

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 – How confident are you in your worldview?	Topic 2 – What is the most helpful approach for people when making medical ethical decisions?
Key subject knowledge:	<p>This unit explores how student’s individual worldviews impact the way that they respond to various aspects of religious and non-religious experiences. The focus is on how confident the students are in their views in relation to these topics. The topics covered in the unit include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is real? Is what we experiencing actually the real world or something else? Are we real? - Religious experiences – Are they possible? How else might these be explained? - Is God real? - Is there life after death? 	<p>The unit explores medical ethics issues through different lenses and worldviews. Through the topic students will begin to understand the complexity of ‘the toolbox’ that different groups of people may use when making difficult medical ethics decisions. Students will apply the thinking of St. Thomas Aquinas, Joseph Fletcher and holy scriptures amongst many others to modern medical ethics scenarios.</p>
Key disciplinary knowledge:	Moral philosophy, Theology and reasoning	Moral philosophy, Theology and reasoning.
Summative Assessment	Written Essay – Students respond to the four key areas they have studied in the unit.	Written Essay – students write a response to the question – What is the most helpful approach for people when making medical ethical decisions?
How does this unit prepare students for future study?	<p>This topic requires the students to consider how confident their views about fundamentally important questions in the study of RPE. This requires the revision of some key topics from year 7 and 8 (Belief in God, Abrahamic faiths). Further to this, it also supports students in developing their understanding of their own worldview/lens. This allows them to respond to key RPE questions in greater depth and allows them to understand how their responses have been formed. It also allows them to have a better understanding of why other people may view these topics differently.</p>	<p>The topic supports students in further developing their reasoning skills. It also allows them to consider the impact of religion in the modern world. Giving students the opportunity to consider these concepts is important, as they will regularly be considering the impact of religion (and its reasoning) in the modern world throughout the remaining topics in year 9. Those who select the GCSE will also return to parts of the medical ethics unit in ‘Theme B – Religion and Life’.</p>

Spring Term	Topic 3 – History of Belief Part 5 – When is a religion not a religion?	Topic 4 – Prejudice and discrimination
Key subject knowledge:	In this unit students will explore examples of new age religious movements and consider what exactly determines if something is a religion or not. They will look at spiritual movements, parody religions, potential cults and many others in the unit. They will also consider the work of writers such as Ninian Smart, to help them consider what factors make something a religion.	In this unit students will explore the impact that prejudice and discrimination has had on the world today and throughout history. They will cover a range of different types of prejudice and discrimination to enable them to fully understand the impact it has on societies around the world. They will also consider how different religions, theologians, writers and philosophers have responded to issues of prejudice and discrimination.
Key disciplinary knowledge:	Theology and reasoning.	Theology, Philosophy and reasoning.
Summative Assessment Strategies	Written work – Students select an example of a faith they have studied and use Ninian Smart’s criteria to help them explain if it is a religion or not.	Written essay response.
How does this unit prepare students for future study?	This unit allows students to return to some of the ideas that they were covering in the ‘What is Religion’ unit in year 7. With a clear foundation of the different types of religious understanding gained in years 7 and 8, students can critically engage in the writing of Ninian Smart. New and emerging religions are complex and at times controversial. This unit strengthens student’s ability to identify what a ‘real’ religion is. In turn, it also allows students to understand what shouldn’t be considered a religion and why this might be dangerous in many cases. This supports students in reflecting on the authority of religious scripture in future topics. It also links to what students’ study in their first CoreRE session in year 10.	This unit gives students another chance to consider the impact of religion in the modern world. It also allows students to consider the perspectives around many issues that are prevalent in the societies around them. Many of the ideas surrounding judgement and behaviour build on what they have learnt in the previous unit (life after death). Those who take the GCSE will also return to ideas relating to prejudice and discrimination in several of the GCSE topics. It will also be useful foundational knowledge for students when they complete the first and third CoreRE sessions.