



Curriculum Detail: Religious Studies

Religious studies is taught as a component of humanities in year 7.

Year 8 students learn about meaning and philosophies of life from the viewpoints of a variety of faiths; different beliefs about life after death are examined and similarities and differences considered. Issues surrounding elements of religion and the power these hold - miracles, for example, and the influence of religious leaders - are discussed. Religious authority is considered in various contexts, e.g. rules for living such as the Ten Commandments in Christianity; food rules in Islam and Judaism; and the role of sacred texts in Sikhism. Different responses to suffering and explanations for its causes are discussed along with the 'problem of evil' and related theodicies. The religious festivals and ritual celebrations of some of the six major world religions are explored and contrasted. Students examine holy sites, what makes them special and what happens when pilgrims and worshippers arrive in these places.

In year 9, Religious studies is taught as a component of citizenship.

Year 10 students consider religious teachings on injustice as well as prejudice, discrimination and equality. A variety of beliefs concerning the nature of God, the features of religious funerals and what happens when we die are examined as well as the purpose of human life and both religious and secular ideas about the creation of the universe (e.g. *creatio ex nihilo* and evolution). Varying perspectives on love, marriage and sex are considered along with what happens when a marriage terminates. Students look at medical ethics and the role of medicine in relation to religious teachings with a particular focus on issues such as abortion, IVF and euthanasia.

In year 11, religion is considered in the context of society; sources of state and religious authority are discussed and viewed in terms of what happens when they clash. The aims and purposes of punishment are examined and religious conflict is discussed along with religious teachings concerning peace and war. The concept of 'just war' is considered and questions raised about whether violent acts can ever be justified and whether or not pacifism can be employed as an effective response; students look at case studies of religious individuals who have worked for peace. Before preparing for their exams, students further explore elements of religious expression such as clothing, charity, places of worship, pilgrimage and spreading the message.