

Curriculum Rationale	
Subject	Philosophy and ethics
	Key Stage 4
Intent	
<p>The educational purpose of Philosophy and Ethics is to provide students with the necessary skills to thrive in a multicultural progressive society. Students of this topic will enhance their awareness and understanding of various cultures, religions, values, traditions and perspectives. This will enable them to discuss and explore a range of crucial current issues sensitively, demonstrating tolerance, respect and flexibility of thought.</p> <p>For this purpose, students will initially learn about two religious outlooks. This will include beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Buddhism as well as their impact on society. Following this they will use the knowledge they have obtained to explore the religious, philosophical and ethical dimensions of various themes and topics. The chosen themes are Relationships and Families, The Existence of God and Revelation, Religion, Crime and Punishment and Religion, Peace and Conflict.</p> <p>Common philosophical questions will occur frequently, either directly or indirectly, in the context of these topics, including: the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self, the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human.</p> <p>The current issues that we will focus on are quite challenging, thought provoking and sensitive, often leading to heated classroom debates. By using their knowledge of religions and societal attitudes to discuss these topics, students will develop a range of skills enabling them to analyse, interpret, evaluate, and reflect on issues and to apply their knowledge to real life situations.</p> <p>The AQA specification has been chosen because it includes all of the major world religions and it offers six contemporary ethical themes to choose from, ensuring that our students have a number of exciting subjects to study. This examination board is dedicated to enabling pupils to develop their attitudes towards contemporary religious and secular issues, by challenging them with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth. In this context they will develop analytical and critical thinking skills, the ability to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research skills that will help them prepare for further study and are important in all workplace environments. Students will study for the GCSE exams according to the AQA board. They will be required to write two papers at the end of their studies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first written exam will be on the <i>beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity and Buddhism</i>. It will last 1 hour and 45 minutes giving a maximum of 96 marks, plus 6 marks for spelling punctuation and grammar, and will account for 50% of the GCSE result. Each religion assessed has a common structure of two five-part questions of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks. • The second paper will focus on the four themes which were discussed in lessons in the context of Christianity. Students will have 1 hour and 45 minutes to complete this exam, 	

achieving a maximum of 96 marks, plus 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar, which will account for 50% of the GCSE result. Each of the four themes assessed has a common structure of one five-part question of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks.

Implementation

Lessons will include power point presentations by the teacher, relevant videos, activities, classroom debates and discussions, independent revision, self and peer assessment, homework, exam preparation, mock tests and more.

They will be structured in a way that aims at maximising classroom learning to better prepare the pupils for their GCSE exams and to lessen their final workload. Students will be required to keep their personalised work books organised and up to date in a way that will help them to revise. Their work will be assessed and pupils will be expected to respond to comments made by correcting and completing their tasks.

Students will initially focus on the beliefs, teachings and practices of specific religions. This component will be taught first so that the students have the foundational knowledge necessary to then discuss the themes in the context of a specific religion, using beliefs teachings and practices to explain and evaluate various opinions.

Impact

With Philosophy and ethics we intend to help students think for themselves, consider their own beliefs and gain confidence in expressing their own viewpoints on a whole range of religious, ethical and philosophical subjects. In addition they begin the process of learning how to think critically, reflectively, flexibly and independently. These skills are essential in all areas of the academic, professional and personal lives of our students.

Philosophy and ethics will also enhance our pupil's respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faith and beliefs are different from their own, which promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice. The practical significance of this is clear in all areas of work in the UK and overseas. Our students will benefit from this additionally in the context of their specialisms which often involves traveling abroad and competing and collaborating with people of various ethnicities, religions and cultural backgrounds.

Students of philosophy and ethics will ultimately be given the opportunity to develop the ideal ethos and attitude to function and achieve optimally in the context of modern globalisation.