Humanities Faculty: Philosophy, Religion and Ethics

Overview of the Curriculum

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics - Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9)

At Parmiter's, the KS3 curriculum broadly follows the guidance of the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus. The aim is to ensure that all students develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses. RS provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges students to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

There are 8 key areas that are covered during KS3: Beliefs and Practices, Sources of Wisdom, Symbols and Actions, Prayer, Worship and Reflection, Identity and Belonging, Ultimate Questions, Human responsibility and Values, and Justice and Fairness. These areas are consistently revisited through the study of different religious, philosophical and ethical perspectives as part of our spiralling curriculum.

The dual emphasis is that students should learn from and about religious and non-religious worldviews; assessment of student work is based on these criteria. Year seven aims to give students a broad grounding in the key beliefs and practices of the world's most followed faiths. As we move through year 8 and 9, where a range of philosophical and ethical questions, ideas and schools of thought will be encountered, students will apply the religious teachings they have covered in year 7.

Students are introduced to philosophical concepts such as what it means to be human, why God would allow suffering, and what makes a just and fair society. As we move through these topics both religious and secular philosophical responses will be considered . Students are expected to question their own values and responses to the world they live in. They are encouraged to formulate and express their own views, and are expected to listen carefully and respect the views of others. They are taught to be 'participants' and to be global citizens responding to and being affected by topical issues and news stories - topical issues are also woven into the delivery of the RS curriculum. The knowledge and understanding developed during KS3 forms a solid foundation for further study at GCSE.

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics GCSE - Key Stage 4 (Years 10 & 11)

At GCSE level we have chosen to study the Edexcel Religious Studies B specification. This qualification allows students to confidently interpret, contextualise and analyse the expressions of religions and world views they encounter. Students focus on key questions around Ethics, Philosophy, Peace and Conflict. They also explore important topics such as marriage and the family, crime and punishment, and matters of life and death.

The specification has a flexible structure which has allowed us to respond to our students' interests and needs. In this vein, we've opted to focus on the religion of Christianity and Judaism throughout our study building on prior learning at KS3. They also

explore Humanist viewpoints, Situation ethics and non-religious views such as Utilitarianism. Students are also encouraged to use their own religious views or secular beliefs as a comparison.

Throughout this course students will develop an appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies. They will also develop analytical and critical thinking skills to enable them to present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments, aiding in progression to A Level study. The examination papers are well structured, coherent and accessible for students of all abilities.

Philosophy, Religion and Ethics A Level - Key Stage 5 (Years 12 & 13)

At A Level we have chosen to study the OCR Religious Studies specification. This qualification allows students to develop their interest in a rigorous study of Philosophical concepts and Ethical values.They also analyse the impact of Christian beliefs on the wider world and how these beliefs have helped to shape modern society. It also facilitates the development of knowledge, understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contributions to individuals, communities and societies. The aim of this study is to engage learners thoroughly and to develop an interest in RS which extends beyond the classroom and can be applied to the world around them. Learners will develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments and responses to religious, philosophical and ethical ideas which can be applied throughout life. The examination papers are well structured, coherent and accessible for students of all abilities.

Overview of schemes of work at each key stage

Key stage 3	Key stage 4	Key stage 5
Throughout this course students develop a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of philosophical and ethical questions and world religions. They reflect, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues throughout all topics. **Year 7** ● What is religion? ● Features of the Six World Religions. ● Judaism: covenant and mitzvot ● Christianity: Miracles, parables. ● Christianity: reconciliation	Throughout this course students develop a knowledge, understanding and appreciation of philosophical and ethical questions and different religious views.They reflect, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues throughout all topics. **Year 10** ● Christian Beliefs ● Jewish Beliefs ● Judaism- Attitudes to Marriage and Family	Throughout this course students develop knowledge and understanding of philosophical and ethical questions, religion and beliefs.They consistently analyse and evaluate aspects of and approaches to religion and belief through the topics. **Year 12** **Religious Philosophy** ● Ancient Philosophical influences ● Soul mind and body ● Arguments based on observation and reason

- Islam: the six articles of faith and the five pillars
- Dharmic faith traditions

Year 8
- Introduction to philosophical thinking
- Doubt and scepticism, and religious responses
- Philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God
- Big ideas in 20th century philosophy
- Philosophy and the good society

Year 9
- Introduction to ethics
- Ethical theory
- Where do right and wrong come from?
- Environmental and animal ethics
- Current moral dilemmas
- Religious responses to moral dilemmas

- Christian - responses to Crime and Punishment

Year 11
- Living the Christian Life - ceremonies and practices
- Living the Jewish Life - ceremonies and practices
- Christianity - issues of peace and conflict e.g. Pacifism, holy war and issues surrounding conflict
- Judaism - matters of life and death.e.g. abortion, euthanasia, animal rights

- Religious experience
- The problem of evil and theodicies

Religion and Ethics
- Normative ethical theories - religious approaches: Aquinas and Natural law, Fletcher and Situation ethics
- Normative ethical theories: Kantian ethics, Utilitarianism
- Applied ethics: Euthanasia and Business Ethics

Developments in Christian thought
- Augustine's teaching on human nature
- Death and the afterlife
- Knowledge of God's existence
- The person of Jesus Christ
- Christian moral principles and moral action (the teachings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

Year 13
- Philosophy of Religion
- The nature and attributes of God
- Religious language, negative, analogical or symbolic
- Twentieth century perspectives and philosophical comparisons

Religious Ethics
- Meta ethics - the study of ethical language
- An analysis of the Conscience - religious and psychological responses e.g. Freud & Aquinas
- Development of religious thought

		● Gender and society. Gender and theology ● Religious pluralism: theology and society ● The challenge of secularism, Liberation theology and marx