

Religious Education at Casterton

Purpose of Study

Religious Education contributes dynamically to children and young people's education in schools by provoking challenging questions about meaning and purpose in life, beliefs about God, ultimate reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. In RE they learn about and from religions and worldviews in local, national and global contexts, to discover, explore and consider different answers to these questions. They learn to weigh up the value of wisdom from different sources, to develop and express their insights in response, and to agree or disagree respectfully.

Teaching therefore should equip pupils with systematic knowledge and understanding of a range of religions and worldviews, enabling them to develop their ideas, values and identities. It should develop in pupils an aptitude for dialogue so that they can participate positively in our society with its diverse religions and worldviews. Pupils should gain and deploy the skills needed to understand, interpret and evaluate texts, sources of wisdom and authority and other evidence.

Pupils learn to articulate clearly and coherently their personal beliefs, ideas, values and experiences while respecting the right of others to differ.

Aims

The aims of this subject are for pupils to:

- To develop religious literacy;
- To acquire and develop knowledge and understanding Christianity and other principal religions and worldviews represented in the United Kingdom;
- To develop an understanding of the influence of the beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, communities, societies and cultures;
- To develop attitudes of respect towards other people who hold views and beliefs different from their own;
- To develop the ability to make reasoned and informed judgements about religious issues, with reference to the principal religions and world views represented locally and in the United Kingdom.

Hours of Study (1 lesson = 1 hour)

Year (total in year group)	Hours per two week cycle	Hours per year (40 weeks)	Number of students
7 (180)	2	40	180
8 (180)	2	40	180
9 (210)	2	40	210
10 (210)	5	100	0
11 (210)	5	100	18

Timetabling and Setting Notes

- RE is grouped by mixed ability.
- KS3 students have one lesson of RE a week throughout the year in Year 7, 8 & 9.
- There is one option group studying GCSE Religious Studies in Year 11.

Year 9 Options Notes

Religious Studies is offered as a full GCSE in one option block, along with the other open subjects.

Programmes of Study

Terms	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
1	Where do we look for God?	Judaism as a living religion	Buddhism as a living religion
2	Where do we look for God?	Judaism as a living religion	Buddhism as a living religion
3	Christian beliefs about God	Christian ways of life	The Ethics of Human Relationships
4	Christian beliefs about God	Christian ways of life	The Ethics of Human Relationships
5	Hinduism as a living religion	Islam as a living religion	Science & Religion
6	Hinduism as a living religion	Islam as a living religion	Science & Religion

Terms	Year 10	Year 11
1	Christianity: beliefs and teachings	Islam: beliefs and teachings
2	Christianity: practices	Islam: practices & Year 11 PPE
3	Christianity: practices & Year 10 PPE	Theme B: Religion & Life

4	Theme A: Relationships & Family	Revision
5	Theme C: Existence of God & revelation	Revision
6	Theme F: Human Rights & Social Justice	

Powerful Core Knowledge

How we identify powerful core subject knowledge

To be successful in RE, and to become a religiously literate young person, a student needs to comprehend the different ways that people understand the world that we live in and how life should be lived. For each of the different religions/worldviews that we teach, students are taught:

- Its origins and development – how/why it came about;
- It's core beliefs and teachings – what is distinctive about this faith in the way that it views God and our place in the world;
- It's practices – how people live out their faith in today's world.

In addition to knowledge that is specific to each religion, students are taught key concepts that are relevant as part of the universal human search for meaning, truth and happiness.

How we sequence topics to create a logical, coherent, narrative.

At KS3 we start by teaching an introductory topic that introduces the universal search for truth and meaning that is at the heart of religion and philosophy. Students are then given a brief overview of the Biblical narrative as a base for further study of the Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity & Islam. Later in the course, students are taught two of the main Dharmic religions, Buddhism & Sikhism. The study of Christianity is sequenced so that

students study its origins and key beliefs in Year 7, ways of living as a Christian in Year 8 and contrasting Christian beliefs on human relationships in Year 9.

At GCSE we start by teaching the main beliefs, teachings and practices of the Christian religion. This is designed to provide an effective foundation to the later study of the four philosophical and ethical themes in Paper 2.

Retention

How we secure mastery (long term retention) of powerful core knowledge

We follow the school approach of learn, practice, test (LPT)

Each topic is accompanied by a knowledge organiser with the powerful core knowledge and vocabulary included.

As each topic is taught we build in low stakes testing in the form of starter questions, quizzes and targeted questioning by the teacher.

We make use of regular revision exercises on quizlet to help students acquire and retain the core knowledge for each topic.

At the end of the topic students take a core knowledge test.

Core knowledge tests are organised so that prior knowledge is revisited and reinforced, so that by the end of year 9, the whole of KS3 is being tested.

Vocabulary and Spelling

How we secure mastery of specialist academic vocabulary (T3 words)

The specialist academic vocabulary for each topic (tier 3 words) is given in knowledge organisers. This is taught explicitly in the context of each topic and examined through the assessment of academic essays and reading for meaning tests. Students that do not understand or use the terms correctly are required to learn them again and construct sentences that use them correctly.

Teachers emphasise the importance of specialist vocabulary to writing and communicating like a philosopher.

Core knowledge tests require students to know specialist vocabulary.

How we secure mastery of vocabulary comprehension (T3 words in context)

Vocab tables in knowledge organisers, break words down into prefixes and suffixes and explain their morphology and etymology. Examples are also given of how they can be used in actual sentences.

The etymology of many T3 words are specifically referenced/explained in lessons, in context.

Reading for meaning tests are set regularly to test students understanding of specialist vocabulary in context.

How we secure mastery of spelling (T3 words)

Vocab tables use morphology to break words down and help students to recognise patterns in their spelling. Etymology helps them to understand common roots.

The spelling of specialist vocabulary is tested as part of core knowledge tests.

Misspelt T3 words are identified when academic essays are marked – for the student to correct.

Academic Writing

How we define writing like a philosopher

For the purpose of Religious Studies, the key to writing like a philosopher is the ability to present arguments, evaluate different viewpoints and justify an opinion.

How we teach academic writing in RE

Pupils cannot produce good writing in RE unless they have knowledge to draw on. Pupils may have good literacy skills, but a good piece of descriptive writing is not the same as a good piece of writing in RE. We make sure that the RE focus of the essay is explicitly taught and understood before we rush into asking pupils to write about it.

We place an emphasis on the most common command words used in our academic writing (Explain; Why; Evaluate) and teach students what they mean in the context of the subject.

The correct meaning and use of words is vital in philosophical discussion and writing, so we place an emphasis on the correct and appropriate use of key words.

Teachers often use Visualisers to model the correct style of writing, jointly constructing paragraphs through discussion with students.

In the academic essay, marks are awarded for the religious knowledge and understanding of the writing, but regard is always given to spelling, punctuation and grammar. The marking criteria is shared with students beforehand to enable them to identify what needs to be done to effectively answer the question.

At KS3 students are required to plan their essay/extended writing at home with the assistance of a writing frame before writing it in full in class, under timed conditions. This is to emphasise the importance of careful preparation, structure and the use of Tier 3 vocab in their writing. Following feedback, students may then be required to rewrite a paragraph to an improved standard.

Independent Learning (Prep)

Regularity

Year	Frequency	Hours per week or term	Main form or types
7	Prep is set in advance of core knowledge tests and academic essays. Occasional enquiry-based prep is set to enhance learning.	2 hours per 6 week term.	Revision from knowledge organisers, quizlet and preparation for academic essays.
8	Prep is set in advance of core knowledge tests and academic essays. Occasional enquiry-based prep is set to enhance learning.	2 hours per 6 week term.	Revision from knowledge organisers, quizlet and preparation for academic essays.
9	Prep is set in advance of core knowledge tests. Occasional enquiry-based prep is set to enhance learning.	2 hours per 10 week unit of work.	Revision from knowledge organisers, quizlet and preparation for academic essays
10	Typically, 1 piece a week, though this may vary.	6 hours per 6 week term.	A3 Revision sheets for each topic Exam-style questions Revision for tests and exams.
11	Typically, 1 piece a week, though this may vary.	6 hours per 6 week term.	A3 revision sheets for each topic Exam-style questions Revision for tests and exams.

Assessment

How we assess progress at KS3

Progress is assessed by the following:

- Core Knowledge Tests
- Reading for Meaning tests
- Academic essays

In year 7 and 8, students are also assessed as being below, in line or above age expected progress, as defined by their baseline.

In year 9 students are given a SAGE grade (Scholastic Excellence, Advanced, Good, Emerging).

This information is reported to parents three times a year in progress reports and further explained at parents' evenings.

How we assess progress at KS4

Progress is assessed by the following:

- Exams (PPE)
- Exam-style questions completed either in class or at home
- Low stakes tests

GCSE grading is used to calculate current working grades (CWG) and projected performance grades (PPG)

KS3 Philosophy & Ethics – Checkpoints, Key Assessment and other assessments

Which assessment	How often?	What is the focus of the assessment?	What will it be measured on?	Communication to parents and students	Will resources be provided to help students prepare?
<i>Checkpoint</i>	Over the course of the year: Year 9 – 6 Year 8 – 6 Year 7 – 6	Mixture of knowledge and skills	1. Core Knowledge Tests completed at the end of each topic. 2. Academic essays 3. Reading for Meaning tests	1. Edulink: revision for core knowledge test set as prep. 2. Edulink: essay planning set as homework. 3. Will inform them this is happening but students do not need to prepare for it – based on comprehension.	1. Students will have access to Quizlet and a Knowledge Organiser for each topic – digital copy also on Edulink each time set 2. Academic essay guidance provided.
<i>Key Assessment</i>	1 at the end of the year for each KS3 year group	Knowledge	Big Knowledge Test in Year 7&8: focus is a multiple-choice quiz of 50 questions from across all the units studied so far in KS3. Big Knowledge Test at the end of Year 9 will be based on 100 questions aims to assess retention of knowledge across all 3 years at KS3	Both to be made aware a month in advance that this is upcoming. Set on Edulink.	Digital copies of all Knowledge Organisers will be made available. Students will be able to access all topics on Quizlet.
<i>Academic Essay</i>	2 across the year in Year 7, 8 & 9.	Knowledge and skills	Centred on a key enquiry question from the topics studied.	Set on Edulink – made clear this will count towards a checkpoint.	Academic essay guidance and planning sheets provided to students with digital copies on Edulink.
<i>Reading for meaning test</i>	1 across the year in Year 7, 8 & 9.	Knowledge and skills	On a key aspect of the topic, to improve knowledge and understanding as well assess comprehension and literacy skills.	Will inform them this is happening but students do not need to prepare for it – based on comprehension.	N/A

Core Knowledge Test	3 across the year in Year 7, 8 & 9.	Knowledge	<p>The focus is on the key words and concepts found within each topic.</p> <p>A list of core concepts within RE has been identified and will be re-visited and tested throughout KS3.</p>	Edulink: revision prep will be set at least a week in advance of each test.	<p>Knowledge Organisers for each topic are made available to students.</p> <p>Revision activities are set on Quizlet in preparation for each test.</p>
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Teaching and Learning

How we teach to the top

We aim to teach to the top by ...

- Being a teacher who possesses very high standards of subject knowledge and language that inspires our students and provides an example for them.
- Setting and expecting high standards in the quality of student work in lesson, encouraging a 'can do' attitude in all students.
- Asking open, challenging questions and probing for better, deeper responses.
- Ensuring that 'challenge' or 'could' tasks are available to stretch the most able.
- The selection of challenging source materials that require students to think, interpret and make inferences.

Explanations are targeted at the top 20% of the class while resources are provided to ensure that others receive the scaffolding they need to reach that level. Targeted questioning is used to check the understanding of current middle and lower ability students and whole class feedback includes reminders of basic knowledge, concepts and vocabulary. This means we usually take a 'no hands' approach to questioning to avoid currently more able students giving a false impression of the general level of understanding of the class.

The mastery approach means no student is left behind and our expectation is that all 'students can', including those with SEND and disadvantage students. Adaptations to resources and bespoke further assistance is provided for SEND students where necessary.

We also celebrate intellectual curiosity, never talk down our own knowledge nor make a virtue of our ignorance. We never use terms like 'gifted and talented', instead attributing progress to effort and deliberate practice and we never stigmatise achievement by using words like nerd, boffin or swot.

How we ensure topics are introduced with direct instruction

At KS3, each religion is introduced in such a way that students can connect with its place in the world, in history and what they already know. This is seen as vital in helping students to make sense of a worldview and lifestyle that is often completely different to their own.

The initial focus of teaching for each religion is its origin and early development. This helps students to begin to understand what is important in that religion and how that relates to the way the religion is followed in the world today. This in turn helps students to appreciate the hugely significant role that religion has played in shaping the world we see around us today.

Cultural Capital

How we develop cultural capital

RE provides an essential spoke in developing the Cultural Capital of our students. A knowledge of religion, beliefs, practices, spiritual insights and secular world views play an important part in preparing pupils for life in modern multicultural Britain. Its importance is increasing as globalisation has created greater links and migration between societies of different faiths and cultures.

The following are some of the ways that RE contributes to the cultural capital of our students:

- The use of music and art when learning about different religions. (eg. music and art that relates to the life of Jesus in Christianity)
- The use of artefacts when learning about religious practices (eg. Shabbat in Judaism)
- The use of sacred texts when learning about the beliefs and values of different religions (eg. the significant role of the Bible)
- Year 8 undertake a visit to a mosque in Leicester.

SEND

At Casterton College, our intention for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) is to ensure that all children receive a High-quality and ambitious education regardless of need or disability. Every teacher at Casterton College is a teacher of SEND. We believe that all students should be equally valued in college and strive to provide an environment where all students can flourish and feel safe.

Through our high quality planning, teaching and provision we:

- Ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is adapted to enable children to understand the relevance and purpose of learning.
- Provide an accessible learning environment which is tailored to the individual needs of all pupils.
- Use a needs-driven SEND model, which supports individuals based on their presentation of need rather than relying on labels or diagnoses.

In the classroom a child with SEND may will:

- Receive a level of challenge suitable for their ability and needs.
- Have reasonable adjustments in place to help overcome their barriers to learning.
- Experience lessons which contain appropriate scaffolding and task modelling.

Additional Notes

The RE department makes a positive contribution to wider school life. Events and activities are organised during the course of the year that enable students to explore, experience and reflect on some of the profound and difficult questions in human life.

Staffing

Head of Department	Mr J. Watts
Deputy Head (where appropriate)	
Teaching Staff (specialism where appropriate)	Mr M. Butterwick
Senior Link	Mr N. Rawes