

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES & WORLDVIEWS

## Our vision:

Our world view shapes the way we experience life and interact and relate to others. Consequently, Religious Education is important to working and living in a multi-faith and multi-cultural world, but it is also a vital way to understand ourselves. By experiencing Religious Education, your child will enter into a rich discourse about the religious and non-religious traditions that have shaped Great Britain and the world.

By focusing on world views – both secular and religious – and by recognizing that even within a religious such as Christianity there are differences between individuals who desire themselves as Christian, we hope to show children the complexity and variety of world views and how they relate to each other. With a. Account on their sponsors knowledge and experience, we hope to give children the opportunity to make sense of their own place in the world.

All children have access to RE education up to the age of 18 at Woldgate School. This begins in Years 7 to 9 with an hour of Religious Education each week for all children and, when moving into Upper School, children are able to choose either the full GCSE course or the short course as part of the options process.

If you wish to withdraw your child from Religious Education then you have the right to do so, however we would ask that you contact the school through your child's Care and Achievement Coordinator so that we can discuss this decision with you carefully and satisfy ourselves together that this is the correct decision for your child.

Key aspects of the national curriculum for RE are covered as part of our STARS programme, which is delivered in tutor time.

**Everything you do in Religious Education should be worthy of great merit, character, and value.**

Of great merit:

**PHILOSOPHICAL**

The key to an effective Religious Education curriculum is not only learning new ideas and world views but seeing how these compare, contrast, and coexist.

Consequently, while children will continue to learn about different faiths through their time at Woldgate, they do so with a thematic approach. For example when studying the Unit Sacred Earth in Year 7, pupils will study in depth aspects of Sikh teaching while contrasting and comparing

	<p>these to Christian and other viewpoints – including non-religious perspectives.</p> <p>Becoming philosophical means that our pupils and students are able to take a considered and informed view of key issues.</p>
<p><b>Of great character:</b> <b>WISE</b></p>	<p>When pupils study RE, they do so 'from a position'. This position is their 'viewpoint' or perspective on the world, which is influenced by, for example, their values, prior experiences and own sense of identity. Through the curriculum, pupils will build 'personal knowledge', which includes an awareness of the assumptions that they bring to discussions concerning religious and non-religious traditions.</p> <p>We prompt pupils to reflect on how their knowledge changes their perspective as well as, conversely, help to consider their perspective changes they way they view the world.</p>
<p><b>Of great value:</b> <b>TOLERANT</b></p>	<p>As part of our school's commitment to the teaching of fundamental British values, through RE pupils learn further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling them to acquire an appreciation of (and respect for) their own and other cultures. The structure of the RE curriculum supports this by bringing the views of different faiths together when considering key issues affecting society.</p> <p>In addition, as all pupils have the opportunity to complete the Archbishop of York's Young Leaders Award as part of their Year 9 curriculum, pupils also work towards the goals of the citizenship programmers of study to reflect on voluntary groups in society, and the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities.</p>

## Our teaching:

The delivery of Religious Education at Woldgate recognises the main types of knowledge they will learn in the subject.

Firstly, **'substantive' knowledge**. This includes knowledge about various religious and non-religious traditions. This will include key facts, religious and non-religious theorist and figures, and traditions.

Secondly, **'ways of knowing'**: pupils learn 'how to know' about religion and non-religion both in terms of the methods and processes but also how to have conversations and debates about these issues.

Finally, **'personal knowledge'**: pupils build an awareness of their own viewpoint, how it affects their perspective and how it can change with experience and knowledge.

## **Substantive knowledge in RE**

**The substantive knowledge of RE is the 'substance' of religious and non-religious traditions that pupils study in the curriculum. It includes:**

- knowledge about artefacts and texts associated with different religious and non-religious traditions
- different ways that people express religion and non-religion in their lives
- word and concepts that relate to religious and non-religious traditions, such as 'dharma', 'incarnation', 'ritual', 'authority', 'prayer', 'sacred', 'anatta' and 'moksha'

This knowledge can further be discussed in terms of its breadth and specificity.

- Some concepts are universal and are common to both religious and non-religious experience. This includes concepts such as "interpretation" or "ethics."
- Some concepts have wider significance and are common to multiple forms of religious experience. This includes concepts like "afterlife" and "sacrifice"
- Elsewhere, other concepts are highly specific to a religious tradition: such as the Christian notion of "incarnation."

Consequently, as well as covering a broad range of religious traditions, we aim to achieve depth in key universal concepts. For instance, concepts like 'forgiveness' and 'impermanence' are learned better on knowledge of a range of examples.

As discussed in our assessment section, regular low-stakes testing and careful matching of substantive knowledge to each topic helps children to understand these concepts and use them insightfully over time. For broader terms, they will appear through the course in different ways to build a wider understanding.

The knowledge behind all religious traditions is vast and so choices have to be made when looking at the content to teach. Pupils receive many of their values, opinions and ideas from their home environments and communities. However, they will base their knowledge about religion and non-religion to a considerable degree on the representations they learn in the curriculum. Consequently, as teachers we consider carefully the content we choose to deliver as the content they learn about a religion they have not personally experienced will form the basis of a "representation" of that religion that they carry with them into their adult lives.

One way we do this is to avoid generalisations (for example, 'Christians believe...' or 'Islam is...'). This is important because in practice, religious traditions are open to fluidity, change and dynamism. They are "alive." It is therefore important that pupils do not simply learn stereotypes and poor generalisations.

## **'Ways of knowing' in RE**

There are two main forms of 'ways of knowing' that pupils can learn in the curriculum:

Knowledge of methods and processes and other tools of scholarship that are used to study and make sense of global and historical religion and non-religion

At Woldgate, pupils learn a range of tools and methods that include:

- tools for interpreting texts
- tools for exploring customs, habits and ways of living
- archaeological procedures
- methods in historical reconstruction
- participant observation
- in-depth interviews
- analysis of relevant data

For example, a study of representations in the Old Testament will give a different perspective on Christian attitudes to forgiveness than, for example, a telephone interview with a sample of modern Christians. At Woldgate we ensure that a range of methods of learning are used to explore the ideas in lessons.

Knowledge of the types of conversation that academic communities have about religion and non-religion

Pupils and teachers will discuss religion and non-religion in the RE classroom. Our teachers reflect carefully on how they intend to frame their classroom discussions about religion.

Pupils will learn different types of conversation and debate (and the assumptions and controversies that can be found within them) about religion and non-religion. It involves understanding that while some statements may be inaccurate or untrue, there is not me easily in such debates a universal truth or "answer." This is because there is no absolutely neutral vantage point from which to explore religion.

Learning about 'ways of knowing' enables pupils to think about, to question and critique whose perspective is being heard through the representations of traditions, and why.

## **'Personal knowledge' in RE**

RE is a place in the curriculum where there are opportunities for pupils to consider their own personal backgrounds and influences. At Woldgate this background knowledge is valuable, and it allows pupils to use RE uses it as a basis for personal reflection.

As well as bringing their personal knowledge to the subject, the subject also has the power to build the personal knowledge children have through lesson activities. So, for example, learning about concepts such as 'forgiveness' in Christian traditions or 'sewa' ('selfless service') in Sikh traditions, together with rich detail about how they form parts of Christian and Sikh ways of life, provides opportunities for our pupils to see how these concepts may relate to their own lives. Their personal views may therefore shift or differ subtly through study of new topics.

As discussed within our assessment section, we ask pupils to reflect on their personal viewpoints throughout their studies.

## **Our curriculum.**

Our curriculum follows the East Riding recommended syllabus as it is contextualised for our local demographic but because we also appreciate and admire the enquiry-based model it is based upon.

The enquiry model provides for a sequence of learning, so that pupils build upon their prior knowledge and understanding to ensure progression. Where RE works well, pupils are given carefully structured opportunities to find out for themselves, making their own connections and drawing their own conclusions.

This approach is built on the following sequence:

### **Ask questions**

- Engage pupils from the outset in 'big questions' to provide a context for carrying out an investigation to answer their own questions, drawing on previous learning

### **Investigate**

- Promote questioning and discussion about key religious concepts
- Use a multidisciplinary approach to deepen learning and extend pupils' investigations into religion and other worldviews, looking through different lenses • dig deeper into pupils' questions

### **Interpret and analyse**

- Provide first-hand experience
- Give access to examples of living religious practice and high-quality resources to stimulate pupils' learning

### **Reflect and respond**

- Integrate opportunities for reflection throughout the process of enquiry, enabling them to deepen their knowledge and understanding

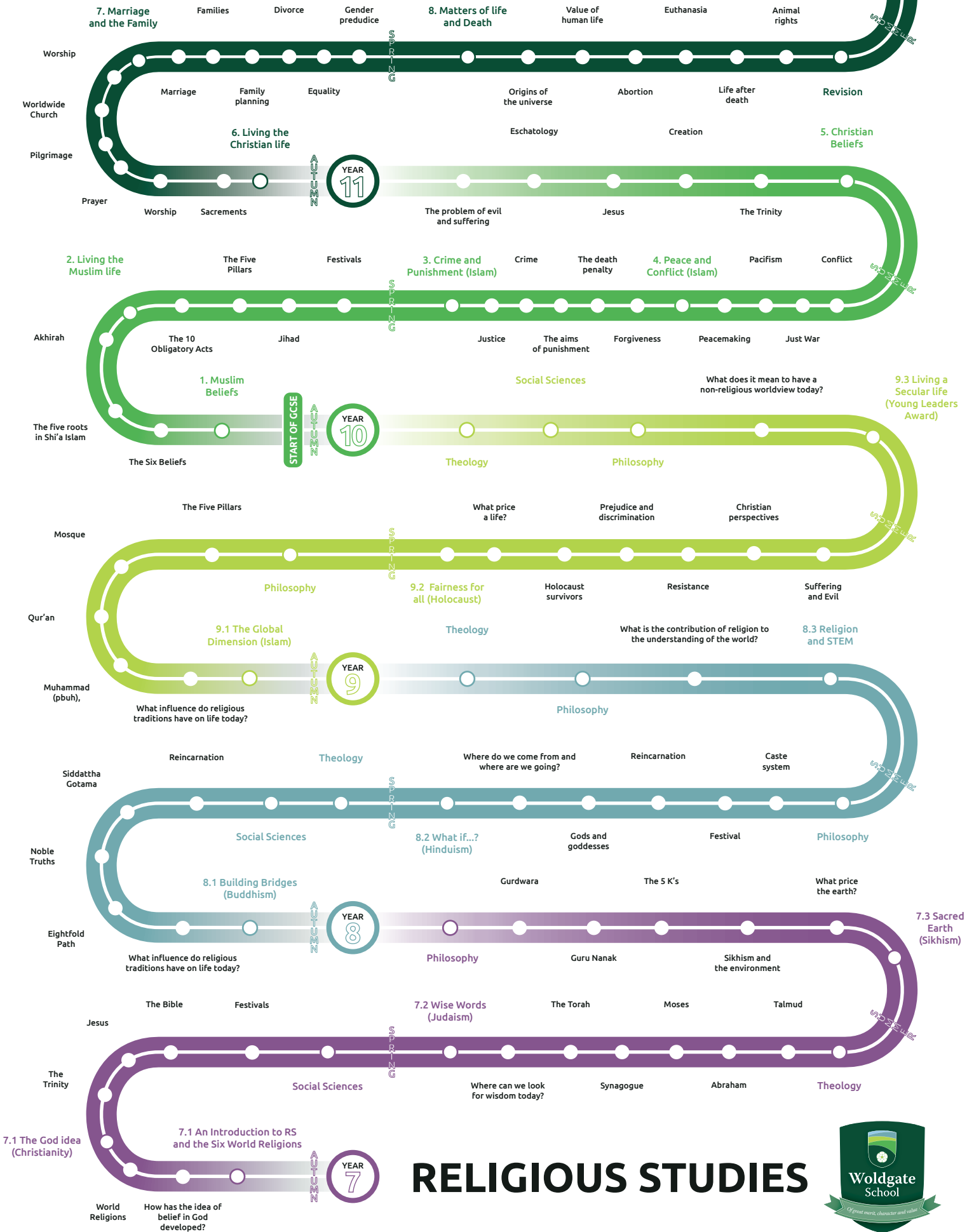
### **Evaluate and review**

- Encourage pupils to develop well-founded reasons and justify their conclusions or views

Through this cycle, pupils will cover a range of thematic units from the God Idea in Year 7 to "Living a Secular Life" in Year 9 with key substantive information about world faiths delivered through these wider ideas and themes.



**GCSE EXAMINATIONS**



**RELIGIOUS STUDIES**



## **How is our curriculum sequenced:**

Sequencing of the curriculum involves identifying links that exist even between very different areas of substantive content. For example, vocabulary and concepts such as 'creation story', 'creation myth' and 'foundation myth' can connect Christian origin narratives with shruti in Hindu traditions, concepts of the patriarchs in Jewish traditions and how all these concepts play out in different people's lives. As a result, the curriculum at Woldgate is sequenced so that it is thematic with wider concepts such as creation, religion and science, and the earth used to explore the interplay between faiths. For each unit, one faith because a key focus of allow 8n depth teaching of its traditions and background but at the hear of that is the way it is explored alongside other beliefs.

Well sequenced curriculums are structured to help pupils integrate new knowledge into their existing knowledge and make enduring connections between content. Consequently, units are planned so that key concepts are returned to regulatory to help them be learned and understood.

## **Assessment**

Pupils' readiness for certain tasks will depend on whether they have the knowledge to be able to succeed at the task. At Woldgate we teach pupils subject-specific vocabulary before they encounter it in content with key terms identified at the start of each unit. This is secured through frequent low stakes testing. Our curriculum is sequenced so that crucial knowledge, such as particular concepts, vocabulary and other components of knowledge, are revisited regularly to retain crucial knowledge over time.

### **Broadly speaking, our assessment therefore falls into two categories:**

**Formative assessment and retrieval practice.** Regular assessment to secure, revisit, and test understanding to correct misconceptions and ensure siren have the knowledge they need to succeed.

**Summative assessment** such as an end-of-topic assessment to sample pupils' knowledge from a topic. These assessments attempt to determine how much of the curriculum pupils know and remember. This can be done by sampling from the knowledge that teachers expect pupils to retain through the curriculum journey.

Consequently, instances of summative assessment take place at sufficiently long intervals at the end of each six-week unit, to allow time for the RE curriculum to be taught and learned. In these longer assessments, teachers also assess 'ways of knowing' through the ways that pupils use substantive content and concepts to respond to a question. These assessments may take different forms, such as written tasks or presentations. They will usually, however, include the opportunity for pupils to rede let on their personal knowledge and how it has changed through study of the unit. This may mean discussing the assumptions that they brought to the study of a particular topic or how their own vantage point changed as a result of new content that they have learned.

All pupils complete a baseline assessment at the start of Year 7 to assess their skills, understanding and knowledge of the subject. Throughout Key Stage 3, pupils complete an assessed piece of work at the end of each key topic. This is marked and pupils are given feedback and targets to respond to, by using their purple pens. Throughout lessons there are also opportunities for peer marking and for pupils to set their own targets to help them progress further in their work. Exercise books are marked in depth every six lessons.

### **How families can support:**

Encouraging pupils to be positive about their learning and lessons and discussing the issues and topics covered in class will be useful. It is also helpful to be aware of key events and issues in the world. Watching documentaries, the news and also reading a newspaper will make pupils understand of what is happening in society. Supporting pupils with homework tasks and looking through their exercise book work will also support and guide pupils.