

# Ellesmere Park High School Religious Education Long Term Curriculum Plan

**RE curriculum intent:** At Ellesmere Park High School, our Religious Education curriculum is designed to develop thoughtful, reflective and informed young people who can explore and critically examine the beliefs, practices and ethical ideas that shape individuals, societies and global communities. From Year 7 to Year 11, students engage with theology, philosophy and ethics through a rigorous and enquiry led curriculum that cultivates curiosity, compassion and challenge.

At Key Stage 3, students investigate core theological and philosophical ideas across the Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) and Dharmic traditions (Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism). Through carefully crafted enquiry questions, they explore topics such as the nature of God, covenant and identity, suffering, moral choices, life after death and religious practice. Students also engage with a range of philosophical and ethical themes including free will, evil and suffering, justice, the value of life and human rights. These enquiries are rooted in substantive knowledge, supported by a focus on disciplinary thinking, helping students to interpret texts, analyse beliefs, compare perspectives and evaluate arguments.

The curriculum is underpinned by high expectations for literacy and vocabulary acquisition, with students explicitly taught both Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary to articulate complex ideas accurately and fluently. These skills are applied through extended writing tasks that build the ability to reason, explain and critically evaluate with precision and clarity. Oracy and philosophical dialogue are central to RE classrooms. Students regularly take part in structured debate and discussion, where they are encouraged to speak with confidence, listen actively and engage with different viewpoints respectfully.

At Key Stage 4, students build on their foundations by studying the AQA GCSE Religious Studies course, which advances the skills developed in Key Stage 3. They explore Christianity and Islam in depth, alongside philosophical and ethical themes such as relationships, crime and punishment, religion and life and the religion peace and conflict. Students are challenged to apply prior knowledge, develop sustained written arguments and approach contemporary issues with critical insight and empathy. By the end of Year 11, students leave RE with a rich understanding of religious and non-religious worldviews, the ability to reason and reflect, and the skills to engage meaningfully with the moral, spiritual and philosophical challenges of modern life.

## **RE curriculum aims:**

Our aim in Religious Education at Ellesmere Park High School is to deliver a broad, challenging, and enquiry-led curriculum that inspires thoughtful and reflective young people to engage deeply with the diverse religious and non-religious worldviews shaping our global society. From Years 7 to 11, students develop the confidence and skills to explore complex theological, philosophical, and ethical questions, critically weigh different perspectives, and express their ideas with clarity and conviction.

We encourage curiosity, empathy, and respect, inviting students to ask meaningful questions about the moral and spiritual issues that influence their lives and the world around them. Literacy and oracy are central to our curriculum, enabling students to master subject-specific vocabulary and participate in respectful, thoughtful dialogue and debate.

At Key Stage 3, students build a broad foundation across multiple faith traditions and ethical themes, grounded in local and global contexts. At Key Stage 4, the focus sharpens through the AQA GCSE Religious Studies course, balancing exam demands with opportunities to deepen understanding and personal insight.

Our major curriculum aims are:

- Broad
- Inspirational
- Challenging
- Thought-provoking
- Relevant
- Preparation for the next stage of education and life

## RE Concepts

**Key Concepts – The heart of religious studies and philosophy:**

**Religious history** – Religious history explores how faiths have developed and influenced societies over time.

**Religious beliefs** – Religious beliefs are ideas that followers accept as true about God, life, and the universe.

**Religious practices** – Religious practices are actions like prayer or fasting that express faith in daily life.

**Religious identity** – Religious identity is how someone sees themselves in relation to their faith.

**Religious stories** – Religious stories communicate moral lessons and beliefs through narrative.

**Rites and rituals** – Rites and rituals are formal ceremonies marking important moments in religious life.

**Philosophy and ethics** – Philosophy and ethics in RE examine moral questions and the nature of existence.

**Religious expression** – Religious expression includes symbols, clothing, and art used to show faith and devotion.

**Religious experience** – Religious experience is a personal encounter that leads someone to feel the presence of the divine.

**Proof** – Proof in RE explores whether belief in God or religious claims can be supported with evidence or logic.

**Causation** – Causation looks at the idea that everything has a cause, often leading to arguments for a first cause or creator.

**Design** – The design argument claims the complexity of the universe suggests an intelligent designer.

**Myth** – A myth in RE is a symbolic story that conveys spiritual or moral truths rather than literal facts.

**Belief** – Belief is the acceptance of certain ideas or teachings as true, often without empirical proof.

**Rationalism** – Rationalism values reason as the primary source of knowledge, sometimes challenging religious belief.

**Atheism** – Atheism is the belief that there is no God or divine being.

**Faith** – Faith is trust or confidence in a religious truth, often without needing proof.

**Psychological perspectives** – Psychological perspectives explore how the human mind influences religious belief and experience.

**Evolution** – Evolution is the scientific theory that species change over time, raising questions for some religious beliefs.

**Sociological perspectives** – Sociological perspectives examine how religion shapes and is shaped by society and culture.

**Authority** – The influence or guidance of religious texts, leaders or institutions on beliefs and actions.

**Spirituality** – A sense of connection to something greater, which may or may not involve belief in God.

**Secularism** – The idea that religion should be separate from state and public life.

**Humanism** – A non-religious worldview that emphasises reason, empathy, and human welfare.

**Evangelism** – Spreading the Christian message with the aim of converting others.

**Mission** – The calling of Christians to serve others and promote their faith.

**Morality** – Principles and values about what is right and wrong behaviour.

**Justice** – The concept of fairness, equality, and upholding human rights.

**Rights** – Entitlements and freedoms that every person should have.

**Identity** – How beliefs, culture, and values shape a person's sense of self.

**Worldview** – A person's overall perspective on life, shaped by beliefs and experiences.

**Ethics** – The study of moral principles and how they apply to real-life situations.

## Ellesmere Park High School KS3 RE Long Term Curriculum Plan

Year 7 Abrahamic religion	Enquiry Question	Religious and Philosophical Concepts	Core knowledge	Summative Assessments	Links to Local Agreed Syllabus	Skills (including but not limited to)
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<p><b>Topic 1: Judaism</b> 8/9 Lessons</p>	<p>Why is Israel Important to Jews?</p>	<p>Religious history, religious beliefs, religious practices, religious identity, religious stories, rites and rituals, philosophy and ethics, religious expression.</p>	<p>Students explore and investigate the significance of Israel in Jewish history and belief, beginning with God’s covenant with Abraham and Moses’ journey to the Promised Land. They examine the importance of Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Western Wall, and consider the impact of persecution and the Holocaust. The unit concludes with an inquiry into the creation of the modern state of Israel and diverse Jewish views on Zionism, encouraging students to reflect on why Israel remains a sacred and symbolic homeland for many Jews today.</p>	<p>SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task “Is the land of Israel the most important part of Jewish belief and life today?”</p>	<p>This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key beliefs, practices, and historical experiences within Judaism through the strands of Believing, Expressing, and Living. Students investigate the concept of covenant and the significance of the land of Israel as part of Jewish identity and faith in God’s promises (Believing). They examine sacred places, rituals, and symbols connected to Israel and the wider Jewish tradition, including prayer at the Western Wall and the celebration of festivals such as Passover and Yom Ha’atzmaut (Expressing). The unit also explores how historical experiences of persecution, exile, and return have shaped Jewish identity and community life today, helping students to understand how beliefs influence resilience, belonging, and moral choices (Living). Students are encouraged to reflect on the relationship between faith and suffering, and to engage with challenging questions about identity, homeland, and the continuing relevance of religious tradition in the modern world.</p>	<p>Students explore how belief, history, and identity are interwoven in Judaism. They examine Abraham and Moses as key figures and investigate how the concept of covenant shapes Jewish law, ritual, and connection to the land. Through practices like circumcision and the Ten Commandments, they consider how belief influences daily life.</p> <p>Students analyse the significance of sacred spaces such as the Temple and the Western Wall and evaluate how persecution and migration have shaped Jewish identity. They explore the Shoah as a pivotal event in Jewish theology, assessing different responses to suffering and belief in God.</p> <p>The unit concludes with an enquiry into Zionism, contrasting Jewish views on the state of Israel and distinguishing between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism. Throughout, students build skills in questioning, interpretation, comparison, and evaluation, encouraging a reflective and informed engagement with religion.</p>
<p><b>Topic 2: Christianity</b> 8/9 Lessons</p>	<p>Why did people follow Jesus?</p>	<p>Religious history, religious beliefs, religious practices, religious identity, religious stories, rites and rituals, philosophy and ethics, religious expression.</p>	<p>Students explore the life and teachings of Jesus within the historical and religious context of first-century Judea, considering how Jewish expectations of a Messiah shaped responses to his ministry. They examine key events such as his baptism, the calling of disciples, miracles, and parables, focusing on stories like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son to explore how Jesus taught compassion, forgiveness, and social justice. The unit investigates how his message of the Kingdom of God challenged existing norms and inspired a growing community of followers. Students consider the lasting impact of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection on Christian beliefs, worship, and ethical living</p>	<p>SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task “Is Jesus’ message of love the main reason why people chose to follow him – and still do today?”</p>	<p>This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key beliefs, practices, and historical experiences within Christianity through the strands of Believing, Expressing, and Living. Students investigate the life and teachings of Jesus, focusing on his message of love, forgiveness, and the Kingdom of God as central to Christian faith and identity (Believing). They examine how Christians express these beliefs through parables, worship, and rituals such as baptism and Eucharist (Expressing). The unit also explores the significance of Jesus’ death and resurrection and how these shape Christian understandings of salvation, hope, and moral living today (Living). Students are encouraged to reflect on the reasons why people followed Jesus</p>	<p>Students explore how belief, history, and identity are interwoven in Christianity. They examine Jesus as a key figure and investigate how his teachings on love, forgiveness, and the Kingdom of God shape Christian faith and practice. Through parables such as the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son, they consider how belief influences moral choices and daily living.</p> <p>Students analyse the significance of events such as Jesus’ baptism, miracles, death, and resurrection, evaluating how these shape Christian understandings of salvation, hope, and community. They explore differing Christian responses to Jesus’ message and how these have influenced Christian identity across history and today.</p> <p>The unit concludes with an enquiry into why people have chosen to follow Jesus, encouraging students to develop skills in questioning, interpretation, comparison, and evaluation. Throughout, students are supported to engage reflectively and respectfully with Christian beliefs, identity, and the ongoing relevance of faith in the modern world.</p>

			today. The unit concludes by encouraging students to critically compare Christianity and Judaism, developing empathy, respect, and the ability to make informed, reflective judgments about the role of faith in people’s lives.		historically and continue to do so, engaging with challenging questions about faith, identity, and the impact of religious teaching on personal and communal life in the modern world.	
<b>Topic 3: Islam</b> 8/9 Lessons	What can the life of Muhammad teach us about Islam?  What is it like to be a Muslim teenager in Britain today?	Religious history, religious beliefs, religious practices, religious identity, religious stories, rites and rituals, philosophy and ethics, religious expression.	Students explore the life of Muhammad within the historical and religious context of seventh-century Arabia, considering how his role as the final prophet shaped the foundations of Islam. They examine key events such as the revelation of the Qur’an, the Hijrah, and Muhammad’s leadership in uniting diverse tribes, focusing on how his teachings establish core beliefs and practices like the Five Pillars of Islam. The unit investigates how these beliefs shape the identity, worship, and daily lives of Muslims, with particular attention to the experiences of Muslim teenagers living in Britain today. Students consider the challenges and opportunities faced by young Muslims in a modern, multicultural society. The unit concludes by encouraging students to thoughtfully compare Islam with Judaism and Christianity, fostering empathy, respect, and the ability to make informed, reflective judgments about the role of faith and religious identity in contemporary life.	SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task “In what ways is the life of Muhammad important for Muslims living in Britain today?”	This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key beliefs, practices, and historical experiences within Islam through the strands of Believing, Expressing, and Living. Students investigate the life of Muhammad, focusing on his role as the final prophet and the foundations he established for Muslim faith and identity (Believing). They examine how Muslims express these beliefs through practices such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage, and how these rituals shape community and personal life (Expressing). The unit also explores the experiences of Muslim teenagers in Britain today, considering how faith influences their identity, values, and responses to challenges such as discrimination (Living). Students are encouraged to reflect on the continuing significance of Muhammad’s example and the role of Islam in shaping moral choices and belonging in a diverse, modern society.	<p>Students develop skills in exploring how belief, history, and identity are interconnected within Islam. They investigate the life and teachings of Muhammad, using evidence to understand foundational beliefs such as the Five Pillars and the concept of duty, and how these shape Muslim faith and practice.</p> <p>Students analyse Islamic rituals like prayer, fasting during Ramadan, and pilgrimage, evaluating how these practices express religious identity and impact the lives of Muslims, particularly Muslim teenagers in Britain today. They critically consider issues of faith, identity, and discrimination, reflecting on diverse Muslim experiences and responses.</p> <p>The unit encourages students to engage in questioning, interpretation, comparison, and evaluation, drawing connections between Muhammad’s teachings and their influence on Muslim communities historically and in modern Britain. Throughout, students are supported to develop empathy, respect, and a thoughtful, reflective approach to understanding Islam and the challenges faced by Muslims today.</p>

Year 8 - Dharmic religions	Enquiry Question	Religious and Philosophical Concepts	Knowledge	Summative Assessments	Links to Local Agreed Syllabus	Skills (including but not limited to)
<b>Topic 1: Hinduism</b> 8 Lessons	What is Hinduism?  What does it mean to be a Hindu in the modern world today?	Religious history, religious beliefs, religious practices, religious identity, religious stories, rites and rituals, philosophy and ethics, religious expression.	Students explore and investigate key beliefs and practices within Hinduism, beginning with the concept of Brahman as the one supreme spirit and the role of deities as personal expressions of the divine. They examine the significance of the Trimurti, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, as	SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task “Hindu beliefs and practices help Hindus live a meaningful life in the modern world.”	This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key beliefs, practices, and spiritual concepts within Hinduism through the strands of Believing, Expressing, and Living. Students investigate the nature of Brahman as the supreme spirit and consider how deities and	<b>Students will revisit skills from Y7 and will also complete:</b>  Students explore how belief, worship, and identity are interwoven in Hinduism. They examine Brahman as the one supreme spirit and investigate how the Trimurti and other deities reflect different aspects of the divine. Through practices such as puja, aarti, and pilgrimage, they consider how belief influences daily routines, rituals, and moral choices.

			<p>representations of creation, preservation and destruction, and how these forms help Hindus connect with different aspects of God. The unit explores how worship takes place both at home and in temples, focusing on the importance of the murti, rituals such as puja and aarti, and the meaning behind sacred spaces. Students also study major festivals like Diwali and Holi, uncovering the stories, symbolism and values they express. The unit concludes with an inquiry into Hindu beliefs about karma, samsara and moksha, encouraging students to reflect on how these ideas influence daily life and moral choices, and how Hinduism offers many paths to spiritual understanding and liberation.</p>		<p>the Trimurti express different aspects of the divine (Believing). The unit examines the significance of worship at home and in temples, including rituals such as puja and aarti, and the role of sacred spaces in expressing devotion (Expressing). Students also explore how festivals and pilgrimages reflect values like renewal, equality, and community, while studying beliefs such as karma, samsara, and moksha to understand how these influence moral choices and ways of living (Living). The unit encourages students to respect religious diversity and reflect on how belief can shape identity, purpose, and behaviour. Through enquiry and discussion, students are guided to respond to challenging questions about the nature of God, the meaning of life, and different paths to spiritual fulfilment.</p>	<p>Students analyse the significance of sacred spaces, both at home and in temples, and evaluate how festivals like Diwali and Holi express key values such as hope, devotion, and equality. They explore the concepts of karma, samsara, and moksha as ways of understanding life, death, and the pursuit of spiritual fulfilment.</p> <p>The unit concludes with an enquiry into Hindu approaches to liberation and the many paths to God. Throughout, students build skills in interpretation, analysis, comparison, and evaluation, encouraging thoughtful and respectful engagement with religious and philosophical ideas.</p>
<p><b>Topic 2: Buddhism</b> 8 Lessons</p>	<p>Why was the Buddha significant for Buddhists?</p>	<p>Religious history, religious beliefs, religious practices, religious identity, religious stories, rites and rituals, philosophy and ethics, religious expression.</p>	<p>Students explore why the Buddha is an important figure in Buddhism by examining his life story, from his early years as Prince Siddhartha to his enlightenment under the Bodhi tree. They investigate how his teachings addressed the problem of suffering and offered a practical path to spiritual liberation through the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. The unit highlights the Buddha's role as a teacher who challenged existing religious ideas and social norms, inspiring a community of followers and shaping Buddhist beliefs and practices. Students consider how the Buddha's example continues to influence Buddhists today in their ethical choices, meditation practices, and understanding of compassion and wisdom. They also reflect on how the Buddha's teachings can be applied to life today, both for Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world, helping people manage challenges, develop mindfulness, and make thoughtful, positive decisions. This enquiry encourages students to</p>	<p>SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task “Is suffering the most important reason why the Buddha is significant to Buddhists?”</p>	<p>This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key beliefs, practices, and spiritual concepts within Buddhism through the strands of Believing, Expressing, and Living. Students investigate the life and teachings of the Buddha, focusing on his significance as a spiritual leader and the foundation of Buddhist faith and identity (Believing). The unit examines how Buddhists express their beliefs through practices such as meditation, mindfulness, and the use of sacred spaces like temples and stupas (Expressing). Students explore core Buddhist teachings including the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, karma, and rebirth, considering how these beliefs shape moral choices and everyday life for Buddhists and non-Buddhists globally today (Living). The unit encourages students to develop respect for religious diversity and reflect on how Buddhist teachings address human suffering, compassion, and ethical living. Through enquiry and</p>	<p>Students develop skills in exploring how belief, history, and identity are interconnected within Buddhism. They investigate the life and teachings of the Buddha, using key concepts such as the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path to understand foundational Buddhist beliefs and how these shape faith and practice.</p> <p>Students analyse Buddhist practices like meditation, mindfulness, and participation in festivals, evaluating how these rituals express religious identity and influence the lives of Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world today. They critically consider themes of suffering, compassion, and ethical living, reflecting on how Buddhist teachings offer guidance for personal and communal life.</p> <p>The unit encourages students to engage in questioning, interpretation, comparison, and evaluation, drawing connections between the Buddha's teachings and their ongoing relevance historically and in contemporary society. Throughout, students are supported to develop empathy, respect, and a thoughtful, reflective approach to understanding Buddhism and its impact on people's lives globally.</p>

			develop empathy and respect for Buddhism as a living faith.		discussion, students engage with challenging questions about spiritual fulfilment, identity, and the ongoing relevance of Buddhism in the modern world.	
<b>Topic 3: Sikhism</b>  8 Lessons	How did Sikhism develop? Why is service important to Sikhs?	Religious history, religious beliefs, religious practices, religious identity, religious stories, rites and rituals, philosophy and ethics, religious expression.	Students explore how Sikhism developed by examining the life and teachings of Guru Nanak and the ten Gurus who followed him. They investigate how Sikh beliefs emerged in response to social inequality and religious division, focusing on the belief in one God, equality, honest living and selfless service. The unit traces key events in Sikh history, including the formation of the Khalsa and the importance of the Guru Granth Sahib, to understand how Sikh identity and community were shaped over time. Students consider why service (seva) is central to Sikh life, exploring how it is expressed through acts such as the langar (community kitchen), volunteering and charitable giving. They reflect on how these practices express values of humility, compassion and justice, and how they influence daily life for Sikhs today. The unit also encourages students to reflect on how Sikh teachings remain relevant in the modern world, for both Sikhs and non-Sikhs, offering guidance on how to live with purpose, dignity and care for others. Through this enquiry, students develop empathy and respect for Sikhism as a living faith shaped by history, belief and practice.	“SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task The most important part of Sikhism is serving others.”	This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key beliefs, practices, and spiritual concepts within Sikhism through the strands of Believing, Expressing, and Living. Students investigate the origins of Sikhism and the lives of the Gurus, with a particular focus on Guru Nanak and the formation of the Khalsa, to understand Sikh beliefs about equality, service, and devotion to one God (Believing). The unit examines how Sikhs express their faith through daily practices, community worship in the Gurdwara, and the importance of symbols such as the Five Ks (Expressing). Students explore the value of selfless service (seva), and how Sikh teachings encourage compassion, justice, and standing up for others in everyday life (Living). The unit encourages students to recognise Sikhism as a living faith that shapes identity, behaviour, and community values in Britain and around the world. Through enquiry and discussion, students reflect on key questions about belief, belonging, and the importance of service in creating a fairer society.	Students develop skills in exploring how belief, history, and identity are interconnected within Sikhism. They investigate the origins of Sikhism and the lives of the Gurus, focusing on key concepts such as equality, service (seva), and devotion to one God to understand foundational Sikh beliefs and how these shape faith and practice.  Students analyse Sikh practices like community worship in the Gurdwara, the significance of the Five Ks, and the importance of selfless service, evaluating how these rituals express religious identity and influence the lives of Sikhs in Britain and around the world today. They critically consider themes of justice, compassion, and standing up for others, reflecting on how Sikh teachings guide ethical choices and communal responsibility.  The unit encourages students to engage in questioning, explanation, interpretation, comparison, and evaluation, drawing connections between Sikh history, beliefs, and practices and their ongoing relevance both historically and in contemporary society. Throughout, students are supported to develop empathy, respect, and a thoughtful, reflective approach to understanding Sikhism and its impact on people’s lives globally.

Year 9 – Philosophy and Ethics	Enquiry Question	Philosophical Concepts	Knowledge	Summative Assessments	Links to Local Agreed Syllabus	Skills (including but not limited to)
<b>Topic 1: Philosophy of religion</b>  8 Lessons	Does God exist?	Religious experience, proof, causation, design, evolution, myth, belief, rationalism, atheism, faith, psychological and	Students examine the question of whether religious experiences can be reliable evidence for the existence of God. They begin by exploring examples of religious experience such as miracles, prayer, and personal encounters	SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task “‘There is no real evidence for God, only human need.’ Or	This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore philosophical and theological ideas about the existence of God, engaging with a range of religious and non-religious worldviews. Through enquiry into	<b>Students will revisit skills from Y7 and Y8 and will also complete:</b>  Students develop key disciplinary skills in philosophical and theological enquiry as they explore arguments for and against the existence of God. They learn to identify and define key concepts such as religious experience, miracles, causation, and design, and describe their main features using precise vocabulary. Through case

		<p>sociological perspectives</p>	<p>with the divine, including references to miracle stories from the Gospels and accounts from believers today. The unit investigates how these experiences are interpreted by religious individuals as signs of God's presence and action in the world. Alongside this, students engage with the philosophical challenges posed by David Hume, who argued that miracles are based on unreliable testimony and that natural explanations are always more likely. Through this, students weigh up subjective and objective evidence and reflect critically on whether personal religious experience can support belief in God or whether such claims require further scrutiny. The unit encourages thoughtful debate and philosophical questioning, helping students to develop their evaluative and analytical skills.</p>	<p>'Religion is nothing more than wishful thinking.'</p>	<p>religious experiences such as miracles and prayer, and critical perspectives from thinkers like Hume, students consider how personal and communal experiences shape belief (Believing). They examine classical arguments for God's existence, including the First Cause and Design arguments, and explore how scientific and psychological critiques from Darwin and Freud challenge traditional views. The unit encourages students to articulate their own responses to ultimate questions (Expressing), while reflecting on how belief or disbelief in God influences moral choices, identity, and life purpose (Living). By analysing different perspectives and engaging with challenging questions, students develop respect for diverse beliefs and gain a deeper understanding of how worldviews can shape behaviour, meaning, and belonging.</p>	<p>studies and texts, students practise interpreting and analysing a range of viewpoints, including Aquinas' First Cause argument, Paley's Design Argument, and critiques by Hume, Darwin, Freud, and Marx. They build comparison skills by weighing philosophical, scientific, psychological, and sociological explanations for belief, and evaluating their strengths and limitations.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to question the reliability of subjective experience as evidence, consider how different worldviews interpret the same data, and investigate how arguments have developed over time. They practise constructing balanced arguments, developing their ability to justify opinions with evidence and reason.</p> <p>The unit culminates in extended writing and debate, where students are assessed on their ability to explain, evaluate, and compare complex ideas clearly and respectfully. Throughout, they strengthen their critical thinking, reasoning, and reflective skills, preparing them to engage thoughtfully with big questions about belief, truth, and meaning.</p>
<p><b>Topic 2: Moral Decisions and Ethics</b></p> <p>8/9 Lessons</p>	<p>How can we decide what is right?</p>	<p>Sanctity of life, personhood, religious authority, human rights, consequentialism, deontological ethics, compassion, autonomy, and ethical decision-making</p>	<p>Students explore the enquiry question, how can we decide what is right? by investigating different approaches to moral decision-making, including utilitarianism, situation ethics, and thought experiments like the trolley problem. The unit also examines complex contemporary issues such as abortion and euthanasia, encouraging students to apply ethical theories to real-life dilemmas. Throughout the topic, pupils will self and peer assess their knowledge using quizzes in class and as homework, while teachers monitor understanding through targeted classwork. Students are expected to explain and evaluate different ethical perspectives, supporting their answers with relevant religious texts and philosophical ideas. They practise giving reasoned arguments, evaluating statements, and forming justified conclusions. This enquiry encourages critical thinking and reflection, helping students develop their ability to</p>	<p>SUN assessment – 12 mark extended writing task "We can only decide what is right by following religious teachings." Or "We must use reason and experience, not religion, to decide what is right."</p>	<p>This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key ethical ideas and questions about how we decide what is right, drawing on religious and non-religious perspectives. Through enquiry into concepts such as sanctity of life, personhood, and human rights, alongside ethical theories like consequentialism and deontological ethics, students investigate how moral decisions are made (Believing). They analyse real-life ethical dilemmas including abortion and euthanasia, considering the role of religious authority, compassion, and autonomy in shaping responses (Expressing). Students reflect on how different worldviews influence personal and social behaviour, identity, and the complexity of ethical decision-making in contemporary society (Living). The unit encourages respectful dialogue and critical thinking, helping students appreciate diverse perspectives and develop their own</p>	<p>Students develop critical skills in ethical enquiry by learning to define and explain key concepts such as sanctity of life, personhood, human rights, consequentialism, deontological ethics, compassion, autonomy, and ethical decision-making. They practise analysing complex moral dilemmas, applying different ethical frameworks to real-life issues like abortion and euthanasia.</p> <p>Through comparison and evaluation, students strengthen their ability to weigh contrasting perspectives and assess the strengths and limitations of religious and secular arguments. They develop skills in constructing coherent, balanced arguments, supporting their views with evidence and clear reasoning.</p> <p>The unit also encourages skills in interpretation, reflection, and respectful dialogue, guiding students to engage thoughtfully with diverse viewpoints. Extended writing and debate activities provide opportunities to demonstrate these skills, enhancing students' critical thinking, moral reasoning, and capacity for empathy in ethical decision-making contexts.</p>

			analyse diverse viewpoints on morality. Through discussion and assessment, pupils build confidence in articulating informed and balanced responses to the central question of how we decide what is right in both religious and secular contexts.		reasoned views on what it means to decide what is right.	
<p><b>Topic 3: The worldwide Church and non-religious world views</b></p> <p>8/9 Lessons</p>	Why is the Church important in the world today? Can you have beliefs if you don't believe in God?	Belief, authority, spirituality, secularism, humanism, evangelism, mission, morality, justice, rights, identity, worldview, ethics.	Students explore the questions, why is the Church important in the world today? and can you have beliefs if you don't believe in God? by examining both religious and non-religious worldviews. The unit covers Christian ideas around mission and evangelism, the role of religion in politics and social justice, as well as alternative perspectives such as humanism and being spiritual but not religious. Pupils also explore ethical debates including vegetarianism and veganism. Knowledge is assessed through quizzes and key pieces of classwork, with opportunities for self and peer assessment throughout. Students are expected to explain and evaluate different beliefs, using religious texts, ethical reasoning, and philosophical ideas. They practise forming reasoned arguments, evaluating statements, and drawing justified conclusions. This enquiry develops critical thinking and reflection, enabling pupils to analyse diverse perspectives and articulate informed responses to questions about belief and ethics.	SUN Assessment – 12 mark extended writing task: “We can only decide what is right by following religious teachings.” Or “We must use reason and experience, not religion, to decide what is right.”	This unit supports the Salford Agreed Syllabus by enabling students to explore key questions about belief and ethics, focusing on both religious and non-religious worldviews (Believing). Through enquiry into concepts such as mission, evangelism, secularism, humanism, and spirituality, students examine how beliefs shape identity and influence attitudes towards social justice and ethical issues like vegetarianism and veganism (Expressing). Pupils reflect on the role of religion and non-religious perspectives in society, considering how these impact personal values and behaviour in a diverse and changing world (Living). The unit promotes critical thinking and respectful discussion, helping students to understand and evaluate different viewpoints while developing their own informed responses to complex questions about belief and morality.	<p>Students develop critical skills in exploring religious and non-religious worldviews by learning to define and explain key concepts such as authority, spirituality, secularism, humanism, mission, evangelism, and ethics. They practise analysing different beliefs and ethical debates, applying these ideas to real-life issues like vegetarianism, veganism, and social justice.</p> <p>Through comparison and evaluation, students build their ability to consider multiple perspectives, weighing the strengths and limitations of religious and secular arguments. They develop skills in constructing clear, balanced arguments, supporting their views with evidence, reasoning, and relevant texts or ideas.</p> <p>The unit also encourages skills in interpretation, reflection, and respectful discussion, encouraging pupils to engage thoughtfully with diverse viewpoints. Activities including extended writing and class debates provide opportunities to demonstrate these skills, enhancing students' critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and empathy when addressing questions about belief and morality.</p>

## Ellesmere Park High School KS4 Religious Studies Long Term Curriculum Plan

Year 10 Paper 1: World religions	Scholarly	Key ideas	Core knowledge and links to GCSE specification	Summative Assessments	Skills (including but not limited to)
<p><b>Christianity Beliefs and Teachings</b></p> <p>11 Lessons</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature of God: omnipotence, omnibenevolence, justice</li> </ul>	Students must develop a secure understanding of the key Christian beliefs outlined in the AQA specification (Component 1, Section A: Christianity, Beliefs and Teachings, 1.1). This includes the nature of God (1.1.1), such as His omnipotence, omnibenevolence, and justice, as well as the problem of evil and suffering. Students should be familiar with the Christian belief in the Trinity (1.1.2) and how these shapes Christian understanding of God. Core knowledge also includes Christian beliefs about creation (1.1.3), including	24 marks end of unit/section assessment	<p><b>The skills apply for each GCSE unit:</b> Students must develop the specific skills required to meet the demands of each exam-style question as outlined in the</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem of evil and suffering</li> <li>• The Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit</li> <li>• Creation beliefs and interpretations</li> <li>• Significance of Jesus: incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension</li> <li>• Salvation: law, grace, Spirit</li> <li>• Eschatology: judgement, heaven, hell, resurrection</li> <li>• </li> </ul>	<p>different interpretations of Genesis, and the role of the Word and Spirit. Pupils must understand the significance of Jesus Christ: incarnation and sonship (1.1.4), crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension (1.1.5), along with salvation through law, grace, and Spirit (1.1.6). They should also explore eschatological beliefs (1.1.7), including judgement, heaven, hell, and resurrection, and appreciate the diversity of Christian beliefs, especially between different denominations.</p>		<p>AQA assessment objectives. For 4-mark questions (AO1), students should practise giving accurate, concise explanations of beliefs and teachings using appropriate religious vocabulary. For 5-mark questions (AO1), they must be able to describe and explain religious beliefs or teachings in greater depth, often supported by reference to sources of wisdom and authority. For 12-mark questions (AO2), students need to construct well-structured, balanced evaluations of a statement, demonstrating reasoned arguments and considering different viewpoints. Across all question types, students should practise using precise language, developing clear lines of reasoning, and showing how beliefs and teachings influence the lives of believers. Skills in analysis, evaluation, comparison, and justification are essential to achieving success in this unit.</p>
<p><b>Christianity Practices</b> XX Lessons</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of worship: liturgical, non-liturgical, informal</li> <li>• Importance of prayer</li> <li>• Sacraments: baptism and Eucharist</li> <li>• Pilgrimage: Lourdes, Iona</li> <li>• Festivals: Christmas and Easter</li> <li>• Role of the Church locally and globally</li> <li>• Charitable work, mission, evangelism, responses to poverty and persecution</li> </ul>	<p>Students must develop a secure understanding of the key Christian practices outlined in the AQA specification (Component 1, Section A: Christianity – Practices, 1.2). This includes forms of worship (1.2.1), such as liturgical, non-liturgical, and informal worship, and the role of prayer in Christian life. Pupils should understand the significance of the sacraments (1.2.2), particularly baptism and the Eucharist, including their meaning and importance to believers. The role and significance of pilgrimage (1.2.3), with reference to places such as Lourdes and Iona, should be understood. Students should also know about Christian celebrations (1.2.4), including Christmas and Easter, and their meaning. Additionally, knowledge of the role of the Church in the local and worldwide community (1.2.5) is essential, including the work of charities and mission, evangelism, and response to poverty and persecution.</p>	<p>24 marks end of unit/section assessment</p>	
<p><b>Islam Beliefs and Teachings</b> XXX Lessons</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature of Allah: oneness (Tawhid), omnipotence, mercy, justice</li> <li>• Role of angels</li> <li>• Holy books: Qur'an</li> <li>• Prophets, especially Muhammad as the final prophet</li> <li>• Predestination (Al-Qadr)</li> <li>• Beliefs about life after death (Aakhirah), heaven,</li> </ul>	<p>Students must develop a secure understanding of the key Islamic beliefs outlined in the AQA specification (Component 2, Section A: Islam – Beliefs and Teachings, 2.1). This includes the nature of Allah (2.1.1), including His omnipotence, mercy, and justice, and the significance of Tawhid (the oneness of God). Pupils should understand the role and importance of angels (2.1.2), the significance of holy books including the Qur'an (2.1.3), and the role of prophets with special focus on Muhammad as the final prophet (2.1.4). Students must also learn about the concept of predestination (Al-Qadr) (2.1.5), the nature of Akhirah (life after death) (2.1.6), including heaven, hell, and the Day of Judgment, and appreciate the diversity of beliefs within Islam, such as Sunni and Shia perspectives.</p>	<p>24 marks end of unit/section assessment</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hell, Day of Judgment</li> <li>Sunni and Shia differences</li> </ul>			
<b>Islam Practices</b> XX Lessons		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five Pillars: Shahadah, Salah, Zakah, Sawm, Hajj</li> <li>Jihad and its interpretations</li> <li>Festivals: Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha</li> <li>Role of mosque and community worship</li> <li>Moral and religious duties shaping Muslim life</li> </ul>	Students must develop a secure understanding of the key Islamic practices outlined in the AQA specification (Component 2, Section A: Islam – Practices, 2.2). This includes the Five Pillars of Islam (2.2.1): Shahadah (declaration of faith), Salah (prayer), Zakah (charitable giving), Sawm (fasting during Ramadan), and Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah). Pupils should understand the significance and practical expressions of these pillars in the lives of Muslims. Knowledge of other important practices such as Jihad (2.2.2) and festivals including Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha (2.2.3) is also essential. Students should appreciate the role of the mosque and community worship (2.2.4), and the importance of religious and moral duties in shaping Muslim identity and ethics.	24 marks end of unit/section assessment	
<b>Thematic B: Relationships and Families</b> XX Lessons		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature and purpose of marriage, cohabitation, divorce</li> <li>Commitment and family roles</li> <li>Views on contraception and family planning</li> <li>Sexual relationships: sex before marriage, sanctity of marriage</li> <li>Gender roles and equality</li> <li>Attitudes toward same-sex relationships</li> <li>Influence of religious beliefs on family and societal roles</li> </ul>	Students must develop a secure understanding of the key teachings and beliefs about relationships and families as outlined in the AQA specification (Component 1, Section C: Theme B, Relationships and Families, 4.1). This includes the nature and purpose of marriage, cohabitation, and divorce (4.1.1), as well as the importance of commitment and the roles of parents and children within families (4.1.2). Pupils should understand different Christian views on contraception and family planning (4.1.3), and the importance of equality and responsibilities in relationships. Knowledge of teachings about sex before marriage and sexual relationships, including the sanctity of marriage and Christian sexual ethics (4.1.4), is essential. Students should also explore the impact of gender roles, the importance of families in society, and how religious beliefs shape attitudes towards same-sex relationships and gender equality (4.1.5).	24 marks end of unit/section assessment	

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Year 11 Paper 2: Thematic	Scholarly	Key ideas	Core knowledge and links to GCSE specification	Summative Assessments	Skills (including but not limited to)
<b>Thematic B: Religion and Life</b> XX Lessons		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Origins of the universe: religious vs scientific views</li> </ul>	Students must develop a comprehensive understanding of Christian and Muslim teachings about life and the environment as outlined in the AQA specification (Component 1, Section C: Theme A – Religion and Life, 4.2). This includes beliefs about the origins and value of human life, including creation and sanctity of	24 marks end of unit/section assessment	<b>The skills apply for each GCSE unit:</b> Students must develop the specific skills required to meet the demands of each

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewardship and environmental responsibility</li> <li>• Use and abuse of animals and natural resources</li> <li>• Sanctity of life and quality of life</li> <li>• Abortion: religious teachings and ethical debate</li> <li>• Euthanasia: types, religious responses, moral dilemmas</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>life. Pupils should understand attitudes towards abortion and euthanasia, and the ethical debates surrounding these issues. Knowledge of environmental responsibility, stewardship, and the use of natural resources is essential. Students should also learn about animal rights and how religious teachings guide treatment of the environment and living beings.</p>		<p>exam-style question as outlined in the AQA assessment objectives. For 4-mark questions (AO1), students should practise giving accurate, concise explanations of beliefs and teachings using appropriate religious vocabulary. For 5-mark questions (AO1), they must be able to describe and explain religious beliefs or teachings in greater depth, often supported by reference to sources of wisdom and authority. For 12-mark questions (AO2), students need to construct well-structured, balanced evaluations of a statement, demonstrating reasoned arguments and considering different viewpoints. Across all question types, students should practise using precise language, developing clear lines of reasoning, and showing how beliefs and teachings influence the lives of believers. Skills in analysis, evaluation, comparison, and justification are essential to achieving success in this unit.</p>
<p><b>Thematic D: Religion, Peace and Conflict</b> XX Lessons</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning and significance of peace, justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation</li> <li>• Causes of war: greed, self-defence, retaliation</li> <li>• Just War theory and conditions</li> <li>• Holy war and religious attitudes towards violence</li> <li>• Pacifism and non-violent protest</li> <li>• Terrorism and religious condemnation of it</li> <li>• Weapons of mass destruction: moral and religious arguments</li> <li>• The role of religion in peace-making and conflict resolution</li> </ul>	<p>Students must develop a secure understanding of key teachings about peace, conflict, and forgiveness as outlined in the AQA specification (Component 1, Section C: Theme D – Religion, Peace and Conflict, 4.4). This includes Christian and Muslim beliefs about peace and violence, including the importance of reconciliation and forgiveness. Pupils should understand different attitudes towards war, including just war theory and pacifism. Knowledge of the causes of war and the use of weapons of mass destruction is essential. Students must explore the role of religion in promoting peace and conflict resolution, including the work of individuals and organisations. Finally, students should be familiar with religious teachings on terrorism and the ethical issues involved.</p>	<p>24 marks end of unit/section assessment</p>	
<p><b>Thematic Studies E: Crime and Punishment</b> XX Lessons</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Causes of crime: poverty, upbringing, addiction, mental illness</li> <li>• Types of crime: hate crime, theft, murder</li> <li>• Aims of punishment:</li> </ul>	<p>Students must develop a thorough understanding of Christian and Muslim teachings on crime, justice, and punishment as outlined in the AQA specification (Component 1, Section C: Theme E – Crime and Punishment, 4.5). This includes the reasons for crime and different types of crime, such as theft and murder. Pupils should know religious views on law-breaking, justice, and the purpose of punishment, including deterrence, retribution, reform, and protection. Knowledge of key concepts such as forgiveness, the treatment of criminals, and attitudes towards the death penalty is essential. Students should also understand the role of religious teachings on forgiveness and restorative justice.</p>	<p>24 marks end of unit/section assessment</p>	

		<p>retribution, deterrence, reformation, protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christian and Muslim attitudes to justice and punishment</li> <li>• Forgiveness and the importance of repentance</li> <li>• Treatment of criminals: prison, corporal punishment, community service</li> <li>• Death penalty: religious and ethical arguments for and against</li> <li>• Restorative justice and reformatory approaches</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Consolidation of learning/Exam preparation</b></p> <p>XX Lessons</p>			<p>TBC – to be confirmed informed by priorities post mock results, focus on skills and content determined at this stage.</p>		