

Topic Sequencing and Rationale

Year 7, 8 and 9 will all have one topic that falls into one of these three categories:

- Living topics look at religious beliefs and worldviews on ways of living; questions about *ethics* and morality.
- Believing topics look at religious beliefs and worldviews, teachings, sources; *Philosophical* questions about meaning, purpose and truth.
- Expressing topics look at Non-religious, Religious and spiritual forms of expression; Questions about values and commitments.

We have adoptive these suggestions from the LA syllabus as they help the curriculum cover a range of topics looking at ethics, philosophy as well as religion and world views.

Key Stage 3

	Year	What is taught? Overview of Topics	Why this? Why then?
KS3	7 YOU In year 7, topics start by looking inward at student's own beliefs.	<p>Living:</p> <p>How do we make decisions?</p> <p>Believing:</p> <p>Is God real?</p> <p>How did the Universe begin?</p> <p>Expressing:</p> <p>How do people express their beliefs?</p>	<p>This topic covers the fundamentals of why and how we make moral decisions. It will look at ethical theories, such as utilitarianism, as well as role models and religious rules. This will give them the skills and the knowledge to apply to ethical issues they study as they move through KS3.</p> <p>This topic forms the basis of religious belief and philosophical questions. It gives context to all other topics. They will look at the nature of God and arguments for and against his existence. They will also learn important philosophical vocabulary such as agnostic and proof need to make progress.</p> <p>Moving on from the previous topic, this looks at another fundamental philosophical belief. Students will look at a range of views on the origins of the Universe. These points of view form the foundation of many religious and world views such sanctity of life or the importance of human life that they will study in the future.</p> <p>This topic will allow students to understand the visual signs of religion in their lives and communities. It will look at the reason behind festivals, forms of worship, pilgrimage, religious art and food. This is a pivotal topic at the start of our curriculum. This will enable students to be more tolerant and understanding of religious expression especially those from a non-religious background.</p>

<p>8</p> <p>YOUR LIFE</p> <p>In year 8, topics will look at issues that students may encounter throughout their own lives.</p>	<p>Living:</p> <p>What is Equality?</p> <p>What is a 'person'?</p> <p>Believing:</p> <p>What happen when we die?</p> <p>Expressing:</p> <p>Why do some people think life is a journey?</p>	<p>This topic will introduce human rights and look at the nature of equality. It will allow students to learn key vocabulary and concepts such as racism, sexism and homophobia. It will look at human rights violations and case studies. It is important they understand this before looking at complex ethical issues.</p> <p>This follows on from the previous topic by looking at who and what deserves rights from animals, the environment, to embryos and foetuses. They will look at a range of religious and world views on issues such as IVF, euthanasia and vegetarianism allowing them to come to their own opinion on the issues. These are issues that students may encounter in their own lives and therefore are some of the first we cover in our curriculum.</p> <p>This philosophical topic follows on from the issues raises from the last topic surrounding abortion and euthanasia by asking if there is an afterlife. It will look at a range of views, both religious and secular, and investigate how these views affect other beliefs on real world issues.</p> <p>This topic continues with the theme of 'life'. It looks at philosophical questions such as 'what is the purpose of life?' including Existentialism and Determinism. As well as the importance of marking life events such as baptism, bar mitzvah and funerals.</p>
<p>9</p> <p>THE WORLD</p> <p>In year 9, topics will focus on looking outward at wider world issues.</p>	<p>Living:</p> <p>What causes conflict in the world?</p> <p>What causes poverty in the world?</p> <p>Believing:</p> <p>Why is there suffering in the world?</p>	<p>This topic moves on from year 8 and begins to look at wider world issues. It will look at the ethics of war as well issues surrounding crime and punishment such as the death penalty. Here, they can apply knowledge from pervious topics such as human rights.</p> <p>This topic continues further and looks at the cause of poverty around the world (such as war) and the issues around it. It follows on from the previous topic with the links to poverty with war and crime. It was also will look at the ethics around business and wealth.</p>

		<p>Expressing:</p> <p>How do people cope with difficult times?</p>	<p>This philosophical topic looks at the problem of evil and will answer some of the questions raised in the last two topics around moral evil. It will look at a range of views looking at the nature of evil and whether these are compatible with religious beliefs.</p> <p>This topic continues from the issue of evil and suffering by looking at how people cope with it around the world. It will look at how people deal with and accept suffering. This will be done by looking at the variety of ways people do this from meditation, the three marks of existence, to doing charity work.</p>
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Religious Literacy for Christianity, Buddhism and Islam:

Religious scripture

Religious Rules

Places of worship

Religious symbols

Same as the LA syllabus

Topic Sequencing and Rationale

Key Stage 4

	Year	What is taught? Overview of Topics	Why this? Why then?
KS4	10	<p>Philosophy:</p> <p>The Nature of God</p> <p>The life of the Buddha</p> <p>The Marks of Existence</p> <p>The Life of Jesus</p> <p>The Afterlife</p>	<p>The first year of philosophy aims to give students the key philosophical language they need to continue with course. It also covers the key philosophical question 'Is God real?'. By understanding different views on this question this means they can apply this knowledge to any other topic in the course.</p> <p>The next two topics cover the basis of Buddhist philosophical belief. Students need to understand the fundamentals of Buddha's journey to enlightenment to give context to other beliefs. The three marks of existence stem from Buddha's understanding of the nature of reality and therefore they are important to be situated at the beginning of our curriculum.</p> <p>Before students can fully understand Christian views towards the afterlife and the problem of evil. Students need to have sound theological understanding of the impact of the life of Jesus on Christian belief.</p> <p>This topic logically follows on from the life of Jesus particularly due to the themes surrounding resurrection. However, it also introduces other worldviews and secular views such as Marxism. It is important that students have a good understanding of the topic before they look at matters of life and death e.g. abortion, euthanasia in Ethics at the start of next year.</p>

		<p>Ethics:</p> <p>Ethical Theories</p> <p>Christian Ethics</p> <p>Buddhist Ethics</p> <p>Human rights and social justice</p> <p>Peace and Conflict</p>	<p>The first three topics give students an understanding of the building blocks in ethical decision making. These topics look at the theories and beliefs behind how people make ethical decisions and why they make these decisions. This knowledge is pivotal before any ethical issues are introduced.</p> <p>The Human Rights topic lays the foundation for other ethical issues. Students need to understand the rights all humans are entitled too. This will then give context to the other ethical issues they will study.</p> <p>The peace and conflict topic looks at the causes of War, the ethics of fighting a war and the impact of war. It follows on from human rights with issues surrounding freedom of speech and the rights of refugees.</p>
11		<p>Philosophy:</p> <p>The Origins of Life</p> <p>The Problem of Evil</p> <p>Buddhist Worship</p> <p>Types of Buddhism</p>	<p>The first year 11 philosophy topic starts with another fundamental philosophical question 'How did the Universe begin?' It looks at range of views on the issue but in particularly contrasts Evolution and the Sanctity of Life. Student need this knowledge to evaluate in their first year 11 ethics topic religion and life. It is also vital to understanding Christian response to evil.</p> <p>The problem of evil topic introduces the inconsistent triad to the students. It looks at the nature of evil as well as responses to the problem evil such as Augustine's theodicy. It builds on knowledge from the last topic by looking at Genesis and the Fall.</p> <p>These two topics follow on from the problem of evil as Buddhist worship normally focuses on how to overcome and stop suffering. It then moves on to how different types of Buddhism approach helping others and reaching enlightenment.</p> <p>This topic looks at issues surrounding life and death such as IVF, abortion, euthanasia. It is later in the GCSE curriculum to allow students to gain the knowledge they need to</p>

		Ethics: Religion and Life Crime and Punishment	understand the reasoning behind the different points of views on these highly sensitive issues. This topic is the final ethical topic as students can build on knowledge from both human rights as well as religious and life. They will look at issues surrounding aims of punishment and the death penalty.
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Topic Sequencing and Rationale

Key Stage 5

	Year	What is taught? Overview of Topics	Why this? Why then?
KS5	12	<p>Philosophy:</p> <p>Ancient Greek Philosophy</p> <p>Arguments for the existence of God</p> <p>The problem of Evil</p> <p>Religious Experience</p> <p>Mind, Body, Soul</p> <p>Ethics:</p> <p>Ethical Approaches</p>	<p>This topic introduces students to the founding fathers of philosophy, Plato and Aristotle. The understanding of these epistemologies allows students to see the key split between other philosophers who followed them - The rationalists and the empiricists.</p> <p>They will then study three different arguments for the existence of God. Two of these follow the empiricist approach, inspired by Aristotle, the teleological and cosmological argument. One follows on from the rationalist approach, inspired by Plato, the ontological argument.</p> <p>The problem of evil is the next logical topic as it carries on with questioning the existence of God. It focuses on the inconsistent triad and the ranges of responses to it both biblical and philosophical.</p> <p>This topic follows on with theme of questioning God's existence. It looks at a common argument for the existence the validity of the evidence used. It introduces students to a range of religious, philosophical and psychological viewpoints.</p> <p>This topic introduces a new question to the students on the nature of consciousness. It asks them to consider what causes it and impact this may have on beliefs.</p> <p>The topic introduces the aim and main approaches that many of the later ethical theories can be categorised into and evaluated on. A solid foundation in this aspect is important for later understanding. By doing this first we also allow for some good quality early assessment work before an in-depth study of an ethical theory.</p> <p>This is one of the applied ethics topics. By doing this topic first we ensure that all students that we teach have secure knowledge of an ethical issue to apply aspects of</p>

		<p>Euthanasia</p> <p>Natural Law</p> <p>Situation Ethics</p> <p>Business Ethics</p> <p>Kantian Ethics</p> <p>Utilitarian Ethics</p>	<p>later ethical theories to. We will look at a range of views towards this issue and show good awareness of current affairs.</p> <p>This topic looks at Aquinas' Theory of Natural Law, in particular the debate concerning moral telos and how this links to ideas of design and purpose across other areas of ethics and philosophy. We evaluate how useful Natural Law is in terms of making moral choices and a variety of challenges to aspects of the theory</p> <p>This topic studies Fletcher's situational, agape based approach to ethical decision making. We will study the Four Working Principle and the Six Fundamental Principles. Students will critically evaluate how robust the theory is and whether its relative approach makes it appealing or not.</p> <p><i>Students must be able to draw on comparisons and contrasts between Natural Law and Situation ethics and to judge which approach is most successful in terms of the essay question they are debating. We will focus on application and evaluation of Natural Law and Situation Ethics to the applied ethical topic of euthanasia (as per the spec)</i></p> <p>In Business ethics we will critically analyse to what extent businesses need show corporate social responsibility. We evaluate economists such and Smith and Friedman as well as thinkers such as Marx and Hobbes. Students need to analyse a variety of case studies as well as being able to evaluate the application of our key ethical theories to matters such as workers right and globalisation.</p> <p>This topic asks students to study and evaluate the validity of Kant's categorical imperative in making moral choices. Students are encouraged to see the synoptic links between Kant's view of morality and wider issues of human nature and reality. We will look at a variety of challenges to the theory and decide on balance if the theory is a useful method of moral discourse.</p> <p>This topic looks at the more secular principle of utility of and happiness in ethical decision making. We will study classical utilitarianism and more modern interpretations. We will evaluate the application of Bentham's Hedonic calculus and whether Mil's adaptations are successful.</p> <p><i>Students must be able to draw on comparisons and contrasts between Kantian and Utilitarian ethics and to judge which approach is most successful in terms of the essay</i></p>
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13		<p>Philosophy:</p> <p>Attributes of God</p> <p>Religious Language</p> <p>Ethics:</p> <p>Sexual Ethics</p>	<p>This first year 13 topic looks at the nature of God and analyses issues with individual attributes. It builds on previous topics and knowledge of religious beliefs, It also includes more complicated philosophical ideas such as Anslem's 4D approach to time which builds on previous ideas studied in year 12.</p> <p>Religious Language is a fundamental part of the philosophy course. It analyses the way religious believers talk God. However, this needs to be studied later in the course after the students have a greater understanding of the arguments for God's existence and the attributes of God.</p> <p>This topic looks at ethical issues connected to sex, such are premarital sex and homosexuality and how these issues have been approached in historical and modern contexts. We will apply our ethical theories and evaluate their use, especially in the</p>

		<p>Meta Ethics</p> <p>Conscience</p> <p>Buddhism:</p> <p><i>Three Refuges</i></p> <p><i>Meditation</i></p> <p><i>Engaged Buddhism</i></p> <p><i>Buddhism and Gender</i></p>	<p>context of modern society and the importance of equality. We will draw on the views of religion and originations such as Stonewall.</p> <p>This topic looks at the meaning and value of ethical language such as good, right, wrong and bad. We will look at approaches such as Naturalism and whether moral statements can be synthetically validated or are they simply emotive and culturally relative in their nature. If ethical language is not cognitively knowable and objective, does this then diminish its value?</p> <p>This topic looks at a variety of scholarly views (e.g. Aquinas, Feud) as to the origins and reliability of the human conscience. If the conscience comes from God does this mean it show always be obeyed? Is the conscience formed by a variety of external and internal forces such as authority, logic, life experience? If there are so many variables can we rely on it as an ethical guide?</p> <p>The topic of the Three Refuges looks at how a Buddhist can seek support and guidance in their search for the nature of reality and to deal with the difficulties of dukkha. We will investigate The Three Jewels: The Buddha, The Dharma and The Sangha (with a focus on levels of involvement in the sangha: laity and ordained)</p> <p>The topic of Meditation asks students to study and evaluate the different approaches to meditation that different Buddhists might take. In particular we will look at Samatha meditation and Vipassana meditation. A key focus is to understand the integral and essential role meditation can play in all aspects of Buddhist life, rather than as a separate act of worship. Students will study the views of contemporary Buddhists such as Thich Nhat Hanh.</p> <p>Engaged Buddhism looks at how the various Buddhis teachings such and Sila, Metta, Karuna, and the 14 Principles of engaged Buddhism can be applied and how successful they are. Students will evaluate how a Buddhist can accept impermanence and still be engaged in a material world and its ethical issues such as war, inequality and the environment. Is Buddhism and introspective, detached approach or engaged and involved?</p>
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