



Tollbar MAT
Family of Academies



Tollbar Academy

Religious Education

Context

RE is taught as a mandatory subject across KS3 and optionally across KS4. Students that do not select RE as an option are taught statutory RE as part of their Citizenship course in years 9, 10 and 11.

At KS3 the subject follows the North East Lincolnshire Agreed Syllabus. At KS4 the subject follows the Eduqas RE GCSE (Route A).

Students are made aware of career opportunities at regular intervals throughout their learning.

Intent

The study of RE is a statutory requirement for all students. It promotes religious literacy, makes students aware of the world around them and incorporates British Values into their everyday learning.

The subject provides significant opportunities for academic learning and skills such as; research, forming academic arguments, evaluating, essay writing and debate. The skills taught complement their overall learning and will help them to access additional learning in other curriculum areas such as English, History, Geography and Citizenship.

The intent of the department is to develop academic skills, whilst also providing students with a platform to explore social, moral, spiritual and cultural issues and to decide for themselves how they respond to these. It will also provide students with cultural capital that can be used later in life.

Implementation



KS3

At KS3 students follow the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Although Academies can follow any agreed syllabus they choose, this was selected as it fits the demographic profile of the local area. Tollbar draws a large number of students from the local area, rather than simply providing for the catchment, thus a syllabus designed to reflect the make-up of the area as a whole is the most appropriate choice for our students. Further, the previous head of department was actively involved in its creation, meaning it is tailored to our needs. The content covered at KS3 is designed to support learning at GCSE by providing complementary and foundational knowledge which will scaffold future learning.

In Year 7, students study six units; the first four of these lay the groundwork for the study of religion. They begin with 'The Island'; an experiential unit designed to introduce the core concepts of religions such as festivals, identity and pilgrimage. This allows teachers to develop the core vocabulary needed for further study, explore gaps in student knowledge and to engage the students in the subject. This unit is not content based, but acts as a holistic overview of the religion providing foundational knowledge.

The Beliefs and Concepts unit covers how people respond to the idea of theism and what they believe about 'God'. What is authority? covers sources of authority over a number of religions and Who Was Jesus? allows for an in-depth exploration of the life of a key religious figure, whilst also providing content that will be revisited in future years at a higher level. Together, these four units provide a base level of knowledge in order to allow students to access further study.

The fifth unit, Sikhism, provides a deep dive into a different world religion that students may not have much prior knowledge on. There is an active Sikh community in the local area, so the decision to cover Sikhism was made in order to educate students on people within their own communities. Sikhism was also chosen because many of the concepts tie in with the study of Hinduism (which is explicitly covered in the GCSE course).

The final unit in year 7 is an exploration of different places of worship. This is used as a platform to provide a discussion on the topic of interfaith dialogue. The topic of interfaith dialogue is covered at GCSE level, so this unit prepares students for future study.



In Year 8, the curriculum is designed to prepare students for further study at GCSE and A-Level. The knowledge provided is another step in systematically building up their knowledge.

The first unit, Global Issues, is a thematic study of environmental ethics from the perspectives of Christianity and Hinduism. The structure of the unit mimics the style of GCSE units by providing religious perspectives on ethical issues, as well as ensuring that students are introduced to the core concepts they will be using at GCSE level.

The second unit, Rights and Responsibilities, focuses on basic Christian teachings about helping others, such as the Good Samaritan, as well as key figures that they might cover later in the course. Maria Gomez can be used to support later learning of Oscar Romero in the GCSE syllabus, Gandhi can be used to support later learning in the Hinduism GCSE paper, as well as the Philosophy and Ethics Paper. Dietrich Bonhoeffer is the subject of a unit in the Philosophy A-Level and can be used to support the GCSE Philosophy and Ethics paper.

The next unit, Pilgrimage, offers a thematic study of different religious perspectives. As the GCSE syllabus is limited to the study of two religions, these units provide an opportunity to explore other religions such as Islam. Although this does not explicitly link to future learning, students have the right to learn about other religions, as the intent of the course is to allow them to have the opportunity to develop their own system of belief. This ethos is echoed in the fifth unit, Faith in Britain, which also allows students a chance to learn more about the country they live in and explore minor faiths that they may come across in the future.

The fourth unit, Philosophy, allows for students to engage with content on the A-Level course. This is a popular topic with students and is designed to ensure engagement across the year by providing students with the chance to learn something completely different. It is also a good opportunity to promote higher level thinking skills by considering abstract topics.

The final unit, Hinduism, provides foundational knowledge for the further study of Hinduism in the GCSE course. The Hinduism paper is worth 25% of the final GCSE course, so this unit is taught at the end of KS3 in order to maximise knowledge retention for the GCSE.



All units are assessed in a GCSE style in order to encourage high expectations and prepare students for the rigours of the GCSE course. This style of assessment ensures that students are taught evaluative skills from the very earliest lessons. The first unit in year 7 (the Island) is an exception to this. It is still written in the same style, but there are additional questions in order to ease students into the demands of the assessment system and allow them additional opportunities to succeed.

A. KS4

At KS4, students follow the Eduqas GCSE (Route A) Syllabus. This is divided into three papers; Philosophy and Ethics (50%), Christianity (25%) and Hinduism (25%). The final unit, Hinduism, was selected from a choice of major world religions on the basis that an Eastern religion would allow students to compartmentalise knowledge, whilst also providing for a broad curriculum that allows students to develop cultural capital. The course is structured so that students alternate between the religions units and the Philosophy and Ethics unit, rather than teaching the units sequentially. The course is structured this way to ensure maximum retention of knowledge and engagement.

The first unit studied, Human Rights, is accessible and engaging for students. Much of their learning is supported by the content at KS3 so it is an ideal introduction to the course. It also provides discussion of many of the key quotes and teachings that will be revisited later in the course.

Students then cover the Christian Beliefs unit. This is the first of the Christianity units because it focuses on what Christians actually believe, so it is therefore necessary to teach this before the Christian Practices unit.

The third unit, Issues of Life and Death, is taught mid-way through year 9. As this unit covers a range of issues that may be sensitive or related to sexual issues such as abortion, it is unreasonable to teach this before students have had access to sex and relationships education through Citizenship.

The final unit taught in year 9 is Christian Practices. This allows students to reflect on their prior learning from the Christian Beliefs unit, whilst expanding their knowledge.

In year 10, students begin with the Relationships unit. Again, this covers sensitive topics such as contraception and homosexuality, which students may not be mature enough to cover in depth until this time.



Students then move on to study Hindu Beliefs. As with Christianity, it is necessary to study the beliefs of a religion so that students are able to understand their actions. Hinduism is covered in year 10 because the content is more challenging and unfamiliar to students than Christianity.

The final Philosophy and Ethics unit is Good and Evil. This is by far the most challenging unit, so is taught at the end of the course in order to allow for students to have made progress in their general academic development and understanding of exam technique. The content also links in with the Philosophy element of the A-Level course, so teaching it at the end of year 10 allows for greater retention of information and understanding.

The final taught unit of the course is Hindu Practices. This allows students to reflect on their prior learning from the Christian Beliefs unit, whilst expanding their knowledge.

In year 11, students complete comprehensive revision of the topics. Each week students complete a taught revision lesson on a topic and a weekly test to embed exam skills. The third lesson rotates between a quiz, taught exam skills or another taught revision lesson depending on the requirements of the topics studied. Again, the revision schedule rotates between topics so that all aspects of the course are revised throughout the year.

Impact

At the end of KS3, students will have developed an understanding of core concepts for the study of RE, a good level of religious literacy and academic skills to benefit them in further study such as presentation, evaluation and essay writing. Students will have a better understanding of the community they live in and the different religions and cultures within it. Students will have been given the chance to develop cultural capital and will have begun to form an understanding of their own personal systems of belief. At the end of KS4, students will have developed an understanding of detailed concepts for the study of RE which will provide them with a good base level of knowledge for A-Level Philosophy, a comprehensive level of religious literacy and academic skills to benefit them in further study such as presentation, evaluation and essay writing. Students will have a detailed understanding of the community they live in and the different religions and cultures within it. Students will have been given the chance to gain cultural capital and will have a developed understanding of their own personal systems of belief.



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