# Programme of study for Year 9 Ethics | SMSC sentence-stem mapping

SOURCE: Yr 9 Ethics PoS Proforma.docx | Original curriculum wording retained. Sentence-stem SMSC mapping covers all six half-terms. A3 landscape.

| Autumn (1st term) | Autumn (2nd term) | Spring (1st term) | Spring (2nd Term) | Summer (1st term) | Summer (2nd term) |
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| Other timescale:<br>From: September<br>To: October | Other timescale:<br>From: October<br>To: December | Other timescale:<br>From: January<br>To: February | Other timescale:<br>From: February<br>To: April | Other timescale:<br>From: April<br>To: May | Other timescale:<br>From: June<br>To: July |
| **Topic:**<br>• Origins of Belief.<br>**Key Question:**<br>• How did religion evolve differently around the world? | | **Topic:**<br>• Afterlife<br>**Key Question:**<br>• Why do people disagree on what happens after death? | | **Topic:**<br>• Applied Ethics.<br>**Key Question:**<br>• How do religious and non-religious beliefs shape the way people make decisions? | |
| **Learning Questions:**<br>1. What is the oldest known religion?<br>2. Why does religion exist?<br>3. What can we learn from Ifa, the oldest surviving religion?<br>4. Assessment | **Learning Questions:**<br>1. GPOP<br>2. How did the Indus Valley shape Hinduism?<br>3. Why did Jainism diverge from Hinduism?<br>4. How did the first monotheistic religions evolve? | **Learning Questions:**<br>1. Is this the only life we have?<br>2. Assessment<br>3. GPOP | **Learning Questions:**<br>1. How do Abrahamic faiths agree and disagree on life after death?<br>2. Why do some religions believe in reincarnation?<br>3. Is death something to fear? | **Learning Questions:**<br>1. What is ethics and what is the trolley problem?<br>2. Should people be allowed to choose when they die?<br>3. Is the death penalty ethical? | **Learning Questions:**<br>1. Can war be justified?<br>2. Can war ever be considered holy?<br>3. Can WMDs be used ethically?<br>4. Can AI be used ethically? |
| **Learning outcomes:**<br>• Understand theories about the origins and development of religion in human societies.<br>• Explore archaeological, historical, and anthropological evidence relating to early religious beliefs and practices.<br>• Explain different explanations for why religion exists, including religious, social, psychological, and evolutionary perspectives.<br>• Investigate the beliefs, practices, and cultural significance of Ifa as one of the world's | **Learning outcomes:**<br>• Understand the significance of the Indus Valley civilisation in the development of early Hindu beliefs and practices.<br>• Explain how Hinduism evolved over time and became one of the world's major religious traditions.<br>• Explore the origins of Jainism and identify key similarities and differences between Jain and Hindu beliefs.<br>• Investigate the emergence of monotheistic religions and the development of belief in one God. | **Learning outcomes:**<br>• Understand a range of beliefs about death and the afterlife, including religious and non-religious perspectives.<br>• Explain how beliefs about what happens after death influence the way people live their lives.<br>• Explore arguments for and against the existence of an afterlife.<br>• Analyse how different worldviews answer questions about mortality, purpose, and human existence.<br>• Evaluate why people hold differing beliefs | **Learning outcomes:**<br>• Understand the similarities and differences between Jewish, Christian, and Muslim beliefs about life after death.<br>• Explain key concepts such as heaven, hell, judgement, resurrection, salvation, and eternal life.<br>• Explore beliefs in reincarnation within religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism.<br>• Analyse how beliefs about rebirth, karma, and enlightenment shape religious practice and ethical behaviour. | **Learning outcomes:**<br>• Understand the meaning of ethics and why ethical decision-making is important in personal and public life.<br>• Explore different approaches to ethics, including religious teachings, Humanist values, and philosophical reasoning.<br>• Explain how ethical dilemmas such as the trolley problem help people consider difficult moral choices.<br>• Analyse arguments surrounding euthanasia and assisted dying from | **Learning outcomes:**<br>• Understand key religious and secular teachings about war, peace, justice, and human responsibility.<br>• Explain the principles of Just War Theory and pacifism.<br>• Analyse arguments concerning holy war and the ethical challenges surrounding religious violence.<br>• Evaluate the ethical implications of weapons of mass destruction and their impact on humanity.<br>• Explore ethical questions raised by artificial intelligence, including |

## SMSC opportunities: where and how

### Autumn (1st term) | Origins of Belief

**Spiritual — Pupils develop fascination with** how people first sought meaning, using archaeological evidence and explanations of religion to reflect on human curiosity and purpose.

**Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of** following the early ethical systems studied in the unit, explaining how beliefs influence conduct and responsibilities within communities.

**Social — Pupils debate different responses to** why religion exists, weighing religious, sociological and psychological explanations while responding respectfully to different accounts.

**Cultural — Pupils appreciate the diversity and shared features of** religious traditions, using Ifa's oral teachings and practices to recognise West African heritage beyond familiar Western frameworks.

### Autumn (2nd term) | Origins of Belief

**Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** changing beliefs about God and how traditions develop, asking what Hindu, Jain and early monotheistic ideas reveal about the search for meaning.

**Moral — Pupils evaluate whether** moral rules depend on divine authority, using divine command theory, moral relativism and absolutism to justify views about right and wrong.

**Social — Pupils debate different responses to** sources of moral authority, practising how to explain disagreement respectfully in a society with diverse beliefs.

**Cultural — Pupils compare** Hindu, Jain and early monotheistic developments, explaining how historical, geographical and cultural contexts shape shared ideas and distinct living traditions.

### Spring (1st term) | Afterlife

**Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** whether this is the only life we have, using religious and non-religious views to explore mortality, purpose and their own assumptions.

**Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of** afterlife beliefs for decisions made in this life, explaining connections between belief, morality and purpose.

**Social — Pupils debate different responses to** afterlife evidence in case studies, listening sensitively and using respectful language when explaining disagreement.

**Cultural — Pupils compare** religious and secular understandings of death, recognising different beliefs and shared questions about mortality, purpose and meaning.

### Spring (2nd term) | Afterlife

**Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** fear of death, comfort, hope and uncertainty, comparing beliefs without needing to disclose their own experiences.

**Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of** actions through beliefs in judgement, accountability and karma, explaining how these beliefs can shape ethical behaviour.

| Autumn (1st term) | Autumn (2nd term) | Spring (1st term) | Spring (2nd Term) | Summer (1st term) | Summer (2nd term) | SMSC opportunities: where and how |
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| oldest surviving religious traditions.<br>• Analyse how religious beliefs develop and change over time in response to historical, cultural, and social influences. | • Evaluate the factors that contribute to the growth, adaptation, and spread of religious traditions across different societies. | about death and what happens afterwards. | • Communicate informed and reasoned responses to questions about death, fear, meaning, and the possibility of an afterlife. | religious and non-religious perspectives.<br>• Evaluate differing views on the death penalty, using evidence and ethical principles to support reasoned conclusions. | responsibility, bias, privacy, and decision-making.<br>• Communicate informed and balanced judgments about contemporary ethical issues. | **Social — Pupils consider how communities and decision-makers** support people during loss, using funeral and remembrance case studies to discuss care and belonging sensitively.<br>**Cultural — Pupils appreciate the diversity and shared features of** Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist afterlife beliefs, comparing interpretations within and between traditions. |
| **Formative assessment:**<br>Multiple choice quiz. | **End of term 1 assessment:** | **Formative assessment:**<br>"Belief in life after death is convincing because there is evidence that goes beyond science." Evaluate this statement. You must use two or more case studies. | **End of term 2 assessment:** | **Formative assessment:**<br>PEEL paragraph in response to a statement justifying Holy War. | **End of year assessment:** | **Existing assessment opportunities**<br>**Spring \| Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** whether afterlife evidence is convincing, using two or more case studies in the planned evaluation to weigh reasons and different perspectives.<br>**Summer \| Moral — Pupils evaluate whether** holy war can be justified in the existing PEEL response, using ethical reasoning to explain their conclusion.<br>The source assessment placement is unchanged. No separate SMSC test or grading of pupils' personal beliefs is added. |
| **Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:**<br>In this unit, students explore the origins and development of religious belief across different cultures and historical periods. They investigate why religion exists, how belief systems emerged, and why religions evolved in different ways around the world.<br>Students begin by examining the question of the oldest known religions. Through archaeological evidence, early human burial practices, cave art, and ancient civilisations, students explore how religious behaviour may have emerged as humans sought to understand the world around them. This provides a foundation for understanding religion as a significant feature of human culture throughout history.<br>The unit then considers why religion exists. | **Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:**<br>The second half of the unit focuses on the development of specific religious traditions. Students investigate the Indus Valley civilisation and its influence on the emergence of Hinduism. They explore how religious ideas, rituals, and cultural practices developed over time, contributing to one of the world's oldest living religions.<br>Students then examine why Jainism emerged as a distinct tradition. By comparing key beliefs and practices, students learn how religious traditions can develop, reform, and diverge in response to changing social and philosophical concerns.<br>The final enquiry explores the emergence of monotheistic religions. Students investigate how belief in one God developed within ancient societies and examine | **Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:**<br>In this unit, students explore one of humanity's most enduring questions: what happens after death? Through the study of religious and non-religious beliefs, students develop an understanding of why different individuals and communities reach different conclusions about the afterlife.<br>Students begin by considering whether this life is the only life we have. This introductory enquiry encourages students to reflect on the nature of existence, mortality, and meaning. They explore a range of viewpoints, including secular perspectives that see death as the end of life and religious perspectives that believe in continued existence beyond death.<br>Students then investigate how beliefs about the afterlife | **Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:**<br>The unit next focuses on the Abrahamic faiths. Students compare Jewish, Christian, and Muslim beliefs about life after death, exploring shared ideas such as judgement and accountability alongside important differences concerning heaven, hell, resurrection, and salvation. This develops students' understanding of both common heritage and theological diversity within the Abrahamic traditions.<br>Students then examine religions that teach reincarnation, particularly Hinduism and Buddhism. They investigate concepts such as karma, rebirth, samsara, and liberation, considering how these beliefs offer a very different understanding of life, death, and spiritual progress.<br>The final enquiry asks whether death is | **Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:**<br>In this unit, students explore how people make moral decisions when faced with difficult ethical questions. They examine how religious teachings, philosophical ideas, and non-religious worldviews influence responses to some of the most challenging issues facing individuals and societies today.<br>Students begin by exploring the concept of ethics itself. Through examining the trolley problem and other moral dilemmas, they are introduced to the complexities of ethical reasoning and the challenge of balancing competing values. This provides students with a foundation for understanding how ethical decisions are made and why people often disagree about what is right.<br>The unit then investigates whether | **Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:**<br>The second half of the unit shifts focus towards issues of conflict and technology. Students begin by examining whether war can ever be justified. Through studying Just War Theory and pacifism, they investigate how religious and secular thinkers have sought to balance the desire for peace with the need to respond to injustice and aggression.<br>Students then explore whether war can ever be considered holy. This enquiry examines how religion has been connected to conflict throughout history and encourages students to critically evaluate the concept of religiously motivated violence while recognising the diversity of interpretations within religious traditions.<br>The unit continues with an examination of weapons of mass | **Summer (1st term) \| Applied Ethics**<br>**Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** human dignity, suffering and the value of life when considering differing beliefs about death and moral responsibility.<br>**Moral — Pupils justify a response to** the trolley problem, assisted dying and capital punishment, weighing competing values and supporting conclusions with ethical principles and evidence.<br>**Social — Pupils debate different responses to** ethical dilemmas about dying and punishment, listening respectfully to alternative views and considering responsibilities within wider society.<br>**Cultural — Pupils compare** religious, Humanist and philosophical approaches to life and justice, recognising how different worldviews shape responses to the same ethical issues.<br>**Summer (2nd term) \| Applied Ethics**<br>**Spiritual — Pupils consider how this changes their perspective on** responsibility after examining the human impact of conflict and artificial intelligence, reflecting on values that guide decisions.<br>**Moral — Pupils evaluate whether** war, weapons of mass destruction and AI can ever be justified, drawing on Just War Theory, pacifism and concerns about harm, bias and privacy.<br>**Social — Pupils consider how communities and decision-makers** should respond to conflict and technology, debating the responsibilities of governments, citizens and those using AI.<br>**Cultural — Pupils challenge stereotypes about** religion and violence by comparing views on war and peace, recognising differences within as well as between traditions. |

| Autumn (1st term) | Autumn (2nd term) | Spring (1st term) | Spring (2nd Term) | Summer (1st term) | Summer (2nd term) | SMSC opportunities: where and how |
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| Students investigate a variety of explanations, including religious accounts of divine revelation as well as sociological, psychological, and anthropological theories about the development of belief. This encourages students to engage critically with different perspectives while recognising that there is no single agreed explanation.<br>Students next study Ifa, one of the world's oldest surviving religious traditions. Through exploring its teachings, oral traditions, divination practices, and influence across West Africa and the wider world, students gain insight into a religious tradition that is often overlooked in studies of world religions. This broadens their understanding of religious diversity and global cultural heritage. | the historical origins of Judaism and its influence on later monotheistic traditions. This helps students understand how religious ideas can spread, adapt, and shape cultures across vast geographical regions.<br>Throughout the unit, students develop historical enquiry skills, analyse evidence, and consider the complex relationship between culture, geography, belief, and identity. They learn that religions are dynamic traditions that have evolved over thousands of years while continuing to influence the lives of people today.<br>By the end of the unit, students will be able to explain how different religions emerged and developed, analyse factors that contributed to religious diversity, and evaluate why belief systems continue to play an important role in human societies. | influence the way people live. By examining links between belief, morality, and purpose, students begin to understand why ideas about death often play an important role in religious and philosophical worldviews. | something to fear. Students explore philosophical, religious, and personal responses to death, considering how beliefs about the afterlife can provide comfort, hope, acceptance, or uncertainty. This encourages thoughtful reflection while helping students engage respectfully with a topic that affects all people.<br>Throughout the unit, students compare different explanations of what happens after death, evaluate the evidence and reasoning used to support these beliefs, and consider how views about mortality shape human behaviour and identity.<br>By the end of the unit, students will be able to explain major religious and non-religious beliefs about the afterlife, analyse reasons for disagreement, and evaluate the significance of these beliefs in the lives of individuals and communities.<br>. | people should be allowed to choose when they die. Students explore arguments surrounding euthanasia and assisted dying, considering ideas such as human dignity, suffering, autonomy, sanctity of life, and compassion. They examine religious and non-religious perspectives while developing skills in respectful discussion and critical evaluation.<br>Students next consider the ethical debate surrounding the death penalty. They analyse arguments concerning justice, punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation, and human rights, evaluating how different belief systems approach questions of crime and punishment. | destruction. Students investigate the ethical implications of technologies capable of causing widespread devastation and consider whether their possession or use can ever be morally justified.<br>Finally, students explore the emerging ethical challenges posed by artificial intelligence. They consider questions surrounding accountability, bias, privacy, surveillance, employment, and the role of technology in decision-making. This enables students to connect ethical reasoning to issues that are increasingly relevant in contemporary society.<br>Throughout the unit, students are encouraged to analyse competing viewpoints, evaluate evidence, and develop reasoned conclusions. They learn that ethical questions rarely have simple answers and that beliefs, values, and experiences all influence how people respond to moral challenges.<br>By the end of the unit, students will be able to explain how religious and non-religious beliefs shape ethical decision-making, evaluate a range of contemporary moral issues, and justify their own views using informed and balanced reasoning. | |
| **Home-Learning:**<br>Comparison of lenses. One method, another method and then conclusion re: can religion be studied? | **Home-Learning:**<br>Origins storyboard about Atenism based on info give. Scaffold by allowing print outs stuck over the boxes. Scaffold info with keywords, | **Home-Learning:**<br>You must draw or collage (print and stick) 9 images that show why people should not be scared of the afterlife. For one of the images, | **Home-Learning:**<br>Pick a religion and explain their beliefs about the Afterlife. Choose from: Zoroastrianism, The Bahai Faith, Atenism | **Home-Learning:**<br>Research the white paper on euthanasia. Vote in favour or against it. Explain why you voted the way you did. | **Home-Learning:** | **Links in existing home-learning**<br>**Cultural — Pupils compare** ways of studying belief through the lenses task, Atenism storyboard and research into a chosen religion's afterlife beliefs.<br>**Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** comfort and hope through the planned afterlife artwork, explaining the meaning of a chosen image in their caption. |

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| | timeline, colour-coded highlights of different info. | you should write a short caption that explains why you chose this image. | | | | |
| **Reading / High Quality Text:**<br>Key words, worded questions, sociology articles, anthropological interviews, Vedas, translations of hieroglyphics. | **Reading / High Quality Text:**<br>Key words, worded questions, philosophical treatises, Confucius, Vedas, Bible, Qur'an. | **Reading / High Quality Text:**<br>Selected extracts from the Bible, Qur'an, and other sacred texts relating to life after death.<br>Age-appropriate philosophical discussions about mortality and the afterlife.<br>Key vocabulary and enquiry questions. | **Reading / High Quality Text:**<br>Case studies exploring religious funeral practices and beliefs.<br>Quotations from religious leaders and contemporary thinkers discussing death and meaning.<br>Articles exploring religious and secular responses to mortality. | **Reading / High Quality Text:**<br>Case studies exploring real-world ethical dilemmas.<br>Selected religious teachings relating to life, justice, peace, and human responsibility.<br>Humanist and philosophical writings on morality and ethics. | **Reading / High Quality Text:**<br>Articles discussing euthanasia, the death penalty, conflict, and artificial intelligence.<br>Key vocabulary sheets and enquiry-based reading activities.<br>Contemporary examples of ethical decision-making in politics, science, and technology. | **Texts and voices**<br>**Moral — Pupils justify a response to** ethical dilemmas using religious teachings, Humanist writings and articles on conflict and AI to weigh reasons and consequences.<br>**Cultural — Pupils compare** sacred-text extracts and funeral case studies to recognise diverse beliefs and community responses to death. |
| **Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital:**<br>**In lessons:**<br>This unit offers students powerful insights that enrich their worldview by exposing them to intellectual traditions beyond Western frameworks, especially through Ifá, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism—many of which are neglected in mainstream curricula.<br>Cross-disciplinary thinking helps students see how historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, and sociologists approach religion in different ways.<br>Students learn to appreciate religious diversity, especially the sophistication of oral traditions, early ethical systems, and evolving spiritual ideas across continents.<br><br>Students develop historical and geographical awareness, situating religious ideas within | **Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital:**<br>**In lessons:**<br>This unit introduces students to religious diversity beyond Abrahamic norms, including Confucianism and Hindu Dharma.<br>Students engage with complex theological debates within Judaism, including Maimonides' philosophical influence and the political theology of Zionism.<br>Students build philosophical literacy, particularly around divine command theory and moral relativism vs absolutism.<br>The unit encourages respectful dialogue about different sources of moral authority, relevant for students navigating ethical decisions in a pluralistic society.<br>Students develop historical awareness of how religious and moral systems evolve in tandem with political and | **Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital:**<br>**In lessons:**<br>This unit enriches students' cultural capital by introducing them to a range of beliefs about one of the most universal aspects of human experience: death.<br>Students gain a deeper understanding of how different religions and worldviews seek to answer fundamental questions about human existence, meaning, and destiny. Through exploring Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and non-religious perspectives, students develop greater religious literacy and appreciation of global diversity.<br>The study of beliefs about resurrection, judgement, heaven, hell, reincarnation, karma, and enlightenment exposes students to concepts that have shaped cultures, | See left | **Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital:**<br>**In lessons:**<br>Students engage with ethical debates around euthanasia, state violence, and justice systems worldwide, helping students connect their learning to law, medicine, politics, and human rights.<br><br>The unit provides access to diverse cultural and religious ethical traditions, including Sikh and utilitarian approaches to justice.<br><br>Students develop civic literacy, empowering students to critically reflect on government power, human dignity, and their responsibilities as future voters, professionals, and citizens.<br><br>The unit encourages ethical creativity, through the prison design task and independent argument construction, which supports | See left | **Social — Pupils debate different responses to** moral dilemmas through the planned discussions, connecting choices to government power, human dignity and responsibilities as citizens. |

| Autumn (1st term) | Autumn (2nd term) | Spring (1st term) | Spring (2nd Term) | Summer (1st term) | Summer (2nd term) | SMSC opportunities: where and how |
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| global timelines and cultural exchanges.<br><br>Students gain respect for complexity, by examining religion not as static doctrine but as something dynamic, responsive to human needs, conflict, and context.<br><br>Students gain not just knowledge of world religions, but a set of analytical tools that empower them to think critically, compassionately, and globally—hallmarks of a culturally rich and well-rounded education. | cultural shifts (e.g., Ancient Canaan, Vedic India, Imperial China).<br>These experiences not only broaden students' knowledge of global religious traditions, but also sharpen their critical thinking, empathy, and intercultural awareness. | literature, art, and societies throughout history. Understanding these ideas helps students interpret references found in wider cultural and historical contexts.<br>Students also explore how beliefs about death influence moral decision-making, personal identity, and community practices. By examining funeral traditions, rituals of remembrance, and responses to grief, they gain insight into how societies support individuals during significant life events.<br>The unit encourages students to engage thoughtfully with complex philosophical questions while developing empathy and respect for differing beliefs. They learn to discuss sensitive topics with maturity and consideration, strengthening skills that are valuable both within education and wider society.<br>Ultimately, the unit broadens students' understanding of how people make sense of life and death, helping them appreciate the diversity of human belief while encouraging critical reflection on their own ideas and assumptions. | | autonomy and imaginative thinking—skills valued in all walks of life.<br><br>Students finish the unit equipped not just with knowledge, but with the ethical reasoning, empathy, and courage to participate thoughtfully in complex moral conversations. | | |