Programme of study for Year 7 Ethics

Autumn (1st term)	Autumn (2nd term)	Spring (1st term)	Spring (2nd Term)	Summer (1st term)	Summer (2nd term)
Other timescale: From: September To: October	Other timescale: From: October To: December	Other timescale: From: January To: February	Other timescale: From: February To: April	Other timescale: From: April To: May	Other timescale: From: June To: July
Topic: • The Island **Key Question:** • How do Humanists live meaningful lives without religion?		**Topic:** • Hinduism **Key Question:** • How do beliefs and practices shape modern Hinduism?		**Topic:** • Buddhism **Key Question:** • How Buddhism be understood as both a religion and a philosophy?	
Learning Questions: 1. How do non-religious origin stories express human identity? 2. What makes non-religious places important? 3. Why are some objects valued by non-religious people? 4. How do non-religious people find comfort?	**Learning Questions:** 1. How do non-religious people mark important events in their life? 2. From where do non-religious lawmakers draw inspiration? 3. How do non-religious people celebrate special times? 4. What goals and values guide non-religious people?	**Learning Questions:** 1. What does the beginning of Hinduism tell us about the religion? 2. How do Hindus understand the idea of God? 3. Why do Hindus still tell ancient stories?	**Learning Questions:** 1. Assessment 2. GPOP 3. How do Hindu festivals demonstrate Hindu beliefs?	**Learning Questions:** 1. What is Buddhism and is it a religion? 2. Are the four sights and three universal truths? 3. What is the Noble Eightfold Path and how does it link to our lives?	**Learning Questions:** 1. Why do Buddhists meditate? 2. Why do Buddhists disagree on the nature of self? 3. What do Buddhists believe about the afterlife? 4. Buddhism Escape Room
Learning outcomes: • Describe how non-religious worldviews, such as Humanism, offer explanations for life's origins and meaning. • Identify and explain how Humanists find value and significance in places, objects, and relationships. • Compare religious and non-religious approaches to comfort, loss, and meaning making. • Reflect on how creating a simulated community helps us understand key Humanist ideas about living well without religion.	**Learning outcomes:** • Explain how Humanists mark key life events and reflect on values through secular ceremonies and traditions. • Evaluate how Humanist principles shape laws, rules, and moral decision-making in a non-religious society. • Design meaningful non-religious festivals that celebrate values such as science, love, or progress. • Analyse what Humanists believe about death, legacy, and the purpose of life in the absence of an afterlife.	**Learning outcomes:** • Describe the origins of Hinduism and explain what its beginnings reveal about the development of the religion. • Explain how Hindus understand the concept of God, including key beliefs about divine reality and its different forms. • Analyse the role of ancient Hindu stories in communicating beliefs, values, and teachings within Hindu communities. • Evaluate the continuing importance of ancient stories and beliefs in Hinduism, using evidence to justify whether they	**Learning outcomes:** • Identify and describe key Hindu festivals and the beliefs associated with them. • Explain how the celebrations, symbols, and practices of Hindu festivals express Hindu beliefs about God, dharma, and community. • Analyse the ways different Hindu festivals communicate religious teachings, values, and traditions to believers. • Evaluate how effectively Hindu festivals help to preserve and express Hindu beliefs in the modern world, using	**Learning outcomes:** • Describe the origins of Buddhism, including the life of the Buddha, the Four Sights, and the Three Universal Truths. • Explain the key teachings of Buddhism, including the Three Universal Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. • Analyse how the Four Sights influenced the Buddha's search for enlightenment and shaped the development of Buddhist beliefs and practices. • Evaluate the relevance of the Noble Eightfold Path for people today, using examples to	**Learning outcomes:** • Describe Buddhist beliefs and practices related to meditation, the nature of self, and the afterlife. • Explain why Buddhists meditate and how different Buddhist teachings understand the concept of self and rebirth. • Analyse the similarities and differences between Buddhist views on meditation, self, and the afterlife, using evidence from different Buddhist traditions. • Evaluate the significance of meditation, beliefs about self, and beliefs

SMSC opportunities: where and how

Autumn (1st term) | The Island

Spiritual — Pupils reflect on how origin stories, special places and treasured objects express identity and belonging, using their island choices to explain sources of meaning.

Moral — Pupils justify a response to the distressed islander, using Humanist ideas of empathy, care and human relationships to explain how comfort can be offered.

Social — Pupils collaborate to build their simulated island community, listening to different perspectives and agreeing how members can support one another.

Cultural — Pupils compare religious and Humanist approaches to treasured objects and comfort, identifying shared human experiences without treating worldviews as identical.

Autumn (2nd term) | The Island

Spiritual — Pupils reflect on death, legacy and life goals, explaining how Humanists find purpose without belief in an afterlife.

Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of proposed island laws, using fairness, empathy and avoidance of harm to justify rules that protect the community.

Social — Pupils collaborate to agree island laws and shared celebrations through role-play, practising listening, compromise and reasoned responses to different views.

Cultural — Pupils compare religious and non-religious ceremonies when designing a naming ceremony and anniversary festival, explaining how symbolism expresses shared values.

Spring (1st term) | Hinduism

Spiritual — Pupils reflect on how Brahman and Hindu ideas about God help believers make sense of life, linking beliefs to identity and values.

Moral — Pupils evaluate whether choices made in the Ramayana and Mahabharata fulfil duty and show courage, using evidence from the stories to justify judgements.

Social — Pupils debate different responses to Alex's misunderstanding of the Trimurti, using accurate explanations and respectful language to challenge an idea without dismissing a worldview.

Cultural — Pupils appreciate the diversity and shared features of Hindu beliefs and sacred narratives, using origins and stories to explain how traditions preserve cultural heritage.

Spring (2nd term) | Hinduism: festivals

Spiritual — Pupils develop fascination with the meanings of Hindu festival symbols and rituals, exploring how celebrations express devotion, identity and belonging.

Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of actions in festival stories, linking duty and good overcoming evil to how Hindu beliefs can guide behaviour.

Autumn (1st term)	Autumn (2nd term)	Spring (1st term)	Spring (2nd Term)	Summer (1st term)	Summer (2nd term)	SMSC opportunities: where and how
		remain relevant for Hindus today.	evidence to support your conclusions.	support your judgement.	about the afterlife for Buddhists today.	**Social — Pupils debate different responses to** the role of festivals in modern Hindu life, listening to others' views on how shared celebrations strengthen community. **Cultural — Pupils compare** Diwali, Holi and Navaratri, identifying shared values and differences and explaining how celebrations preserve traditions while adapting in India and the Hindu diaspora.
Formative assessment:	**End of term 1 assessment:** Diary entry on law.	**Formative assessment:** Alex is confused and thinks the Trimurti means Hinduism is polytheistic. 2x PEEL responding to Alex.	**End of term 2 assessment:**	**Formative assessment:**	**End of year assessment:** PEEL response to Buddhist scenario	**Use existing assessment opportunities** **Autumn | Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of** their proposed laws in the diary entry, using fairness and avoidance of harm to justify rules. **Spring | Cultural — Pupils compare** Hindu beliefs about God with Alex's interpretation of the Trimurti, using the planned PEEL response to explain the misconception respectfully. **Summer | Moral — Pupils justify a response to** the Buddhist scenario, applying teachings to explain their ethical judgement. No separate SMSC test or grading of pupils' personal beliefs is added.
Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons: In this imaginative half-term project, students are cast away on a deserted island. With no pre-existing traditions, scriptures, or religious authorities, they must create meaning for themselves and their community. This scenario provides a rich opportunity to explore Humanist ideas—how people who do not follow a religion still find purpose, build values, and support each other. By developing their own island society, students discover that meaning, morality, and comfort can emerge from human experience, reason, and relationships. Over the course of the unit, students will first design a shared origin story to explain how they came to be on the island. This helps them reflect on how non-religious narratives—like evolution or the Big	**Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:** In the second half of *The Island*, students continue developing their imagined society by tackling some of life's most profound questions: how do we celebrate milestones, make moral rules, create shared identity, and imagine the future? These activities reflect how non-religious people—especially Humanists—construct meaning and community without relying on religious beliefs. Through hands-on role-play and collaborative decision-making, students explore Humanist ideas about ethics, celebration, and purpose, deepening their understanding of how non-religious worldviews shape lives. Students begin by celebrating the birth of a new child on the island. This introduces them to key Humanist ceremonies, such as	**Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:** In this unit, students investigate the origins, beliefs, and stories of Hinduism, exploring how one of the world's oldest living religions has developed and remained significant over thousands of years. Through examining Hindu origins, beliefs about God, and the role of sacred stories, students develop a deeper understanding of how religious traditions shape identity, values, and ways of life. Through this, they develop religious literacy while also considering how beliefs and narratives help communities make sense of the world, pass on traditions, and respond to life's big questions. Students begin by exploring the origins of Hinduism, examining how the religion developed over time rather than being	**Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:** In this unit, students investigate the role of festivals in Hinduism, exploring how religious celebrations communicate beliefs, values, and traditions. Through examining a range of Hindu festivals, students develop an understanding of how faith is expressed through rituals, symbols, stories, and community practices. Through this, they deepen their religious literacy while considering the wider role that celebrations play in shaping identity, strengthening communities, and preserving religious traditions across generations. Students begin by exploring key Hindu festivals and the beliefs associated with them. They learn about significant celebrations such as Diwali, Holi, and Navaratri, identifying	**Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:** In this unit, students investigate the origins and core teachings of Buddhism, exploring how the experiences of Siddhartha Gautama led to the development of one of the world's major religious traditions. Through examining key Buddhist beliefs and practices, students consider how Buddhists understand suffering, human existence, and the search for a meaningful life. Through this, they develop religious literacy while also engaging with philosophical questions about happiness, purpose, morality, and personal responsibility. Students begin by exploring the origins of Buddhism and the life of Siddhartha Gautama. They learn about the historical and cultural context in which Buddhism emerged and examine the events that shaped the Buddha's	**Building understanding: Rationale / breakdown for your sequence of lessons:** In this unit, students deepen their understanding of Buddhism by exploring key beliefs and practices related to meditation, the nature of self, and beliefs about the afterlife. Through examining different Buddhist traditions and interpretations, students investigate how Buddhists seek wisdom, overcome suffering, and understand what it means to be human. Through this, they develop religious literacy while also engaging with philosophical questions about identity, consciousness, personal growth, and what may happen after death. Students begin by exploring the practice of meditation and its importance within Buddhism. They examine different forms of meditation and consider how Buddhists use these practices to	**Summer (1st term) | Buddhism** **Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** suffering, change and a meaningful life through the Four Sights and Three Universal Truths, examining how experiences changed Siddhartha's perspective. **Moral — Pupils justify a response to** a modern ethical situation using the Noble Eightfold Path, linking chosen actions to Buddhist teachings on behaviour and responsibility. **Social — Pupils debate different responses to** modern challenges using the Noble Eightfold Path, listening to alternative views and practising respectful disagreement. **Cultural — Pupils compare** understandings of Buddhism as a religion and a philosophy, recognising how its historical and cultural origins shape different interpretations. **Summer (2nd term) | Buddhism** **Spiritual — Pupils consider how this changes their perspective on** identity after studying meditation, anatta and rebirth, reflecting on different Buddhist ideas about the self. **Moral — Pupils consider the consequences of** actions through teachings on karma, using Buddhist scenarios to explain how compassion and responsibility can guide behaviour. **Social — Pupils debate different responses to** questions about self and the afterlife, explaining disagreements within Buddhism respectfully without assuming all Buddhists hold identical views. **Cultural — Pupils appreciate the diversity and shared features of** Buddhist meditation, self and rebirth beliefs, using real Buddhist case studies to explain differences within the tradition.

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Bang—can also inspire wonder, curiosity, and a sense of belonging. Next, they will map out key locations that are important to their community, such as sources of food, sites of beauty, or gathering places. In doing so, they will explore how meaning can be found in places that are not considered sacred in a religious sense, and whether a place must be religious to feel powerful or special. Students will then salvage meaningful objects from the sinking ship, discussing what makes an item valuable in the absence of religious symbolism. This task will encourage them to reflect on whether religious and non-religious people treasure things for similar emotional or cultural reasons. Finally, when a woman on the island becomes distressed, students must work out how to offer her comfort without referring to religious ideas. This allows them to explore Humanist approaches to wellbeing, grief, and support—highlighting the role of reason, empathy, and community in coping with loss or uncertainty.	naming ceremonies, and encourages them to compare these with religious rites of passage in both form and meaning. Ultimately, they will design their own Humanist-style ceremony, thinking carefully about the symbolism and values it expresses. Next, students must decide on laws to help their island community live fairly and safely. They explore how Humanist principles—like fairness, empathy, and the avoidance of harm—can guide ethical rule-making, and discuss whether laws without religious backing can still be morally strong and widely respected. To foster a sense of community, the group then creates a festival to mark the anniversary of their arrival. This task invites students to learn about non-religious ways of celebrating, and to think about how values like family, science, love, or shared humanity can be meaningfully celebrated without reference to the divine. Finally, as the group plans their escape from the island, they are asked to reflect on their long-term goals. They explore Humanist ideas about what makes a life meaningful—such as happiness, reason, and helping others—and compare these with religious teachings about the end of life and human destiny. Students will consider whether Humanist aspirations can offer guidance and	founded by a single individual. They investigate key influences on the growth of Hinduism and consider what its beginnings reveal about the diversity and adaptability that characterise the religion today. The focus then shifts to Hindu beliefs about God. Students explore the concept of Brahman as the ultimate divine reality and examine how Hindus understand and worship God in many different forms. They consider how Hindu beliefs about the divine differ from more familiar monotheistic ideas and investigate the ways in which these beliefs influence worship and religious practice. Students then turn their attention to the rich tradition of Hindu stories. Through the study of stories from texts such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata, they explore how narratives communicate important beliefs, values, and teachings. They analyse the role of these stories in helping Hindus understand concepts such as duty, devotion, courage, and morality. In the final part of the unit, students evaluate the continuing importance of Hindu stories and beliefs in the modern world. They consider how ancient narratives continue to influence religious practice, cultural identity, and personal values for Hindus today. Drawing on evidence from across the unit, students make	their origins, key practices, and religious significance. Through this study, students gain an appreciation of the diversity and richness of Hindu worship and celebration. The focus then shifts to the symbols, rituals, and traditions that form part of Hindu festivals. Students examine how acts of worship, storytelling, music, food, and community gatherings express important Hindu beliefs about God, dharma, devotion, and the interconnectedness of family and community life. They explore how festivals provide opportunities for believers to put their faith into practice. Students then analyse the ways different festivals communicate religious teachings and values. By comparing celebrations and examining their underlying messages, students investigate how festivals help to reinforce ideas such as good overcoming evil, the importance of duty, devotion to God, and the celebration of life and renewal. They consider how these teachings are passed on through both formal and informal religious education. In the final part of the unit, students evaluate the significance of Hindu festivals in the modern world. They consider how festivals continue to preserve religious beliefs and cultural traditions while adapting to contemporary societies both in India and across	spiritual journey. Students investigate the Four Sights and consider how encounters with suffering, illness, old age, and death challenged Siddhartha's understanding of the world and motivated his search for answers. The focus then shifts to the Three Universal Truths and other foundational Buddhist teachings. Students explore Buddhist understandings of impermanence, suffering, and the nature of existence, considering how these beliefs help Buddhists make sense of the human condition. They also discuss whether Buddhism should be understood as a religion, a philosophy, or a combination of both. Students then examine the Noble Eightfold Path as the Buddha's practical response to the problem of suffering. They explore each aspect of the path and analyse how it provides guidance for ethical behaviour, mental discipline, and personal development. Through this study, students consider the relationship between belief and practice within Buddhism. In the final part of the unit, students evaluate the relevance of the Noble Eightfold Path in contemporary life. They consider whether Buddhist teachings offer useful guidance for addressing modern challenges and compare these ideas with their own experiences and	develop mindfulness, concentration, compassion, and insight. Students investigate the role meditation plays in helping Buddhists progress towards enlightenment and overcome suffering. The focus then shifts to Buddhist understandings of the self. Students explore the concept of anatta (non-self) and investigate why Buddhists may hold different interpretations of personal identity and consciousness. They consider how these beliefs challenge common assumptions about individuality and analyse how different Buddhist traditions understand the relationship between the self and enlightenment. Students then examine Buddhist beliefs about rebirth and the afterlife. They explore how Buddhists understand the cycle of samsara and investigate the connections between karma, rebirth, and the pursuit of enlightenment. Through comparing different perspectives within Buddhism, students analyse similarities and differences in beliefs about what happens after death and the ultimate goal of religious practice. In the final part of the unit, students draw together their learning through a Buddhism Escape Room activity, applying their knowledge and understanding of key concepts from across the unit. They then evaluate the	

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	hope in the same way religious eschatologies aim to do.	reasoned judgements about the relevance and significance of these stories in contemporary Hindu life.	the global Hindu diaspora. Drawing on evidence from throughout the unit, students make reasoned judgements about how effectively festivals help Hindus express, maintain, and strengthen their faith today.	values. Drawing on evidence from across the unit, students make reasoned judgements about the significance and applicability of Buddhist teachings in the modern world.	significance of meditation, beliefs about self, and beliefs about the afterlife for Buddhists today. Drawing on evidence from a range of Buddhist traditions, students make reasoned judgements about the continuing importance of these beliefs and practices in contemporary Buddhist life.	
Home-Learning: Humanism/religion comparison worksheet.	**Home-Learning:** A leaflet to advertise the Island's anniversary festival.	**Home-Learning:** Ramayana storyboard	**Home-Learning:** Write a short story based on the Mahabharata	**Home-Learning:** A day in the life of a monk.	**Home-Learning:** TBC.	**Links in existing home-learning** **Cultural — Pupils compare** religious and Humanist values in the comparison worksheet and festival leaflet, explaining different ways of expressing meaning. **Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** beliefs and ways of life through the Ramayana storyboard, Mahabharata story and "A day in the life of a monk".
Reading / High Quality Text: Key words, worded questions, and captain's logs.	**Reading / High Quality Text:** Key words, worded questions, and case studies in Humanism, e.g., Stephen Fry.	**Reading / High Quality Text:** Keywords, worded questions, Vedas, Ramayana.	**Reading / High Quality Text:** Key words, worded questions, the Mahabharata, case studies from Hindu festivals.	**Reading / High Quality Text:** Key words, worded questions, quotations of the Buddha.	**Reading / High Quality Text:** Key words, worded questions, case studies of real Buddhists.	**Texts and voices already planned** **Spiritual — Pupils reflect on** sources of comfort and meaning through the captain's logs and Humanist case studies. **Cultural — Pupils compare** perspectives in the Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Buddha quotations and real Buddhist case studies, recognising diversity in beliefs and lived experience.
Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital: **In lessons:** Students explore Humanism as a coherent worldview, learning that moral and meaningful lives can be lived without religion. They encounter real-world Humanist ceremonies and practices. This helps them to develop an understanding of non-religious belief systems. They develop their imagination and empathy by simulating the building of a society from scratch as a Titanic-era character. This unit encourages critical thinking and respectful dialogue about different sources of meaning and comfort. **Across the year:** Philosophy & ethics content builds students' ability to reason, debate, and reflect — vital skills for civic life and higher education. Creative tasks (e.g. designing festivals, letters to philosophers, artistic representations) enable students to express abstract ideas through visual, verbal, and practical mediums.	**Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital:** **In lessons:** Students are introduced to Hinduism as one of the world's oldest and most diverse living religious traditions, developing an understanding of how belief systems evolve over time rather than emerging in a single moment. They encounter key concepts such as Brahman, dharma, and the relationship between the divine and its many forms, allowing them to engage with ideas that have shaped philosophy, art, and culture across South Asia and the wider world. Students explore how Hindu beliefs are expressed through sacred stories such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata, gaining insight into narratives that continue to influence literature, theatre, film, and popular culture globally. They also consider how these stories communicate moral and spiritual ideas such as duty, courage, devotion, and the struggle between good and evil. Through the study of Hindu festivals such as Diwali, Holi, and Navaratri, students gain an understanding of how religion is lived and celebrated in practice.	**Enrichment / Opportunities to develop cultural capital:** **In lessons:** Students are introduced to Buddhism as both a religion and a philosophy, engaging with one of the world's major spiritual traditions and exploring how it addresses fundamental human questions about suffering, identity, and meaning. They encounter the life of Siddhartha Gautama and consider how his experiences continue to shape beliefs and practices across diverse Buddhist traditions today. Students explore key philosophical and ethical concepts such as the Four Sights, the Three Universal Truths, anatta (non-self), karma, samsara, and nirvana. These ideas enable students to engage with complex worldviews that have influenced global thought, psychology, ethics, and mindfulness practices. Through the study of meditation, students gain insight into practices that are widely used in both religious and secular contexts today, including mindfulness in education, healthcare, and wellbeing programmes. This helps students understand how religious practices can extend beyond faith communities and into modern public life.		**Social — Pupils debate different responses to** questions about meaning, morality and identity through the planned philosophical discussions, practising reasoned and respectful disagreement.

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Comparative learning develops intellectual humility and intercultural understanding, crucial for participating in a diverse, global society.		They examine how rituals, symbols, food, music, and community gatherings reinforce identity and belonging, offering insight into the role of celebration in both religious and cultural life. The unit develops students' ability to construct and defend arguments through structured tasks such as PEE paragraphs (e.g. evaluating monotheism vs polytheism) and the end-of-term assessment "An Idiot's Guide to God." These tasks encourage clarity of thought, evidence-based reasoning, and confidence in handling abstract ideas. Students are exposed to a range of textual and narrative forms, including Hindu scriptures, epics, and festival case studies. This builds familiarity with religious literacy and strengthens their ability to interpret complex texts, vocabulary, and symbolic meaning. **Across the year:** Philosophy & ethics content builds students' ability to reason, debate, and reflect — vital skills for civic life and higher education. Creative and extended writing tasks (e.g. storyboards of the Ramayana, retelling the Mahabharata, designing explanatory materials such as the end-of-term brochure) enable students to communicate abstract ideas through imaginative and structured forms. Comparative learning across religions and worldviews develops intellectual humility, cultural awareness, and the ability to understand diverse perspectives — essential for participating in a pluralistic and global society.	The unit develops analytical and evaluative skills through structured tasks such as explaining Buddhist teachings, comparing traditions, and completing the "Buddhism Escape Room," which encourages application of knowledge in an engaging and problem-solving context. These activities strengthen memory, reasoning, and conceptual understanding. Students engage with interpretative and comparative thinking by exploring disagreements within Buddhism about the nature of the self and the afterlife. This builds intellectual flexibility and helps them understand that religious traditions are not uniform, but diverse and evolving. **Across the year:** Philosophy & ethics content builds students' ability to reason, debate, and reflect — vital skills for civic life and higher education. Creative and reflective tasks (e.g. writing "A day in the life of a monk," scenario-based learning in the Escape Room, and extended explanations of abstract concepts) enable students to express complex ideas in imaginative and structured ways. Comparative learning across religions and worldviews develops cultural literacy, intellectual humility, and the ability to engage respectfully with different perspectives — essential for participation in a diverse and global society.	