

Strategic Overview of Curriculum

Religious Studies

Curriculum Intent

At Aylesford School, the Religious Studies (RS) curriculum offers a comprehensive and inclusive exploration of religion, belief, and worldviews. It is designed to equip students with knowledge, critical thinking skills, and empathy, preparing them to thrive in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. By fostering respect for differences and encouraging curiosity about global perspectives, the curriculum aims to nurture students who are ready to engage meaningfully with modern society.

The RS program invites students to explore profound questions about existence, morality, and the meaning of life. It provides a safe space for them to reflect on their own beliefs while considering the perspectives of others. Through the study of both religious and non-religious worldviews, students are encouraged to develop thoughtful and informed responses to life's fundamental questions.

At its core, the RS curriculum is guided by several key aims. It seeks to provide students with a thorough understanding of major religious traditions in the UK and across the globe, as well as significant non-religious perspectives such as Humanism. The program promotes critical thinking by encouraging students to evaluate and analyse diverse beliefs, practices, and ethical dilemmas with thoughtfulness and respect. Additionally, it supports personal growth by fostering self-awareness, empathy, and reflection, helping students explore and express their own values and identities. Finally, the curriculum enhances social and cultural awareness by examining how religion and belief shape culture, history, and communities, preparing students to navigate and contribute confidently to a pluralistic society.

Year 7 Religious Studies Curriculum

Religion and Worldviews: year 7

This year, you will investigate how beliefs and values shape people's lives, explore the story and teachings of Jesus, and discover different ways people express spirituality and meaning.



Subject Intent	Year 7 Religion and Worldviews introduces students to beliefs, values and worldviews that shape people's lives. Students explore questions about morality, identity, spirituality and the life of Jesus whilst developing curiosity, respect and open-mindedness. The curriculum builds on Key Stage 2 learning and develops the knowledge and skills needed for future study in Religious Studies.				
Rationale	Beginning with the question of whether religion helps people to be good, students establish a foundation in ethics, beliefs and worldviews. They then explore the life and teachings of Jesus before moving into philosophical questions about spirituality, identity and human purpose. This sequence develops theological, philosophical and ethical thinking whilst strengthening literacy, discussion and critical thinking skills.				
	WHAT? Explore morality and ethical behaviour through religious teachings; investigate the historical Jesus and his influence; examine spirituality, human identity and beliefs about the soul. HOW? Students engage with stories, sacred texts, discussion, debate, independent enquiry, retrieval activities and extended writing tasks. WHY? These topics help students understand themselves, others and the diverse world around them whilst developing the knowledge and skills needed for KS4 Religious Studies and life in modern Britain.				
Topics					
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Does religion help you to be good?	Does religion help you to be good?	What was so radical about Jesus?	What was so radical about Jesus?	How can we express the spiritual?	How can we express the spiritual?
Assessment					
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Baseline key words and concepts	How does Sikhi help us live better?	Mid Year Assessment term 1-3 knowledge and application	The life of Jesus	The divine	End of Year formative assessment
Homework					
1. Week 1: Key word learning 2. Week 3: Creative / Video learning 3. Week 5 : Seneca / Revision homework					

Religious Studies References

Key Stage 2 Kent Agreed Syllabus

Building on the Kent Agreed Syllabus at Key Stage 2, students move from learning about religious beliefs, stories, celebrations and practices to exploring how religion and worldviews influence people's choices, values and identity.

Pupils draw on their prior knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions whilst developing a deeper understanding of morality, spirituality and the life and teachings of Jesus.

Key Stage 3 Kent Agreed Syllabus

Year 7 lays the foundations for the analytical and evaluative thinking developed throughout Key Stage 3. By strengthening skills of enquiry, interpretation, explanation and reflection, students are prepared for the deeper philosophical and ethical discussions encountered in Years 8 and 9 Religious Studies.

KS4 GCSE : AQA Religious Studies 8061

The Year 7 curriculum also introduces key concepts that are revisited throughout Key Stage 4, including morality, authority, identity, belief, human purpose and the influence of religion on individuals and communities.

As a result, students develop both the substantive knowledge and disciplinary understanding needed for successful progression to GCSE Religious Studies and beyond.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-8062/specification>

KS5 A' level : AQA Sociology

The Year 7 Religion and Worldviews curriculum provides an important foundation for future study in Sociology. Through the exploration of beliefs, values, morality, identity and the influence of religion on individuals and communities, students begin to develop the disciplinary skills needed to understand human behaviour and society.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-level/sociology-7191/specification>

Further reading and national bodies/ homework log in's

<https://natre.org.uk/resources/>

<https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/>

Year 8 Religious Studies Curriculum

Religion and Worldviews: Year 8

In Year 8, you will explore big questions about God, happiness and justice.
You will investigate religious and non-religious worldviews, analyse different arguments and develop your critical thinking skills.

Throughout Year 8 You Will Develop

-  Critical Thinking
-  Philosophical Enquiry
-  Evidence-Based Reasoning
-  Discussion and Debate
-  Analytical Writing
-  Respect and Empathy
-  Global Awareness

6

How can we play our part in a Just Society? (Over 2 terms)

- What do we mean by the key terms Racism, Discrimination, Prejudice and Justice?
- How has History impacted our views on Racism?
- Detailed case studies on anti racism campaigners
- What can we learn from Mpho Tutu?
- How can we contribute to a Just society?

5

EQUALITY

Religious Studies develops skills valued in careers such as law, teaching, journalism, healthcare, social work, public services and business.

4

Should happiness be the purpose of life? (Over 2 terms)

- What is happiness?
- Does following religious rules make us happy?
- Is unhappiness the purpose of Buddhism?
- How is happiness understood in the secular world?
- Should happiness be our focus in life?



Resilience



Respect

 **KS2 → KS3 Religious Studies**

Building on your learning about religions, beliefs and values, you will investigate different worldviews and explore big questions about life, meaning and purpose.

3

Do we need to prove the existence of God? (Over 2 terms)

- What do we mean by the term God?
- Why is Dawkins Significant?
- Are Religion and Science in Conflict?
- What do we mean by the problem of evil?
- Can we ultimately prove God existence?



Curiosity

2



1



Openminded

RESPECT SELF-DISCIPLINE
MOTIVATION RESILIENCE
INTEGRITY **COURAGE**
OPEN-MINDEDNESS
CONFIDENCE
COMPASSION CURIOSITY

Links Across the Curriculum

-  **Science** - Exploring evolution, the Big Bang, evidence and explanations of the universe.
-  **History** - Investigating influential thinkers, religious traditions and campaigns for justice.
-  **English** - Developing debate, discussion, interpretation and analytical writing skills.
-  **Geography** - Considering global issues such as poverty, inequality, human rights and community.

**COURAGE
CONFIDENCE
CHARACTER**

Subject Intent	Year 8 Religion and Worldviews develops students' understanding of philosophy, ethics and worldviews through the exploration of questions about God, happiness and justice. Students investigate religious and non-religious responses to life's big questions whilst developing critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning and respect for different perspectives. The curriculum builds on Year 7 learning and prepares students for the more complex ethical and philosophical issues studied in Year 9 and GCSE Religious Studies.				
Rationale	Students begin by exploring arguments for and against the existence of God, including the relationship between religion and science. They then examine different religious and secular understandings of happiness, with a particular focus on Buddhist teachings. Finally, students investigate issues of racism, discrimination and justice, considering how individuals can contribute to a fairer society. This sequence develops students' ability to analyse arguments, evaluate evidence and apply religious teachings to contemporary issues.				
	WHAT? Explore arguments about the existence of God, investigate religious and secular understandings of happiness, and examine issues of justice, discrimination and social responsibility. HOW? Students engage with philosophical arguments, religious teachings, contemporary case studies, discussion and debate, source analysis, retrieval activities, independent enquiry and extended writing. WHY? These topics help students develop critical thinking skills, understand diverse beliefs and worldviews, and apply ethical reasoning to real-world issues. They provide important foundations for GCSE Religious Studies and responsible citizenship in modern Britain.				
Topics					
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Do we need to prove the existence of God?	Do we need to prove the existence of God?	Should Happiness Be the Purpose of Life?	Should Happiness Be the Purpose of Life?	How Can We Play Our Part in a Just Society?	How Can We Play Our Part in a Just Society?
Assessment					
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Baseline Key Words and Concepts	Assessment: Can We Prove God Exists?	Mid Year Assessment term 1-3 knowledge and application	Should Happiness Be the Purpose of Life?	Justice and Equality	End of Year Assessment
Homework 1. Week 1: Key word learning 2. Week 3: Creative / Video learning 3. Week 5 : Seneca / Revision homework					

Religious Studies References

Key Stage 2 Kent Agreed Syllabus -

Building on the foundations established through the Kent Agreed Syllabus and Year 7 learning, students develop a more analytical approach to Religion and Worldviews. They explore philosophical questions about the existence of God, the origins of the universe, happiness, suffering and human purpose.

Students learn to compare religious and non-religious perspectives, evaluate evidence and consider how beliefs influence people's lives.

Key Stage 3 Kent Agreed Syllabus

Year 8 develops the knowledge and disciplinary skills outlined in the Kent Agreed Syllabus by moving beyond describing beliefs to analysing, questioning and evaluating different religious and non-religious viewpoints.

Students are encouraged to ask thoughtful questions, consider alternative perspectives and support their ideas with clear reasoning.

By developing these skills of enquiry, interpretation and evaluation, Year 8 helps students become more confident and independent learners. This prepares them for the increasingly complex ethical and philosophical discussions encountered in Year 9 and provides a strong foundation for the analytical and evaluative demands of GCSE Religious Studies.

KS4 GCSE : AQA Religious Studies 8061

Year 8 develops the knowledge and disciplinary skills that underpin success at GCSE Religious Studies. Through the study of philosophical and ethical questions such as the existence of God, creation, happiness, suffering and human purpose, students learn to analyse different religious and non-religious viewpoints and consider the evidence used to support them.

Students strengthen their ability to interpret sources of wisdom and authority, explain beliefs and practices, and construct reasoned arguments.

These skills are essential for GCSE, where students must analyse religious teachings, evaluate contrasting viewpoints and justify their own judgements. The concepts explored in Year 8 also provide important foundations for GCSE topics including Religion and Life, beliefs about creation, human responsibility and the nature of religious belief.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-8062/specification>

KS5 A' level : AQA Sociology

Year 8 introduces students to important questions about belief, identity, values, happiness and human behaviour. Through exploring different viewpoints and evaluating evidence, students develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, discussion and reasoned judgement. These skills are essential for A Level Sociology, where students investigate how beliefs, values and social influences shape individuals and society. The study of different perspectives in Year 8 also provides a foundation for understanding

sociological theories, culture, identity and social behaviour at Key Stage 5. helps prepare students for later study of topics such as families, education, culture, inequality and social change at A Level.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-level/sociology-7191/specification>

Further reading and national bodies/ homework log in's

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<https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/>

Year 9 Religious studies Curriculum

Religion and Worldviews: Year 9

In year 9 we will explore big questions such as:

What makes a family? How should we care for the world? Can war ever be justified?

Through Christian, Buddhist and non-religious perspectives, we will develop our understanding of different beliefs while building skills in explanation, analysis and evaluation.

Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Philosophical Enquiry
- Ethical Reasoning
- Evidence Analysis
- Discussion and Debate

AQA

Theme A



Driving Question: What responsibilities do we have towards those we love?

- **Explore** different family structures and relationships.
- **Investigate** religious and non-religious views on marriage.
- **Examine** attitudes towards divorce, remarriage and cohabitation.
- **Evaluate** how families support individuals and society.



Openminded

Religious Studies develops skills valued in careers such as law, teaching, journalism, healthcare, social work, public services and business.

4

Driving Question: When, if ever, is conflict justified?

- **Explore** the causes and impact of conflict.
- **Analyse** religious teachings about peace and forgiveness.
- **Examine** attitudes towards violence, war and pacifism.
- **Investigate** the Just War Theory.
- **Explore** responses to victims of war and injustice.
- **Consider** issues surrounding nuclear weapons.

Theme D



Curiosity

Building on learning about religion and belief, exploring big questions about life, morality and society. We focus on religious and non-religious worldviews to ensure we develop critical thinking and evaluation skills for GCSE Religious Studies.

3

2

Driving Question: What makes life valuable?

- **Explore** religious and scientific explanations for the origins of life.
- **Examine** beliefs about the value and sanctity of life.
- **Investigate** human responsibility for the environment.
- **Examine** attitudes towards abortion and euthanasia.
- **Explore** beliefs about animal rights and welfare.
- **Consider** the relationship between science and religion.

Theme B



Respect

RESPECT SELF-DISCIPLINE
MOTIVATION RESILIENCE
INTEGRITY **COURAGE**
OPEN-MINDEDNESS
CONFIDENCE
COMPASSION CURIOSITY

Links Across the Curriculum

 **History:** Explore how wars, conflicts, civil rights movements and religious beliefs have shaped societies throughout history.

 **Science:** Investigate questions about the origins of life, evolution, the environment and humanity's responsibility for the natural world.

 **Geography:** Examine global issues such as climate change, sustainability, migration, conflict and the impact of religion on communities around the world.

COURAGE
CONFIDENCE
CHARACTER

Subject Intent	Year 9 Religion and Worldviews introduces students to key GCSE Religious Studies themes through the exploration of relationships, life, peace and conflict. Students investigate religious and non-religious perspectives, with a particular focus on Christian and Buddhist viewpoints, whilst developing the skills of explanation, analysis and evaluation. The curriculum encourages students to engage with contemporary ethical issues and prepares them for successful study at GCSE.				
Rationale	Students begin by exploring questions about the value of life, including religious and scientific explanations for the origins of life, environmental responsibility and ethical issues surrounding abortion and euthanasia. They then investigate causes of conflict, religious teachings about peace and forgiveness, and debates surrounding war and justice. Finally, students examine relationships and family life, exploring different family structures, marriage and contemporary issues affecting society. This sequence develops theological, ethical and philosophical understanding whilst building the evaluative skills required for GCSE Religious Studies.				
	WHAT? Explore religious and non-religious perspectives on life, peace, conflict, relationships and family life through the study of contemporary ethical issues and GCSE-style enquiry questions. HOW? Students engage with religious teachings, contemporary case studies, discussion and debate, source analysis, retrieval practice, exam-style questions, independent enquiry and extended evaluative writing. WHY? These topics help students understand important moral and social issues facing society today whilst developing critical thinking, ethical reasoning and evaluation skills. The curriculum provides a strong foundation for GCSE Religious Studies and encourages students to become informed, respectful and responsible citizens.				
Topics					
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
What makes life valuable?	What makes life valuable?	When, if ever, is conflict justified?	When, if ever, is conflict justified?	What responsibilities do we have towards those we love?	What responsibilities do we have towards those we love?
Assessment					
Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5	Term 6
Key word and concept baseline	4 and 6 mark questions life and environment	Topic test for Unit B and D	4 and 6 mark questions war	Topic test A	End of year summative
Homework					
1. Week 1: Key word learning 2. Week 3: 4 mark style question 3. Week 5 : Seneca / Revision homework for topic test					

Religious Studies References
Key Stage 2 Kent Agreed Syllabus

Building on the knowledge and enquiry skills developed through the Kent Agreed Syllabus and Years 7 and 8, students begin to engage with themes and approaches found within AQA GCSE Religious Studies. They explore contemporary ethical and philosophical issues such as relationships, prejudice, justice, conflict, peace, human rights and beliefs about life after death.

Students are encouraged to analyse different viewpoints, apply religious teachings to modern issues and evaluate arguments using evidence. This provides a strong foundation for GCSE study by developing the disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking and extended writing skills required for success at Key Stage 4.

Key Stage 3 Kent Agreed Syllabus

Year 9 reflects the aims of the Kent Agreed Syllabus by encouraging students to engage critically with religion, belief and worldviews whilst exploring questions of meaning, purpose, truth and value. Students investigate how beliefs influence individuals, communities and society, and consider a range of religious and non-religious responses to contemporary issues.

Year 9 represents the culmination of Key Stage 3 learning, bringing together theological, philosophical and ethical enquiry while developing the knowledge, understanding and disciplinary skills outlined in the Kent Agreed Syllabus. It prepares students for the transition to GCSE Religious Studies by fostering curiosity, critical thinking and informed reflection on the complex questions that shape our world

KS4 GCSE : AQA Religious Studies 8061

At Key Stage 4, students revisit and deepen these ideas through the study of Themes A (Relationships and Families), B (Religion and Life), D (Religion, Peace and Conflict), E (Religion, Crime and Punishment) and F (Religion, Human Rights and Social Justice). They explore how religious teachings influence individuals and communities whilst examining a range of religious and non-religious perspectives on contemporary issues.

Students develop increasingly sophisticated skills in analysing religious teachings, interpreting sources of wisdom and authority, explaining beliefs and practices, and evaluating arguments using evidence and reasoned judgement. The curriculum encourages students to think critically about important issues facing the modern world whilst developing respect for diverse beliefs, values and worldviews. These skills provide a strong foundation for further study and a wide range of future pathways.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-8062/specification>

KS5 A' level : AQA Sociology

Year 9 helps prepare students for future study in Sociology by exploring topics such as identity, prejudice, discrimination, conflict, human rights and social justice. Students develop skills in analysing different viewpoints, interpreting evidence, discussing social issues and constructing reasoned arguments.

These skills are central to A Level Sociology, where students investigate how society influences people's lives and opportunities. The knowledge and critical thinking developed in Year 9 provide a strong foundation for understanding topics such as families, education, inequality, crime and social change.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-level/sociology-7191/specification>

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