

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics at Key Stage 3 at Cottenham Village College Religion, Philosophy and Ethics is a truly unique subject within the secondary curriculum. It gives students the opportunity to explore some of the most challenging ideas of human history. It explores some of the most difficult ethical issues that humanity has ever faced. It looks at the past and explores how beliefs have shaped the world that we live in now. It looks at the future and considers how all this might influence what will happen next for humanity. In short, it requires students to engage with high level, critical thinking. There are few places in the secondary curriculum, where students are given the freedom to explore issues in such a way. They can challenge perspectives, understand how others view their world differently, track how beliefs have changed over time and understand how religion is viewed from the perspective of a religious believer and those who do not believe. The subject also supports students in developing their opinions in relation to ethical issues that are having an impact on society now. In the years to come, these will be the issues that young people are voting on. Religion, Philosophy and Ethics provides students with a balanced understanding of the most important questions that face modern society. **At Cottenham VC we routinely use a range of strategies to formatively assess and give feedback to students about their progress. In Religion, Philosophy and Ethics these strategies include:** Regular knowledge tests, end of top assessments for each topic (these range for written essay responses and knowledge-based quizzes), feedback lessons for students to self-evaluate their work, mid-year and end-of-year cumulative tests.

Autumn Term	Topic 1 – Are humans responsible for all the suffering and evil in the world?	Topic 2 – Judaism - What does it mean to be ‘chosen’ by God?
Key subject knowledge:	This unit considers the religious and non-religious explanations for the suffering and evil that exist in the world. The unit will cover the following key information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How we define good, suffering and evil. - How Christianity explains the existence of suffering and evil in a world designed by an all-powerful, all-knowing and all-loving God. - The concept of free will and its consequences. - The problem of evil argument and Christian responses to this. 	This unit tells the story of how Judaism became a major world faith and helps students to understand the key aspects of how Jewish people relate to their God. The unit will focus on the Jewish concept of a ‘chosen people’ and will explore four key areas that relate to this (covenant, being tested by God, being committed to God and being rewarded by God).
Key disciplinary knowledge:	Theology– the study of religious beliefs in relation to a modern issue. Moral Philosophy – How good is the reasoning of the arguments that students are studying?	Theology, Religious History, and interpretations.
Summative Assessment	Written Essay – Are humans responsible for all the suffering and evil in the world?	Written essay response to the enquiry question.
How does this unit prepare students for future study?	The topic provides students with an understanding of Christian beliefs regarding God, Good, evil and suffering. It builds on their knowledge regarding Christian creation learnt in year 7 and considers how many people use suffering and evil to challenge the existence of God. The unit also encourages students to develop their ability to apply philosophical arguments and reasoning to theological beliefs and concepts. This is a skill that is built on throughout year 8 and 9.	This topic introduces students to the origins of Judaism and concept of Abrahamic faiths. This provides students with a solid foundation that they will develop further in the remaining topics in year 8. The next topic uses Christian and Jewish stories to consider the overarching enquiry question. The fourth topic explores Christianity and how it differs from Judaism. The final topic of the year explores the life of Muhammad and the development of Islam. By the end of year 8 students will have learnt about all three Abrahamic faiths. This unit gives them a vital foundation to support their understanding of this. They also need this unit to access the units taught in year 9.

Spring Term	Topic 3 – To what extent does religion encourage people to be violent?	Topic 4 – Christianity – What does it mean to be ‘saved’ by God?
Key subject knowledge:	This unit encourages students to consider the impact that religion can have in the modern world, specifically in relation to violence. Students build on the last two topics by exploring the role that religious stories can have in terms of encouraging/discouraging violence. The unit also covers religious teachings relating to peace and pacifism and encourages students to consider if there are non-religious factors that also contribute to the violence we see in modern society.	In this unit students will learn about the life of Jesus and how this led to a major split between Judaism and Christianity. It will also emphasise how Christianity differs from Judaism theologically. By looking at many of the shared stories through a Christian lens, students will be encouraged to consider what it means to be saved by God and why Christians believe people need to be saved by God.
Key disciplinary knowledge:	Theology – learning about religious beliefs and attitudes towards peace and violence Philosophy – learning about philosophers and their views regarding society, peace and violence.	Theology – the history, beliefs and practices of Christianity.
Summative Assessment Strategies	Written essay - To what extent does religion encourage people to be violent?	Written essay - Christianity – What does it mean to be ‘saved’ by God?
How does this unit prepare students for future study?	This unit develops student’s ability to evaluate the influence and impact of religion in relation to a modern world issue. It also allows students to develop their ability to evaluate claims made about religion and its impact in modern society. This is returned to in year 9 during the medical ethics unit and the prejudice and discrimination unit.	This unit adds to students existing knowledge of the Abrahamic faiths. It also provides them with foundational knowledge of Christianity, which is returned to at various points in year 9. It is also one of the two religions studied at a greater depth at GCSE.

Summer Term	Topic 5 – History of Belief Part 5 - The life of Muhammad
Key subject knowledge:	In this unit students will learn about the emergence and development of Islam in 7 th century Arabia. They will develop an understanding of the system of clans and tribes that existed at the time and how the Muhammad's faith challenged this and changed the society over time. The five pillars will act as a driving force for understanding these changes.
Key disciplinary knowledge:	Theology – the history, beliefs and practices of Islam.
Summative Assessment Strategies	Written essay regarding the impact of the five pillars on Arabian society.
How does this unit prepare students for future study?	This unit adds to students existing knowledge of the Abrahamic faiths. It also provides them with foundational knowledge of Islam, which is returned to at various points in year 9. It is also one of the two religions studied at a greater depth at GCSE.