

Year 9 Core Religious Studies Curriculum Map						
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Half term	Unit title with hyperlink to scheme of work	Unit summary	Skills & content covered	Skills & content revisited	Summary of formative marking, feedback and student response	Summative assessment schedule, including assessment criteria
Autumn 1	Should everyone live as vegans	This unit explores veganism as a contemporary ethical worldview and lifestyle choice. Students examine the philosophical, religious, environmental and animal welfare arguments for and against veganism. They will evaluate whether humans have moral responsibilities towards animals and the planet, considering perspectives from Christianity, Islam, Humanism and secular ethical thinkers. Students will develop critical thinking, ethical reasoning and evaluation skills while engaging with a topic of increasing social significance.	Students develop a range of disciplinary and academic skills that support both GCSE Success and wider critical thinking. They learn to explain religious beliefs and practices using accurate subject terminology, analyse the influence of religion on individuals and communities, compare similarities and differences within and between religious traditions, and evaluate religious, philosophical and ethical arguments. Students become increasingly confident in interpreting sources of wisdom and authority, constructing balanced arguments, considering different viewpoints and reaching justified conclusions supported by evidence. Students also develop literacy, oracy and extended writing skills through regular engagement with GCSE-style questioning and discussion.	Students revisit and deepen their understanding of key religious beliefs, teachings, practices and ethical issues throughout the curriculum. Knowledge of Christianity and Islam is regularly revisited alongside themes such as peace and conflict, crime and punishment, religion and life, and relationships and families. As students return to these topics, they strengthen their understanding of religious concepts, apply prior knowledge in new contexts, and make increasingly sophisticated connections between beliefs and their influence on individuals and communities. Pupils also revisit scripture, religious authority and sources of wisdom, enabling them to develop a more secure and nuanced understanding of religious traditions.	Starter tasks with retrieval questions to check students learning	Multiple Choice Quiz and short answer response assessment
Autumn 2	How do we make ethical decisions	This unit introduces students to the study of ethics and morality, exploring how individuals, religious communities and societies determine what is right and wrong. Students will investigate sources of moral authority, including religious teachings, conscience, reason, law and ethical theories. They will apply ethical approaches to contemporary issues such as medical ethics, human rights, environmental responsibility and social justice. Throughout the unit, students will develop the ability to analyse arguments, evaluate different viewpoints and construct justified conclusions about moral decision-making.	Students develop the ability to explain ethical and religious perspectives using accurate subject-specific vocabulary and evidence. They learn to analyse different approaches to decision-making, compare contrasting viewpoints and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of ethical arguments. Students strengthen their critical thinking, reasoning, discussion and extended writing skills through the exploration of moral dilemmas and contemporary issues. They also develop the ability to justify conclusions with evidence and engage respectfully with differing opinions.	Students revisit prior learning about religious beliefs and worldviews, particularly how beliefs influence actions and ethical choices. They build on their understanding of Christianity, Islam and non-religious worldviews as sources of moral guidance, whilst further developing skills in interpretation, analysis and evaluation. The unit revisits concepts such as authority, responsibility, justice, human rights and stewardship, alongside extended writing skills, balanced argument construction and evidence-based reasoning. Students draw upon previous learning about contemporary issues and citizenship themes to examine moral dilemmas from multiple perspectives and reach well-justified conclusions.	Starter tasks with retrieval questions to check students learning	Multiple Choice Quiz and short answer response assessment
Spring 1	How important is the Hindu Dharma?	Students investigate the question, "How important is the Hindu Dharma?" by exploring the meaning of Dharma and its role in Hindu life. They examine key Hindu beliefs about duty, responsibility and righteous living, including Saantana Dharma, varnadharma and personal duty. Students study how Dharma is expressed through worship, festivals, family life and ethical decision-making. They also consider how Hindu teachings continue to influence the lives of believers in contemporary society and evaluate differing perspectives on the importance of Dharma.	Students develop the ability to explain religious beliefs and practices using accurate subject-specific vocabulary and evidence. They learn to interpret teachings from sacred texts, analyse the influence of beliefs on individuals and communities and compare different viewpoints within Hinduism. Students strengthen their evaluation skills by considering the extent to which Dharma remains important in modern life and constructing well-reasoned arguments supported by evidence. The unit also develops discussion, critical thinking, interpretation and extended writing skills through enquiry-based learning and reflective activities.	Students revisit prior learning about religious beliefs, sacred texts, worship, authority and morality. They build upon previous understanding of concepts such as belief, duty, responsibility, community and identity while making connections with other religions and worldviews studied across the curriculum. Students revisit the idea that religious beliefs influence actions and explore how ethical teachings shape behaviour in both individual and community contexts. Retrieval activities and discussion tasks help reinforce previous learning and strengthen long-term understanding.	Starter tasks with retrieval questions to check students learning	Multiple Choice Quiz and short answer response assessment
Spring 2	Why is there suffering?	Students investigate the causes and nature of suffering from religious and non-religious perspectives. They explore how different beliefs seek to explain why suffering exists and how individuals and communities respond to it. The unit examines religious teachings about human free will, evil, compassion, justice and hope while encouraging students to consider their own views about suffering and the responsibilities people have towards those who experience it. Students evaluate a range of responses to suffering and consider whether suffering can ever have purpose or meaning.	Students develop the ability to explain religious and non-religious beliefs about suffering using accurate subject-specific vocabulary and evidence. They learn to analyse different explanations for suffering, compare contrasting viewpoints and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of religious and philosophical responses. Students strengthen their ability to construct reasoned arguments, justify opinions with evidence and engage respectfully with complex and sensitive issues. The unit also develops discussion, reflection, empathy and critical thinking skills.	Students revisit key concepts including belief, morality, justice, compassion, responsibility, free will and community. They build upon previous learning about religious teachings, ethical decision-making and the influence of beliefs on actions. Links are made to earlier units exploring moral issues, religious authority and the role of faith in supporting individuals during difficult circumstances. Through retrieval practice and discussion activities, students consolidate their understanding while making connections across different religions and worldviews.	Starter tasks with retrieval questions to check students learning	Multiple Choice Quiz and short answer response assessment
Summer 1	What are arguments for God's existence?	Students investigate the question, "What are the arguments for God's existence?" by exploring key philosophical arguments that support belief in God. They examine classical arguments including the Design Argument, the First Cause Argument and religious experiences as evidence for God's existence. Students also consider challenges to these arguments from atheist and agnostic perspectives. Throughout the unit, students evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different viewpoints and consider whether belief in God requires evidence, faith or both.	Students develop the ability to explain and analyse philosophical arguments using accurate subject-specific vocabulary. They learn to identify evidence, assess the strengths and weaknesses of arguments and evaluate contrasting viewpoints. Students strengthen their critical thinking, reasoning and debate skills by constructing balanced arguments and reaching justified conclusions. The unit also develops the ability to interpret different forms of evidence and engage thoughtfully with complex questions about belief and knowledge.	Students revisit prior learning about beliefs, sources of authority, faith, evidence and religious worldviews. They build on earlier discussions about ultimate questions, the nature of belief and the relationship between religion and science. Concepts such as truth, morality, purpose and human experience are revisited and applied within a philosophical context. Students make connections between different units and consider how beliefs about God influence religious practice and identity.	Starter tasks with retrieval questions to check students learning	Multiple Choice Quiz and short answer response assessment
Summer 2	What is Sikhism?	This unit introduces students to Sikhism as a major world religion and worldview. Students will explore the origins of Sikhism, the life and teachings of Guru Nanak, beliefs about God, the role of the Ten Gurus, Sikh worship and the importance of the Guru Granth Sahib. They will examine how Sikh beliefs influence daily life through practices such as seva (selfless service), equality, the Five Ks and worship in the Gurdwara. Students will develop religious literacy by understanding Sikh beliefs, values and traditions and considering their significance for Sikh communities today.	Students develop the ability to explain Sikh beliefs and practices using accurate religious vocabulary and evidence. They learn to analyse how Sikh teachings influence individual behaviour and community life and compare Sikh beliefs with those of other religions and worldviews. Students strengthen their critical thinking and evaluation skills by considering different perspectives on Sikh identity and commitment. The unit also develops communication, discussion, interpretation and extended writing skills through enquiry-based learning and reflective tasks.	Students revisit prior learning about religious beliefs, practices and sources of authority by exploring how Sikh teachings influence the lives of believers. Building on previous studies of Christianity, Islam and other worldviews, they develop comparative skills by identifying similarities and differences between religions. Students further strengthen their ability to interpret religious teachings, explain the impact of beliefs on actions and analyse the importance of identity, belonging and community. The unit revisits key concepts such as worship, sacred texts, equality, commitment and moral responsibility, while continuing to develop discussion, source analysis, explanation and evaluation skills through enquiry-based learning.	Starter tasks with retrieval questions to check students learning	Multiple Choice Quiz and short answer response assessment