity continues to shape moral thinking, relationships, family life, charity, justice, and social responsibility whilst considering whether ancient religious teachings remain relevant within an increasingly diverse and secular society.

Through studying lived religion, Biblical teachings, and contemporary case studies, students investigate how different Christians interpret scripture and apply religious teachings to modern ethical issues. Students explore how religion influences identity, relationships, moral decision making, community life, and public debate whilst recognising that individuals may reach different conclusions based upon their own beliefs, experiences, and worldviews.

The enquiry is designed to be reflective, challenging, and relevant to students' own lives. Themes of morality, authority, identity, responsibility, interpretation, and respectful disagreement run throughout the unit as students investigate how religious teachings continue to influence individuals and society today.

Students are encouraged to think critically about the relationship between religion and modern life whilst recognising the diversity that exists within Christianity itself. They develop an understanding that religious belief is lived and experienced differently by individuals and communities rather than existing as one single viewpoint. The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of sacred texts, lived religion, diversity within Christianity, Biblical interpretation, ethical reasoning, and the influence of religion on individuals and contemporary society. Students investigate how beliefs are interpreted differently whilst developing an appreciation of both religious and non-religious worldviews.

The enquiry also strongly supports Citizenship through the exploration of democracy, freedom of religion and belief, rights and responsibilities, mutual respect, respectful disagreement, and participation within modern British society. Students investigate how different beliefs contribute to public debate whilst considering whether religious values should continue to influence modern laws and society.

Alongside this, the enquiry explicitly supports statutory RSHE through themes including identity, healthy relationships, family life, personal values, decision making, respectful communication, diversity, and understanding different beliefs and lifestyles. Students reflect upon how values, beliefs, family, culture, and wider society influence the choices people make throughout their lives.

Zoom In

What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students develop substantive knowledge linked to Christianity, the Bible, authority, interpretation, morality, ethics, relationships, family life, justice, and modern British society. Students investigate how Christian teachings continue to influence individuals and communities whilst exploring how different Christians interpret scripture in different ways.

A major focus of the enquiry is understanding that Christianity is a diverse, lived religion rather than a single set of beliefs. Students investigate how different Christian denominations and individuals apply Biblical teachings to modern issues including relationships, wealth, charity, justice, and social responsibility. Through contemporary case studies, students explore how religious beliefs continue to shape everyday decisions and lifestyles.

Students also investigate the concept of Biblical authority by exploring why Christians regard the Bible as sacred whilst recognising that Christians interpret scripture differently. Through discussion, source analysis, and comparison activities, students evaluate how religious teachings can be understood within different historical, cultural, and contemporary contexts.

Alongside this, students explore moral decision making by comparing Christian teachings with secular and Humanist perspectives. Students consider whether religion is necessary for morality and investigate how religious and non-religious worldviews contribute to debates surrounding ethical behaviour, responsibility, and community life.

The enquiry is structured around a sequence of focused questions including:

- What does it mean to live Biblically today?
- Which Biblical teachings still influence society?
- What do Christians believe about relationships and family life?
- What do Christians believe about wealth and success?
- Should religious teachings influence modern laws?
- How do different Christians interpret the Bible?
- Can religious teachings conflict with modern values?
- Can we still live Biblically today?

Alongside this, students strengthen disciplinary understanding by interpreting Biblical passages, analysing contemporary case studies, comparing religious and non-religious viewpoints, evaluating ethical questions, and constructing balanced arguments supported by evidence.

Key vocabulary including authority, scripture, interpretation, denomination, discipleship, morality, ethics, secularism, worldview, justice, stewardship, discipleship, vocation, and belief is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge *What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?*	**Pitch Up** *How will we challenge ourselves?*
Students will already have developed an understanding of Christianity, lived religion, identity, diversity, and community through their Year 7 Religion and Worldviews enquiries. They will also have prior knowledge of how beliefs influence individuals and communities through investigations into charity, morality, leadership, and environmental responsibility. This enquiry develops those ideas further by introducing students to Biblical interpretation, Christian ethics, authority, and the diversity that exists within Christianity itself. Students continue to strengthen disciplinary skills including	Students are challenged to think critically about whether religious teachings remain relevant within modern Britain. They evaluate different Christian interpretations of scripture whilst considering difficult ethical questions surrounding relationships, wealth, justice, responsibility, and moral decision making. Students apply their understanding to unfamiliar scenarios through debate, discussion, source analysis, and evaluative extended writing. They investigate contemporary ethical issues, compare religious and non-religious viewpoints,

interpretation, comparison, evaluation, discussion, and evidence-based reasoning.	and justify their own conclusions using balanced arguments supported with evidence. Students also reflect upon how beliefs, values, culture, family, and society influence moral choices. Through these discussions, students continue developing increasingly sophisticated disciplinary skills including ethical reasoning, interpretation, evaluation, respectful discussion, and evidence-based judgement.
Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Curriculum Hinterland** *What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?*
This enquiry provides an important foundation for the philosophical and ethical themes students will encounter throughout the remainder of Key Stage 3 and at GCSE. By exploring how religious teachings influence personal values and ethical decision making, students begin to understand the relationship between belief, morality, and contemporary society. These concepts are revisited in Year 8 through enquiries into racism, death, crime and punishment, before being developed further in Year 9 through philosophy, human rights, and applied ethics. The enquiry also develops transferable skills that support learning across the wider curriculum. Students strengthen their ability to interpret sources, analyse evidence, communicate reasoned arguments, evaluate contrasting viewpoints, and respectfully challenge ideas. These disciplinary skills are fundamental to success in subjects including History, English, Citizenship, and the Humanities, whilst preparing students for the evaluative demands of the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course.	Students investigate the historical influence of the Bible upon British society, law, literature, education, and charitable organisations. They explore how Christianity has shaped many aspects of modern British culture whilst recognising that Britain has become an increasingly diverse and multi-faith society. The enquiry also introduces students to the diversity that exists within Christianity itself. Through examining different Christian denominations and traditions, students appreciate that Christians may interpret the same Biblical teachings in different ways whilst remaining committed to their faith. Students explore contemporary examples of Christians responding to issues such as homelessness, poverty, family life, and social justice, recognising that religion continues to play an important role in many communities today. Students are encouraged to make connections between historical religious teachings and contemporary issues, developing an understanding that religion is continually interpreted and applied within changing social, cultural, and political contexts.
Authentic connections *How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?*	
Through this enquiry, students develop social understanding by exploring how religious beliefs continue to shape families, communities, schools, charities, and wider society within modern Britain. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating issues surrounding relationships, wealth, justice, responsibility, forgiveness, and ethical decision making from both religious and non-religious perspectives. Students experience spiritual development by reflecting upon their own beliefs, values, identity, and purpose whilst considering how faith provides guidance and meaning for many individuals. Cultural understanding is developed	

through investigating the diversity that exists within Christianity and recognising the continuing influence of religion within an increasingly diverse and multicultural Britain.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore democracy, individual liberty, freedom of religion and belief, rights and responsibilities, and the role religious values play within modern society. They investigate how different beliefs contribute to public life, consider whether religious teachings should influence modern laws and ethical decisions, and develop an appreciation of respectful disagreement within a democratic society.

British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly mutual respect, tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty, and the rule of law. Students regularly engage in respectful discussion and debate, learning to evaluate contrasting viewpoints whilst recognising that people may reach different conclusions based upon their beliefs, experiences, and values.

Cross-curricular links are made with English through discussion, debate, persuasive writing, and evaluation; History through exploring the historical influence of Christianity on Britain and the development of modern society; Citizenship through democracy, rights, responsibilities, diversity, and community participation; and RSHE through identity, healthy relationships, family life, personal values, respectful communication, and informed decision making.

The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their Speaking skills by articulating opinions using evidence and subject-specific vocabulary, Listening skills by considering alternative viewpoints respectfully and thoughtfully, and Problem Solving skills by evaluating ethical dilemmas and constructing balanced, evidence-based conclusions.

Careers including Teacher, Youth Worker, Chaplain, Social Worker, Community Development Officer, Charity Manager, and Family Support Worker are explored, helping students understand how religious understanding, communication, and ethical decision making are valuable across a wide range of professions that support individuals and communities.

Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	**Assessment** *How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?*
Students are encouraged to deepen their understanding through a range of high-quality resources, including: • BBC Bitesize – Christianity • BBC Teach – Christianity • TrueTube – Christian Beliefs and Practices • The Bible Project • Bible Society • RE:ONLINE • NATRE Classroom Resources • Church of England Education Office	Assessment is designed to evaluate both students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge within meaningful religious, ethical, and philosophical contexts. Throughout the enquiry, students demonstrate their understanding through discussion, source analysis, extended writing, debate, and reflection. Approximately 60% of assessment focuses on substantive knowledge, including key religious teachings, beliefs, concepts, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret religious sources, compare different viewpoints, evaluate evidence, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with philosophical and ethical questions. This enquiry contributes towards the Unit 1 Assessment, where students draw together their understanding from both Can religious teachings still guide modern life? and How can religion and worldviews challenge racism

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• Christian Aid case studies • Contemporary news articles exploring Christianity in modern Britain and ethical issues.	and prejudice? to answer the overarching question: **Can religious teachings still guide modern life?**

Topic 2 Topic		**How can religion and worldviews challenge racism and prejudice?**

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This enquiry encourages students to explore one of the most significant moral and social issues facing modern society: racism and prejudice. Students investigate how religious and non-religious worldviews promote equality, dignity, compassion, and justice whilst considering the role individuals and communities have in challenging discrimination. Through historical and contemporary case studies, students examine how beliefs have inspired people to stand against injustice and campaign for equality.

Students explore the causes and consequences of prejudice, discrimination, and racism, considering how stereotypes can influence attitudes, behaviours, and society. They investigate the teachings of Christianity, Islam, Humanism, and other worldviews, analysing how these traditions encourage respect for all people regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or background. Throughout the enquiry, students are encouraged to recognise that diversity is a strength within modern Britain and to reflect upon their own responsibilities in creating inclusive communities.

The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of lived religion, human dignity, justice, equality, religious responses to social issues, and the influence of belief on individual and collective action. Students develop disciplinary knowledge by interpreting religious teachings, evaluating ethical questions, and comparing religious and non-religious perspectives on prejudice and discrimination.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, enabling students to explore equality, human rights, democracy, the rule of law, protected characteristics, community cohesion, and active citizenship. Students investigate how individuals, communities, governments, and organisations can work together to challenge racism and promote fairness.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by developing students' understanding of respectful relationships, diversity, inclusion, empathy, discrimination, online behaviour, and the impact of stereotypes. Students are encouraged to celebrate diversity whilst developing the confidence to challenge prejudice respectfully and responsibly.

Zoom In
What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

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Students begin by exploring what racism, prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping mean, investigating how prejudice develops and the impact it can have on individuals and communities. They examine examples of discrimination from both history and modern society, recognising the importance of equality and respect within diverse communities.

Students investigate religious teachings about equality and human dignity, exploring how Christianity teaches that all people are made in the image of God and how Islam promotes equality through the belief that all people are equal before Allah. They also consider Humanist perspectives, recognising that equality and human rights can be promoted through both religious and non-religious worldviews.

Throughout the enquiry, students investigate significant individuals and movements that have challenged racism and injustice, including Martin Luther King Jr., whilst considering how faith has inspired campaigns for social justice and equality. They explore the role of communities, charities, schools, governments, and individuals in promoting inclusion and challenging discrimination.

Students also consider the influence of modern media and social media on prejudice, recognising both the opportunities and dangers of digital communication. They evaluate how misinformation, stereotypes, and online behaviour can reinforce discrimination whilst exploring how responsible digital citizenship can promote understanding and respect.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- What is racism?
- Why does prejudice exist?
- How have religions challenged racism?
- What can we learn from Martin Luther King Jr.?
- What do Humanists believe about equality?
- How can communities promote inclusion?
- Does social media help or worsen prejudice?
- How can individuals challenge discrimination?

Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge through analysing religious teachings, evaluating ethical issues, interpreting contemporary case studies, comparing different worldviews, and constructing balanced arguments supported by evidence.

Key vocabulary including prejudice, discrimination, racism, equality, justice, dignity, inclusion, Human Rights, Humanism, diversity, stereotype, discrimination, inclusion, and community cohesion is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge *What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?*	**Pitch Up** *How will we challenge ourselves?*
Students build upon their Year 7 understanding of religious diversity, identity, belonging, and the ways religion influences individuals and communities. They	Students are challenged to consider why prejudice continues to exist despite widespread legal protections and increasing social awareness. They evaluate

also draw upon prior learning surrounding British Values, respectful relationships, charity, moral responsibility, and community cohesion. This enquiry extends that understanding by exploring equality, discrimination, human dignity, and social justice through both religious and non-religious perspectives. Students continue to develop disciplinary skills including interpretation, comparison, ethical evaluation, and evidence-based reasoning.	religious and non-religious responses to racism, analyse real-life case studies, and consider whether individuals or society hold the greatest responsibility for promoting equality. Students investigate difficult contemporary issues, including online hate speech, discrimination, unconscious bias, and community cohesion, developing balanced arguments that are supported by evidence from both religious teachings and wider society. Throughout the enquiry, students continue to strengthen their ability to respectfully challenge ideas, justify conclusions, and communicate their own viewpoints with confidence. Students also take part in active citizenship tasks including designing charity campaigns, awareness projects, fundraising ideas, and community action initiatives linked to helping vulnerable people and improving local communities. Through discussion, debate, and evaluative extended writing, students develop increasingly sophisticated disciplinary skills including analysis, interpretation, ethical reasoning, communication, and justification using evidence and accurate subject specific terminology.
Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Curriculum Hinterland** *What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?*
This enquiry provides an important foundation for future study of philosophy, ethics, and human rights within Year 9, particularly the enquiry into Where do human rights come from and why do they matter? It also prepares students for GCSE Religious Studies through the exploration of justice, equality, prejudice, and the influence of religion upon ethical decision making. The enquiry develops transferable skills including empathy, critical thinking, evaluation, communication, and respectful discussion. These skills support learning across the Humanities and prepare students to become informed, active, and responsible citizens within modern Britain.	Students investigate significant historical and contemporary examples of campaigns against racism and discrimination, recognising the influence of individuals, faith communities, charities, and international organisations in promoting equality. They explore the work of Martin Luther King Jr., the Civil Rights Movement, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights whilst considering how religious beliefs have inspired social reform throughout history. Students also investigate how modern Britain has become increasingly diverse and multicultural, recognising both the opportunities and challenges this presents. They explore the continuing importance of inclusion, tolerance, and mutual respect within schools, workplaces, communities, and wider society.
Authentic connections *How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?*	

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Through this enquiry, students develop social understanding by exploring how communities, charities, schools, faith groups, and individuals work together to challenge racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating issues surrounding equality, justice, inclusion, stereotypes, and human dignity. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon the inherent value of every individual and considering how religious and non-religious beliefs inspire compassion, justice, and social action. Cultural understanding is developed through exploring Britain's diverse communities and recognising the positive contribution that different faiths, cultures, and worldviews make to society.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore equality, diversity, protected characteristics, human rights, community cohesion, active citizenship, and the responsibilities individuals have in creating an inclusive society. They investigate how discrimination can be challenged through education, legislation, community action, and respectful dialogue.

British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty, democracy, and the rule of law. Students regularly engage in thoughtful discussion and debate, learning how to challenge prejudice respectfully whilst valuing the opinions and experiences of others.

Cross-curricular links are made with History through the Civil Rights Movement and campaigns for equality; English through discussion, persuasive writing, debate, and evaluation; Citizenship through human rights, equality, democracy, and community cohesion; and RSHE through respectful relationships, diversity, discrimination, online behaviour, empathy, and inclusion.

The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their Listening skills by considering different experiences and viewpoints respectfully, Speaking skills by participating confidently in debate and discussion, and Leadership skills by considering how individuals can influence positive change within their communities. Careers including Equality and Diversity Officer, Police Officer, Teacher, Youth Worker, Social Worker, Community Development Officer, and Human Rights Campaigner are explored, helping students understand how promoting equality, inclusion, and respect is valuable across a wide range of professions.

Resources
What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?

- BBC Bitesize – Equality and Human Rights
- BBC Teach – Martin Luther King Jr.
- Amnesty International Education Resources
- Equality and Human Rights Commission
- NATRE Classroom Resources
- RE:ONLINE
- TrueTube – Equality and Diversity
- Humanists UK Education Resources

Assessment
How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?

Assessment is designed to evaluate both students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge within meaningful religious, ethical, and philosophical contexts. Throughout the enquiry, students demonstrate their understanding through discussion, source analysis, debate, extended writing, and reflection.

Approximately 60% of assessment focuses on substantive knowledge, including key religious teachings, beliefs, concepts, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret religious teachings, compare different worldviews, evaluate ethical issues, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with contemporary debates.

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• News articles exploring discrimination, inclusion, and community cohesion • Universal Declaration of Human Rights	This enquiry contributes towards the Unit 1 Assessment, where students draw together their understanding from both Can religious teachings still guide modern life? and How can religion and worldviews challenge racism and prejudice? to answer the overarching enquiry: **Can religious beliefs help create a fairer and more inclusive society?**

Topic 3
Topic

Is Death the End?

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This enquiry encourages students to explore one of humanity's oldest and most profound questions: What happens when we die? Students investigate how religious and non-religious worldviews respond to questions about death, the afterlife, and the purpose of human life. Through philosophical enquiry and the study of different beliefs, students develop an appreciation of how ideas about life after death influence the ways people live, cope with loss, and make moral decisions.

Students explore Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Humanist beliefs about death and the afterlife, recognising both similarities and differences between worldviews. They consider how beliefs about heaven, hell, judgement, reincarnation, rebirth, and the absence of an afterlife shape attitudes towards life, morality, grief, and hope.

Throughout the enquiry, students are encouraged to think critically about ultimate questions whilst recognising that different people reach different conclusions based upon faith, evidence, philosophy, culture, and personal experience. Students develop empathy, respect, and understanding when discussing sensitive issues that affect everyone.

The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of ultimate questions, beliefs about life after death, lived religion, diversity within and between religions, and the influence of belief upon individuals and society. Students continue developing disciplinary knowledge by interpreting religious teachings, comparing worldviews, evaluating philosophical arguments, and constructing reasoned conclusions.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, encouraging students to value diversity of belief, respect freedom of religion and belief, and appreciate the importance of respectful discussion within a democratic society. Students recognise that people from different backgrounds may hold different beliefs whilst sharing common values of compassion, dignity, and respect.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by encouraging students to explore themes including loss, resilience, emotional wellbeing, personal identity, empathy, and mental health. Students develop confidence discussing sensitive issues with maturity whilst recognising the importance of supporting others during times of grief and bereavement.

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Zoom In

What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students begin by considering why human beings ask questions about death and what different people believe happens after life. They explore how beliefs about death provide comfort, purpose, and hope for many people whilst recognising that some people do not believe in an afterlife.

Students investigate Christian beliefs about heaven, hell, salvation, resurrection, and judgement before comparing these with Muslim beliefs about the Day of Judgement and the afterlife. They then explore Hindu beliefs about reincarnation and karma alongside Buddhist teachings about rebirth and the cycle of samsara. Finally, students investigate Humanist perspectives, recognising that meaning and purpose can be found without belief in life after death.

Throughout the enquiry, students evaluate how beliefs about death influence everyday life. They consider how religious beliefs shape attitudes towards suffering, grief, morality, forgiveness, and the value of life, whilst recognising that beliefs about death often influence how people choose to live.

Students are encouraged to compare religious and non-religious perspectives, recognising that questions surrounding death cannot be answered with certainty and require thoughtful philosophical discussion supported by evidence and reasoning.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- Why do people ask questions about death?
- What do Christians believe happens after death?
- What do Muslims believe about the afterlife?
- What do Hindus believe about reincarnation?
- What do Buddhists believe about rebirth?
- What do Humanists believe about death?
- How do beliefs about death influence how people live?
- Is death the end?

Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge through interpreting religious teachings, analysing philosophical questions, comparing beliefs, evaluating evidence, and constructing balanced arguments supported by reasoned judgement.

Key vocabulary including afterlife, salvation, resurrection, judgement, heaven, hell, reincarnation, rebirth, karma, samsara, Humanism, immortality, soul, and ultimate questions is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge

What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Pitch Up

How will we challenge ourselves?

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Students build upon their Year 7 understanding of Christianity, Islam, Humanism, morality, and lived religion, alongside their Year 8 learning about religious authority and ethical decision making. They have previously explored how beliefs influence individuals and communities and are now extending this understanding by investigating one of the most significant philosophical questions explored by religion and worldviews. This enquiry develops increasingly sophisticated disciplinary skills including interpretation, comparison, evaluation, empathy, and philosophical reasoning.	Students are challenged to consider questions that have no universally agreed answers. They compare religious and non-religious beliefs, evaluate philosophical arguments, and reflect upon how beliefs about death influence moral choices and human behaviour. Students investigate difficult questions surrounding suffering, hope, grief, and the purpose of life, developing balanced arguments that demonstrate empathy and respect for differing beliefs. Throughout the enquiry they continue strengthening their ability to evaluate evidence, compare viewpoints, and justify conclusions using accurate religious and philosophical vocabulary.
Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Curriculum Hinterland** *What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?*
This enquiry provides an important foundation for future study of philosophy and ethics in Year 9, particularly the enquiries exploring the existence of God and the problem of suffering. It also prepares students for GCSE Religious Studies by introducing key concepts surrounding life after death, religious belief, human purpose, and philosophical reasoning. The enquiry develops transferable skills including empathy, critical thinking, evaluation, respectful discussion, and evidence-based reasoning. These skills support learning across the Humanities whilst preparing students to engage confidently with complex moral and philosophical questions.	Students investigate how beliefs about death have influenced cultures, traditions, rituals, and societies throughout history. They explore funeral traditions, remembrance practices, and beliefs surrounding mourning across different religions and cultures, recognising both diversity and shared human experiences. Students also investigate how religious beliefs about the afterlife have inspired art, literature, music, architecture, and charitable work throughout history. Through these wider connections, students develop an appreciation of the significant role beliefs about death continue to play within modern society.
Authentic connections *How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?*	
Through this enquiry, students develop social understanding by exploring how families, faith communities, and wider society support individuals during times of grief, loss, and bereavement. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating questions surrounding the value of life, suffering, hope, and personal responsibility. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon questions of meaning, purpose, identity, and what happens after death whilst considering a range of religious and non-religious responses. Cultural understanding is developed through investigating funeral traditions, beliefs, and practices from a range of religions and cultures, recognising both diversity and shared human experiences. The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore freedom of religion and belief, mutual respect, diversity, inclusion, and the importance of respecting different worldviews within modern Britain. They investigate how different beliefs shape communities whilst recognising the importance of empathy, dignity, and respect when discussing sensitive issues.	

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British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty, and respect for diversity. Students regularly engage in thoughtful philosophical discussion, recognising that people may reach different conclusions whilst maintaining respectful dialogue.

Cross-curricular links are made with History through exploring changing beliefs and traditions surrounding death across different cultures and time periods; English through philosophical discussion, interpretation, and evaluative writing; Citizenship through diversity, respect, and inclusion; and RSHE through emotional wellbeing, bereavement, resilience, empathy, and mental health.

The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their Listening skills by respectfully considering deeply personal beliefs and experiences, Speaking skills by discussing philosophical questions with sensitivity and confidence, and Critical Thinking skills by evaluating evidence and comparing contrasting religious and non-religious viewpoints.

Careers including Counsellor, Hospice Worker, Chaplain, Funeral Director, Teacher, and Bereavement Support Worker are explored, helping students understand how empathy, communication, and understanding of diverse beliefs support many professions.

Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	**Assessment** *How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?*
• BBC Bitesize – Life After Death • BBC Teach – Beliefs About Death • TrueTube – Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism • Humanists UK Education Resources • NATRE Classroom Resources • RE:ONLINE • The Bible Project • Islamic Relief Educational Resources • Contemporary case studies exploring grief, remembrance, and religious diversity • Funeral and remembrance traditions from different faith communities	Assessment is designed to evaluate both students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge within meaningful religious, ethical, and philosophical contexts. Throughout the enquiry, students demonstrate their understanding through discussion, source analysis, extended writing, philosophical debate, and reflection. Approximately 60% of assessment focuses on substantive knowledge, including key religious beliefs, teachings, concepts, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students compare religious and non-religious worldviews, interpret religious teachings, evaluate philosophical arguments, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with ultimate questions. This enquiry forms the foundation of Unit 2 and prepares students for the Mid-Unit Assessment during Topic 4, where they draw upon their understanding of beliefs about life after death alongside religious teachings about morality, justice, and responsibility.

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Topic 4 Topic/Theme/Enquiry	**Why do people commit crimes and how should society respond?**

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

This enquiry encourages students to explore the complex relationship between morality, justice, crime, and punishment. Students investigate why people commit crimes, how different religions and worldviews respond to wrongdoing, and whether justice should focus on punishment, forgiveness, rehabilitation, or restoration. Through contemporary and historical case studies, students examine how beliefs influence attitudes towards justice whilst considering how society can balance fairness, compassion, and responsibility.

Students explore Christian, Muslim, and Humanist perspectives on crime and punishment, considering key concepts including justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, free will, and moral responsibility. They investigate how religious teachings continue to influence legal systems, charitable organisations, restorative justice programmes, and community support whilst recognising that people hold differing views about how offenders should be treated. Throughout the enquiry, students are encouraged to evaluate complex ethical issues, recognise that moral decisions often involve competing values, and appreciate that there are rarely simple answers to questions surrounding justice and punishment. Students develop empathy, critical thinking, and confidence in constructing balanced, evidence-based arguments.

The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of ethical decision making, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, human dignity, lived religion, and the influence of religious belief on individuals and society. Students continue to strengthen disciplinary knowledge through interpreting religious teachings, evaluating ethical issues, comparing religious and non-religious worldviews, and reaching reasoned judgements.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, encouraging students to investigate democracy, the rule of law, rights and responsibilities, criminal justice, rehabilitation, and active participation within society. Students consider the role individuals, communities, governments, and the legal system have in promoting justice and protecting society.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by exploring personal responsibility, decision making, peer influence, conflict resolution, healthy relationships, consequences of actions, and respectful communication. Students reflect upon how positive choices contribute to safer communities and healthier relationships.

Zoom In
What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Students begin by investigating why people commit crimes, considering a range of social, economic, psychological, and moral influences upon behaviour. They explore the concept of free will and responsibility before investigating different theories surrounding justice and punishment.

Students examine Christian teachings on justice, forgiveness, mercy, and reconciliation, considering how these influence attitudes towards crime and punishment. They compare these with Muslim teachings about justice, accountability, compassion, and forgiveness whilst recognising both similarities and differences between religious traditions.

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Throughout the enquiry, students investigate different approaches to punishment, including retribution, deterrence, rehabilitation, reparation, and restorative justice. They evaluate whether prisons should primarily punish or reform offenders and consider the role forgiveness plays in rebuilding relationships and communities. Students also investigate contemporary ethical issues surrounding crime, including youth offending, knife crime, hate crime, and restorative justice initiatives. Through discussion, debate, and case studies, students evaluate how societies can respond fairly whilst balancing justice, compassion, and public safety.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- Why do people break the law?
- What is justice?
- What do Christians believe about crime and punishment?
- What do Muslims teach about justice and forgiveness?
- Should prisons punish or reform?
- What is restorative justice?
- Should everyone be forgiven?
- How should society respond to crime?

Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge through analysing religious teachings, interpreting ethical issues, comparing different worldviews, evaluating evidence, and constructing balanced arguments supported by reasoned judgement.

Key vocabulary including justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, rehabilitation, deterrence, retribution, restoration, free will, responsibility, accountability, mercy, punishment, and restorative justice is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge *What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?*	**Pitch Up** *How will we challenge ourselves?*
Students build upon their Year 8 understanding of morality, equality, prejudice, human dignity, and beliefs about life after death. They also draw upon prior learning from Year 7 surrounding responsibility, leadership, charity, and religious teachings about helping others. This enquiry extends those ideas by exploring how beliefs influence responses to wrongdoing, justice, and forgiveness whilst continuing to strengthen disciplinary skills including interpretation, evaluation, comparison, and evidence-based reasoning.	Students are challenged to consider difficult moral dilemmas where competing values exist. They evaluate whether punishment or rehabilitation is more effective, consider the role forgiveness should play within justice systems, and investigate how religious teachings continue to influence modern approaches to crime and punishment. Students apply their understanding to contemporary case studies, exploring issues including youth crime, restorative justice, hate crime, and community safety. They continue to develop increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills by comparing religious and non-religious perspectives, weighing evidence, and constructing balanced conclusions supported by reasoned arguments.

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Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Curriculum Hinterland** *What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?*
This enquiry provides an important foundation for future study of ethics, philosophy, and human rights within Year 9 and prepares students for the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course, particularly the study of Religion, Peace and Conflict. Students develop a deeper understanding of justice, morality, human responsibility, and ethical reasoning that will underpin future philosophical enquiries. The enquiry also develops transferable skills including critical thinking, communication, empathy, evidence-based reasoning, and respectful discussion. These skills support learning across the Humanities whilst preparing students to become thoughtful, informed, and responsible members of society.	Students investigate how ideas surrounding justice and punishment have changed throughout history and explore how different societies have responded to crime. They examine the development of modern legal systems alongside the influence religious beliefs have had upon concepts including forgiveness, mercy, rehabilitation, and restorative justice. Students also investigate the work of organisations including prison chaplaincies, restorative justice programmes, youth offending teams, and charities supporting victims and offenders. Through these wider examples, students appreciate the continuing influence of faith communities and wider society in promoting justice, rehabilitation, and reconciliation.

Authentic connections
How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

Through this enquiry, students develop social understanding by exploring how families, communities, charities, faith groups, and the criminal justice system work together to reduce crime, support victims, and rehabilitate offenders. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating issues surrounding justice, punishment, forgiveness, responsibility, and rehabilitation. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon free will, personal responsibility, forgiveness, reconciliation, and the value of every individual. Cultural understanding is developed through investigating how different religions, legal systems, and societies respond to crime whilst recognising the importance of fairness, dignity, and human rights.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore democracy, the rule of law, justice, rights and responsibilities, rehabilitation, restorative justice, and community safety. They investigate the responsibilities individuals, communities, governments, and the legal system have in promoting justice whilst considering how society should respond fairly and compassionately to crime.

British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly the rule of law, mutual respect, individual liberty, democracy, and tolerance of different beliefs. Students regularly engage in thoughtful discussion and debate, evaluating difficult ethical issues whilst learning to respect differing viewpoints and construct balanced arguments.

Cross-curricular links are made with History through the changing nature of crime and punishment and the development of justice systems; English through discussion, debate, persuasive writing, and evaluation; Citizenship through democracy, justice, rights, responsibilities, and the rule of law; and RSHE through decision making, peer influence, conflict resolution, healthy relationships, personal responsibility, and community safety.

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The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their Problem Solving skills by evaluating complex ethical dilemmas and proposing balanced solutions, Speaking skills by presenting evidence-based arguments confidently, and Listening skills by considering contrasting viewpoints respectfully and thoughtfully.

Careers including Police Officer, Probation Officer, Solicitor, Barrister, Prison Officer, Youth Justice Worker, Magistrate, and Restorative Justice Practitioner are explored, helping students understand how fairness, communication, ethical decision making, and responsibility are central to careers within the justice system and wider public services.

Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	**Assessment** *How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?*
Students are encouraged to deepen their understanding through a range of high-quality resources, including: ○ BBC Bitesize – Crime and Punishment ○ BBC Teach – Justice and the Law ○ Prison Reform Trust Educational Resources ○ Restorative Justice Council ○ TrueTube – Crime and Punishment ○ NATRE Classroom Resources ○ RE:ONLINE ○ Humanists UK Education Resources ○ News articles exploring contemporary criminal justice issues ○ Ministry of Justice educational resources	Assessment is designed to evaluate both students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge within meaningful religious, ethical, and philosophical contexts. Throughout the enquiry, students demonstrate their understanding through discussion, source analysis, extended writing, debate, and reflection. Approximately 60% of assessment focuses on substantive knowledge, including key religious teachings, beliefs, concepts, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret religious sources, compare different viewpoints, evaluate evidence, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with philosophical and ethical questions.