New Line Learning Academy
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Religion and Worldviews Curriculum Intent	Year 9

Year 9 Religion and Worldviews represents the culmination of students' Key Stage 3 journey, encouraging them to engage with some of the most significant philosophical, ethical, and human rights issues facing individuals and societies today. Through increasingly challenging enquiries, students investigate ultimate questions about the existence of God, the problem of suffering, the origins of human rights, and how people should make difficult ethical decisions. Students develop the confidence to analyse complex ideas, evaluate contrasting viewpoints, and construct balanced, evidence-based arguments whilst recognising that many philosophical questions remain open to interpretation.

Across four enquiries, students explore a range of religious and non-religious worldviews including Christianity, Islam and Humanism, considering how beliefs influence morality, justice, identity, and responses to contemporary ethical issues. Students investigate philosophical arguments, religious teachings, human rights, and applied ethics, recognising how religion and worldviews continue to shape individuals, communities, and global society.

The curriculum continues to reflect the Kent Agreed Syllabus, developing students' understanding of lived religion, philosophical enquiry, ethical reasoning, ultimate questions, diversity within and between religions, and the influence of belief upon individuals and society. Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge by interpreting philosophical arguments, evaluating religious teachings, comparing worldviews, and reaching well-reasoned conclusions supported by evidence.

Strong links are made to Citizenship and the statutory RSHE curriculum, enabling students to explore democracy, human rights, freedom of religion and belief, equality, justice, diversity, respectful relationships, personal identity, resilience, and responsible decision making. Students are encouraged to engage thoughtfully with controversial issues whilst developing the confidence to express informed opinions respectfully and appreciate the perspectives of others.

Throughout the year, students continue to develop transferable skills including critical thinking, communication, philosophical reasoning, analysis, evaluation, and evidence-based judgement through debate, source interpretation, ethical enquiry, and extended writing. These skills prepare students for the academic demands of Key Stage 4 whilst supporting their development as informed, reflective, and responsible citizens.

Year 9 provides a direct bridge into the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course, introducing many of the philosophical and ethical concepts that students will encounter in greater depth through the study of Christianity, Islam, Families and Relationships, and Religion, Peace and Conflict. By the end of the year, students will have developed the knowledge, understanding, and confidence to engage critically with complex religious, ethical, and philosophical issues, preparing them for further study and for life within a diverse and rapidly changing world.

Topic 1 Topic		**Can God's existence be proven?**

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Big Picture

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

This enquiry introduces students to one of the most significant philosophical questions explored throughout history: Does God exist? Students investigate a range of arguments that seek to prove or disprove the existence of God, recognising that people from religious and non-religious worldviews often reach different conclusions based upon evidence, reason, faith, and personal experience. Through philosophical enquiry, students develop the confidence to analyse complex ideas, evaluate evidence, and construct balanced arguments.

Students explore classical arguments including the Design Argument and the First Cause Argument alongside atheist and Humanist responses. They investigate the relationship between science and religion, considering whether scientific explanations challenge or complement religious belief. Throughout the enquiry, students recognise that questions surrounding God's existence remain relevant today, influencing personal identity, ethical decision making, and the beliefs of billions of people across the world.

The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of philosophical enquiry, ultimate questions, the relationship between faith and reason, diversity of religious and non-religious worldviews, and the influence of belief on individuals and society. Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge by interpreting philosophical arguments, evaluating evidence, analysing differing viewpoints, and constructing well-reasoned conclusions.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, encouraging students to appreciate freedom of religion and belief, mutual respect, respectful disagreement, and democratic discussion. Students investigate how people with different beliefs can engage thoughtfully with philosophical questions whilst recognising that disagreement can exist alongside mutual respect.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by encouraging students to develop critical thinking, self-awareness, respectful communication, resilience when considering challenging ideas, and confidence in expressing informed opinions whilst recognising the beliefs and experiences of others.

Zoom In

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

Students begin by exploring why people believe in God and investigate the variety of religious and non-religious explanations for belief. They consider the difference between evidence, faith, opinion, and proof before examining how philosophers have attempted to explain the existence of God throughout history.

Students investigate the Design Argument, considering whether the complexity and order of the universe point towards an intelligent designer. They then explore the First Cause Argument, examining whether everything that exists must have an original cause. Alongside these philosophical arguments, students investigate scientific explanations for the origins of the universe and evaluate whether science and religion necessarily conflict.

Throughout the enquiry, students explore atheist and Humanist responses to these arguments, recognising that many people reject belief in God based upon evidence, reason, or personal conviction. They evaluate the strengths and limitations of different viewpoints whilst recognising that philosophical questions often remain open to interpretation.

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Students also investigate the role faith plays within religious belief, considering whether faith alone can be a sufficient reason for belief. They develop increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills by comparing evidence, analysing philosophical arguments, and constructing balanced conclusions supported by reasoned judgement.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- Why do people believe in God?
- What is the Design Argument?
- What is the First Cause Argument?
- What is the problem of evidence?
- Can science explain everything?
- What do atheists believe?
- Is faith a good reason to believe?
- Can God's existence be proven?

Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge through analysing philosophical arguments, interpreting evidence, comparing religious and non-religious perspectives, evaluating different viewpoints, and constructing balanced arguments supported by reason and evidence.
Key vocabulary including theism, atheism, agnosticism, faith, evidence, proof, Design Argument, First Cause, philosophy, omnipotent, omniscient, creator, and worldview is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge
What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Students build upon their understanding of Christianity, Humanism, religious authority, ethical decision making, and philosophical thinking developed throughout Years 7 and 8. They have previously explored how beliefs influence individuals and communities and have considered a range of ultimate questions surrounding morality, death, and the purpose of life.

This enquiry extends those ideas by introducing formal philosophical arguments and encouraging students to evaluate evidence, compare worldviews, and justify conclusions using increasingly sophisticated reasoning.

Pitch Up
How will we challenge ourselves?

Students are challenged to investigate questions that have been debated by philosophers, scientists, and theologians for centuries. They evaluate whether evidence can prove or disprove God's existence, compare religious and non-religious responses, and consider whether belief is based upon reason, faith, or personal experience.

Students develop increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills by weighing evidence, identifying strengths and weaknesses within arguments, and recognising that philosophical questions rarely have simple or universally accepted answers. They continue to strengthen their ability to justify conclusions using evidence whilst respectfully considering alternative viewpoints.

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?

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This enquiry provides an important foundation for later study of suffering, human rights, and ethical decision making within Year 9 whilst preparing students for the philosophical elements of the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course. Students develop confidence evaluating complex arguments, interpreting evidence, and reaching reasoned conclusions that will support future learning across Religious Studies and the Humanities. The enquiry also develops transferable skills including critical thinking, logical reasoning, communication, evaluation, and respectful discussion, preparing students for further academic study and informed participation within modern society.	Students investigate some of history's most influential philosophers and scientists, including thinkers who have argued both for and against the existence of God. They explore how philosophical enquiry has shaped religious belief, scientific discovery, and public debate throughout history. Students also investigate how questions surrounding God's existence continue to influence literature, art, science, politics, and culture across the world. They recognise that philosophical enquiry remains relevant today, influencing the beliefs, identities, and decisions of billions of people from a wide range of religious and non-religious worldviews.

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 people with different beliefs can engage respectfully with philosophical questions and appreciate diverse worldviews. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating evidence, recognising the importance of intellectual honesty, and considering how beliefs influence moral choices and behaviour. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon ultimate questions surrounding existence, purpose, meaning, and belief whilst considering their own responses to philosophical enquiry. Cultural understanding is developed through investigating the diversity of religious and non-religious beliefs that exist within Britain and across the world.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore freedom of religion and belief, mutual respect, democracy, respectful disagreement, and the importance of engaging thoughtfully with different opinions. They investigate how individuals with contrasting beliefs can contribute positively to society whilst recognising the importance of evidence, reason, and respectful dialogue.

British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, individual liberty, and democracy. Students regularly participate in philosophical discussion and debate, developing the confidence to challenge ideas respectfully whilst recognising that people may legitimately reach different conclusions.

Cross-curricular links are made with Science through theories surrounding the origins of the universe and scientific explanations of existence; English through debate, persuasive writing, discussion, and evaluation; Citizenship through freedom of belief, democracy, and respectful discussion; and RSHE through identity, self-awareness, respectful communication, critical thinking, and personal values.

The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their Adapting skills by evaluating philosophical arguments and evidence, Speaking skills by presenting balanced viewpoints using reasoned arguments, and Listening skills by respectfully considering alternative perspectives.

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Careers including Philosopher, Teacher, Academic Researcher, Journalist, Barrister, Solicitor, and Policy Advisor are explored, helping students understand how analysis, communication, and evidence-based reasoning are valuable across a wide range of professions.

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 – Philosophy of Religion • BBC Teach – Belief in God • RE:ONLINE • NATRE Classroom Resources • TrueTube – Philosophy and Religion • Humanists UK Education Resources • The Bible Project • Philosophy Foundation resources • Contemporary articles exploring science, religion, and belief • TED-Ed videos exploring philosophical arguments	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 philosophical concepts, religious teachings, arguments, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret philosophical arguments, evaluate evidence, compare religious and non-religious viewpoints, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with ultimate questions. This enquiry contributes towards the Unit 1 Assessment, where students draw together their understanding from both Can God's existence be proven? and Why do suffering and evil exist? to answer the overarching enquiry: Can belief in God be justified through faith, reason, or evidence?

Topic 2 Topic	**Why do suffering and evil exist?**

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

This enquiry encourages students to explore one of the greatest philosophical and theological challenges facing religious belief: If God is loving and all-powerful, why does suffering exist? Students investigate how different religious and non-religious worldviews explain suffering, evil, and injustice whilst recognising that there are no universally accepted answers. Through philosophical enquiry, students develop the confidence to evaluate complex arguments, interpret religious teachings, and consider how beliefs influence responses to suffering.

Students explore Christian explanations including the Problem of Evil, the Free Will Defence, and beliefs surrounding suffering, compassion, and hope. They compare these with Humanist perspectives and consider whether suffering challenges belief in God or can lead to personal growth and resilience. Throughout the enquiry, students investigate how beliefs influence attitudes towards suffering, justice, responsibility, and the value of human life.

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The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through philosophical enquiry, ultimate questions, lived religion, diversity of belief, and the ways religious and non-religious worldviews respond to contemporary ethical issues. Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge by interpreting religious teachings, evaluating philosophical arguments, comparing differing viewpoints, and constructing reasoned judgements.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, encouraging students to explore justice, compassion, human dignity, community responsibility, and the importance of supporting those experiencing hardship. Students investigate how individuals and communities respond to suffering whilst recognising the role faith organisations and charities continue to play within modern society.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by encouraging students to develop empathy, resilience, emotional wellbeing, respectful communication, and an appreciation of how people respond differently to challenge, grief, and adversity.

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

Students begin by considering why suffering exists and whether suffering challenges belief in a loving and all-powerful God. They investigate different types of suffering, including natural evil and moral evil, before exploring why these distinctions are important within philosophy and religion. Students investigate the Problem of Evil, considering whether suffering provides evidence against the existence of God. They then explore the Free Will Defence, examining whether human freedom can explain the existence of moral evil and why many religious believers believe free will is necessary.

Students compare Christian responses to suffering with Humanist perspectives, recognising that people may find meaning, purpose, and hope through both religious and non-religious worldviews. They also explore examples of individuals and organisations inspired by faith to respond positively to suffering through charity, humanitarian aid, and community support. Throughout the enquiry, students consider whether suffering can ever have value, evaluating ideas surrounding resilience, personal growth, forgiveness, and hope. They compare differing viewpoints and develop increasingly sophisticated evaluative responses supported by evidence.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- Why do bad things happen?
- What is the Problem of Evil?
- Why do Christians believe suffering exists?
- What is the Free Will Defence?
- Can suffering ever be good?
- How do religions respond to suffering?
- What do Humanists believe about suffering?
- Why do suffering and evil exist?

Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge through interpreting philosophical arguments, evaluating evidence, comparing religious and non-religious perspectives, analysing ethical issues, and constructing balanced conclusions supported by reasoned judgement.

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Key vocabulary including evil, suffering, natural evil, moral evil, omnibenevolent, omnipotent, omniscient, free will, theodicy, compassion, justice, resilience, and Humanism is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge
What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Students build upon their understanding of philosophical arguments for the existence of God explored in Term 1, alongside prior learning about morality, life after death, justice, and religious teachings developed throughout Years 7 and 8.

This enquiry develops students' ability to evaluate philosophical arguments and investigate how different religious and non-religious worldviews respond to complex moral and existential questions.

Pitch Up
How will we challenge ourselves?

Students are challenged to evaluate one of philosophy's most difficult questions by considering whether suffering disproves the existence of God or whether religious explanations remain convincing. They investigate contrasting viewpoints, analyse philosophical arguments, and consider how evidence, faith, and personal experience influence belief.

Students continue developing increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills by weighing evidence, identifying strengths and weaknesses within competing arguments, and constructing balanced conclusions supported by reasoned judgement.

Wider Framework
How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

This enquiry builds directly upon students' exploration of God's existence and provides an important bridge towards later study of human rights and applied ethics. It also prepares students for the philosophical themes explored within the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course, particularly the evaluation of religious beliefs and ethical issues.

Students continue strengthening transferable skills including critical thinking, philosophical reasoning, empathy, communication, and evidence-based evaluation, preparing them for further study and informed participation within modern society.

Curriculum Hinterland
What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?

Students investigate how philosophers, theologians, charities, and faith communities have responded to suffering throughout history. They explore contemporary examples of humanitarian organisations including Christian Aid, Islamic Relief, and the Red Cross, recognising how beliefs continue to inspire practical responses to injustice, conflict, poverty, and natural disasters.

Students also investigate examples of individuals whose experiences of suffering have shaped their beliefs, recognising that suffering can strengthen, weaken, or transform religious faith in different ways.

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 individuals, charities, faith communities, and governments respond to suffering, injustice, and humanitarian crises. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating questions surrounding justice, compassion, responsibility, forgiveness, and human dignity. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon questions of suffering, hope, purpose, and resilience whilst considering how different worldviews respond to adversity. Cultural understanding is developed through investigating how different religions and societies respond to suffering and support vulnerable individuals both locally and globally.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore justice, equality, human rights, community responsibility, global citizenship, and the importance of supporting those experiencing hardship. They investigate how individuals, governments, charities, and international organisations respond to suffering whilst considering their own responsibilities within society.

British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly mutual respect, tolerance of different beliefs, individual liberty, and respect for diversity. Students regularly engage in thoughtful philosophical discussion, learning to consider contrasting viewpoints with empathy and respect whilst recognising the complexity of moral issues.

Cross-curricular links are made with History through historical examples of conflict, persecution, and humanitarian responses; Geography through natural hazards, development, poverty, and global inequality; English through discussion, debate, interpretation, and evaluative writing; Citizenship through justice, equality, and human rights; and RSHE through resilience, emotional wellbeing, empathy, healthy coping strategies, and supporting others.

The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their planning skills by evaluating philosophical explanations for suffering, Listening skills by respectfully considering deeply held beliefs and experiences, and Speaking skills by presenting balanced arguments supported by evidence.

Careers including Counsellor, Charity Worker, Humanitarian Aid Worker, Psychologist, Teacher, and Social Worker are explored, helping students understand how empathy, communication, resilience, and ethical decision making are valued across a wide range of professions.

Resources

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

Students are encouraged to deepen their understanding through a range of high-quality resources, including:

- BBC Bitesize – The Problem of Evil
- BBC Teach – Religion and Suffering
- RE:ONLINE
- NATRE Classroom Resources
- Christian Aid educational 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 philosophical concepts, religious teachings, ethical ideas, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret religious teachings, evaluate philosophical

• Islamic Relief educational resources • Humanists UK Education Resources • TrueTube – Philosophy and Ethics • Amnesty International case studies • Contemporary news articles exploring humanitarian crises and responses	arguments, compare religious and non-religious viewpoints, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with complex ethical and philosophical questions. Where students draw together their understanding from both Can God's existence be proven? and Why do suffering and evil exist? to answer the overarching enquiry: Can belief in God be justified in a world where suffering exists?

Topic 3 Topic	**Where do human rights come from and why do they matter?**

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

This enquiry encourages students to explore one of the most significant ethical questions facing modern society: Where do human rights come from and why should they be protected? Students investigate religious and non-religious perspectives on human dignity, equality, justice, and freedom whilst considering whether human rights are universal or culturally dependent. Through philosophical enquiry and contemporary case studies, students develop an understanding of how beliefs influence ideas about fairness, equality, and the value of every individual.

Students explore the origins of human rights, the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the ways in which religions and worldviews have influenced concepts of justice, compassion, and human dignity. They consider how human rights continue to shape modern societies whilst recognising that rights are not always protected equally across the world.

The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of lived religion, social justice, human dignity, ethical reasoning, and the influence of religious and non-religious worldviews on individuals and society. Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge by interpreting religious teachings, evaluating ethical issues, comparing different perspectives, and constructing balanced, evidence-based conclusions.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, encouraging students to explore democracy, equality, diversity, the rule of law, freedom of religion and belief, and the responsibilities individuals and governments have in protecting human rights. Students investigate how active citizens can challenge injustice and contribute positively to society.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by developing students' understanding of equality, inclusion, respectful relationships, discrimination, identity, community participation, and responsible decision making. Students are encouraged to reflect upon their own responsibilities in promoting fairness, respect, and inclusion within their communities.

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

Students begin by investigating what human rights are and why societies create laws to protect them. They explore the historical development of human rights before examining the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights following the Second World War.

Students investigate religious teachings about human dignity, equality, justice, and compassion, exploring how Christianity and Islam understand the value of every individual. They compare these with Humanist perspectives, recognising that both religious and non-religious worldviews support human rights through different foundations and beliefs.

Throughout the enquiry, students consider contemporary human rights issues including discrimination, persecution, freedom of religion, gender equality, children's rights, and refugee rights. They evaluate whether human rights should always be protected and consider situations where individual rights may conflict with the rights of others.

Students also investigate the work of charities, governments, and international organisations in defending human rights, recognising the role individuals play in promoting justice and equality within modern society.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- What are human rights?
- Where did human rights come from?
- What do religions teach about human dignity?
- Why was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights created?
- Are human rights universal?
- When should rights be limited?
- How can people defend human rights?
- Where do human rights come from and why do they matter?

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

Key vocabulary including human rights, dignity, equality, justice, discrimination, freedom, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, persecution, prejudice, inclusion, democracy, and social 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?

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Students build upon their understanding of equality, prejudice, justice, racism, and religious responses to social issues developed throughout Years 7 and 8. They also draw upon their philosophical learning surrounding morality, suffering, and ethical reasoning from earlier in Year 9.

This enquiry develops those ideas further by exploring how human rights have developed historically and how religious and non-religious worldviews continue to influence debates surrounding justice, equality, and freedom.

Students are challenged to evaluate complex ethical questions where competing rights and values exist. They investigate whether human rights should always be universal, consider when rights may be restricted, and evaluate how societies should respond when rights are denied or abused.

Students analyse contemporary case studies involving discrimination, persecution, refugees, and freedom of belief, developing balanced conclusions supported by religious teachings, philosophical reasoning, and historical evidence.

Wider Framework

How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

This enquiry provides an important foundation for the final Year 9 enquiry exploring ethical decision making whilst preparing students for the ethical themes studied within the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course, particularly Religion, Peace and Conflict.

Students continue strengthening transferable skills including critical thinking, empathy, analysis, communication, evaluation, and evidence-based judgement, preparing them for Key Stage 4 and informed participation within modern British society.

Curriculum Hinterland

What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?

Students investigate how historical events including the Holocaust, apartheid, the Civil Rights Movement, and the establishment of the United Nations influenced the development of modern human rights. They explore the work of organisations including Amnesty International, UNICEF, and the United Nations, recognising how individuals and communities continue to campaign for justice and equality throughout the world.

Students also investigate contemporary examples of human rights issues, recognising that the protection of dignity, equality, and freedom remains an ongoing global challenge.

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 individuals, charities, governments, and international organisations work together to promote equality, justice, and human rights. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating issues surrounding discrimination, freedom, fairness, dignity, and responsibility. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon the value of every individual and considering how religious and non-religious beliefs inspire compassion, justice, and social action. Cultural understanding is developed through investigating how different societies, religions, and cultures understand human dignity, equality, and freedom whilst recognising the diversity that exists within modern Britain and the wider world.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore democracy, equality, diversity, the rule of law, human rights, active citizenship, and the responsibilities individuals and governments have in protecting the rights and freedoms of others. They investigate how people can challenge injustice through peaceful action, campaigning, and democratic participation.

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British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, and the rule of law. Students regularly engage in respectful discussion and debate, evaluating complex ethical issues whilst recognising the importance of evidence, empathy, and respectful disagreement.

Cross-curricular links are made with History through the Holocaust, Civil Rights Movement, and the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; English through persuasive writing, debate, discussion, and evaluation; Citizenship through democracy, equality, human rights, and active participation; and RSHE through identity, inclusion, respectful relationships, discrimination, community participation, and responsible decision making.

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 issues involving competing rights and responsibilities, Speaking skills by presenting balanced arguments using evidence, and Listening skills by respectfully considering differing perspectives on justice and equality.

Careers including Human Rights Lawyer, Police Officer, Social Worker, International Aid Worker, Teacher, Civil Servant, and Equality and Diversity Officer are explored, helping students understand how fairness, communication, ethical reasoning, and leadership are valued across a wide range of professions.

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

Students are encouraged to deepen their understanding through a range of high-quality resources, including:

- BBC Bitesize – Human Rights
- United Nations – Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Amnesty International Education Resources
- UNICEF UK Education
- RE:ONLINE
- NATRE Classroom Resources
- Humanists UK Education Resources
- BBC Teach – Human Rights
- Equality and Human Rights Commission resources
- Contemporary case studies exploring global human rights issues

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, ethical concepts, historical developments, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret religious teachings, evaluate ethical issues, compare different worldviews, analyse historical evidence, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with questions surrounding justice and human rights.

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Topic 4 Topic		How should people make difficult ethical decisions?

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

This enquiry encourages students to explore how people make difficult ethical decisions in an increasingly complex world. Students investigate how religious teachings, philosophical ideas, personal values, and non-religious worldviews influence responses to contemporary ethical issues. Through discussion, debate, and evaluation, students recognise that ethical questions rarely have straightforward answers and that different people may reach contrasting conclusions based upon their beliefs, experiences, and values.

Students explore a range of contemporary issues including animal rights, animal testing, abortion, and the role of conscience in moral decision making. They investigate how Christianity, Islam, and Humanism approach ethical dilemmas whilst recognising that there is often diversity of opinion both within and between religious traditions.

The enquiry explicitly supports the Kent Agreed Syllabus through the exploration of ethical reasoning, lived religion, diversity of belief, philosophical enquiry, and the influence of religion and worldviews on individuals and society. Students continue developing disciplinary knowledge by interpreting religious teachings, evaluating ethical arguments, comparing religious and non-religious perspectives, and constructing balanced, evidence-based conclusions.

The enquiry also has strong links to Citizenship, encouraging students to investigate democracy, human rights, individual liberty, equality, and responsible participation within society. Students consider how ethical decisions influence laws, public policy, healthcare, and scientific developments whilst recognising the importance of respectful disagreement in a democratic society.

Alongside this, the enquiry supports statutory RSHE by encouraging students to develop critical thinking, respectful communication, empathy, personal values, informed decision making, and resilience when discussing sensitive or controversial issues.

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

Students begin by exploring what makes an issue ethical and investigate how people develop moral values and principles. They consider whether ethical decisions should be based upon religious teachings, personal conscience, consequences, or wider societal values.

Students investigate questions surrounding animal rights and animal testing, evaluating whether humans have special responsibilities towards animals and considering religious and Humanist perspectives on stewardship, compassion, and the value of life. They then explore the issue of abortion, investigating a range of Christian, Muslim, and Humanist viewpoints whilst recognising the diversity of opinion that exists within religious traditions.

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Throughout the enquiry, students compare different approaches to ethical decision making, considering whether moral decisions should always be guided by religious teachings or whether individuals should rely upon conscience, reason, evidence, and compassion. They develop increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills through analysing contemporary case studies, interpreting religious teachings, and constructing balanced arguments supported by evidence.

The enquiry is structured around the following questions:

- What makes an issue ethical?
- Should animals have rights?
- Is animal testing ever justified?
- What is abortion?
- How do religions view abortion?
- How do Humanists approach ethical decisions?
- Who should decide what is right?
- How should people make difficult ethical decisions?

Students strengthen disciplinary knowledge through interpreting religious teachings, analysing ethical dilemmas, comparing religious and non-religious worldviews, evaluating evidence, and constructing balanced conclusions supported by reasoned judgement.

Key vocabulary including ethics, conscience, sanctity of life, quality of life, stewardship, compassion, abortion, animal rights, Humanism, morality, autonomy, dignity, and ethical decision making is explicitly introduced and revisited throughout the enquiry.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge
What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Students build upon their understanding of religious teachings, philosophical enquiry, justice, human rights, suffering, and moral responsibility developed throughout Years 7, 8, and earlier in Year 9. They have previously explored how beliefs influence individuals and societies and have developed increasingly sophisticated skills of interpretation, comparison, evaluation, and evidence-based reasoning.

This enquiry brings together students' substantive and disciplinary knowledge by applying philosophical and ethical thinking to a range of contemporary moral issues.

Pitch Up
How will we challenge ourselves?

Students are challenged to evaluate complex ethical dilemmas where competing rights, beliefs, and responsibilities exist. They compare religious and non-religious approaches to moral decision making whilst recognising that there are often multiple justifiable viewpoints.

Students investigate contemporary ethical issues using real-life case studies, developing increasingly sophisticated evaluative skills through weighing evidence, considering alternative perspectives, and constructing balanced conclusions that demonstrate empathy, critical thinking, and reasoned 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?

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This enquiry provides the culmination of students' Key Stage 3 Religion and Worldviews curriculum and prepares them directly for the ethical themes explored within the AQA GCSE Religious Studies Short Course, particularly Families and Relationships and Religion, Peace and Conflict. Students strengthen the evaluative and analytical skills required for GCSE whilst developing confidence discussing contemporary ethical issues with maturity and respect. The enquiry also develops transferable skills including critical thinking, communication, evaluation, empathy, and evidence-based reasoning, preparing students for further academic study and informed participation within modern British society.	Students investigate how ethical debates surrounding medicine, scientific research, environmental responsibility, and human rights continue to shape modern society. They explore how governments, religious organisations, charities, scientists, healthcare professionals, and campaign groups contribute to contemporary ethical discussions. Students also investigate significant ethical debates that continue to influence legislation, public opinion, and international policy, recognising that ethical decision making remains central to life within an increasingly diverse and technologically advanced world.

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 individuals, communities, governments, healthcare professionals, scientists, and faith organisations make difficult ethical decisions that affect society. Moral understanding is developed through evaluating questions surrounding the value of life, justice, responsibility, compassion, and personal conscience. Students experience spiritual development through reflecting upon their own beliefs, values, and moral responsibilities whilst considering how different religious and non-religious worldviews approach ethical dilemmas. Cultural understanding is developed through investigating the diversity of beliefs that exist within modern Britain and recognising how different cultures and religions respond to contemporary ethical issues.

The enquiry has strong explicit links to Citizenship. Students explore democracy, individual liberty, human rights, equality, the rule of law, and the role of public debate in shaping ethical decisions and legislation. They investigate how individuals can participate responsibly within democratic society whilst recognising the importance of respecting differing beliefs and viewpoints. British Values are embedded throughout the enquiry, particularly democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, and the rule of law. Students regularly engage in mature discussion and debate, learning to justify their opinions using evidence whilst respecting the perspectives of others.

Cross-curricular links are made with Science through medical ethics, genetics, reproduction, and animal testing; English through discussion, debate, persuasive writing, and evaluation; Citizenship through democracy, law, human rights, and public policy; and RSHE through healthy relationships, personal values, informed decision making, respect, consent, and responsible citizenship.

The enquiry also supports employability and career-related skills through the Skills Builder Universal Framework. Students particularly develop their planning skills by evaluating complex ethical dilemmas using evidence and reasoned judgement, Speaking skills by communicating balanced arguments confidently and respectfully, and Problem Solving skills by considering multiple perspectives before reaching justified conclusions.

Careers including Doctor, Nurse, Midwife, Veterinarian, Biomedical Scientist, Lawyer, Teacher, and Ethics Committee Member are explored, helping students understand how ethical reasoning, communication, empathy, and evidence-based decision making are essential across a wide range of professions.

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Believe and Achieve

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 – Religion and Ethics • BBC Teach – Ethics and Contemporary Issues • RE:ONLINE • NATRE Classroom Resources • Humanists UK Education Resources • Christian Aid educational resources • Islamic Relief educational resources • TrueTube – Ethics • Nuffield Council on Bioethics resources • Contemporary news articles exploring medical ethics, animal welfare, and human rights	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, ethical concepts, philosophical ideas, and subject-specific vocabulary. Approximately 40% focuses on disciplinary knowledge, assessing how students interpret religious teachings, evaluate ethical dilemmas, compare religious and non-religious worldviews, justify conclusions, and engage thoughtfully with contemporary moral issues. The enquiry culminates in the End of Unit Assessment, where students synthesise their learning from both Year 9 enquiries to answer the overarching question: **How should people make difficult ethical decisions in a diverse and democratic society?**