Henry Beaufort - KS3 Religious Education

Half term	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9 Core
Autumn 1	Welcome & Judaism	Does God Exist?	War and Peace
Autumn 2	Life of Jesus	Islam: Seven Dimensions	Buddhism
Spring 1	Hinduism	Ethics	Sanctity of Life
Spring 2	Hinduism	Ethics	Religion in the Modern World
Summer 1	Religion and Art	Christianity: Death & Resurrection	Humanism
Summer 2	Human Rights	Sikhism	Other Faiths

Year 7

Welcome & Judaism

What pupils learn: Jewish identity and belonging, covenant, the synagogue, sacred texts and shared observances such as Shabbat and festivals.

Why this matters: Pupils encounter a lived religion: beliefs are expressed through routines, places, stories and obligations, not just statements about God.

Living Difference IV: ***Belonging*** — covenant and Jewish identity; ***Community*** — shared worship and family practice; **Special** — Torah and sacred space.

KS3 progression: Introduces religious commitment and sacredness; revisited through Muslim practice in Year 8 and religious identity in Year 9.

GCSE Link: Indirect foundation for comparing worship, religious identity and commitment.

Life of Jesus

What pupils learn: Key events in Jesus' life, his teaching and significance to Christians.

Why this matters: Establishes who Jesus is before pupils later consider why his death and resurrection matter to Christian salvation.

Living Difference IV: ***Love*** — teachings and actions towards others; ***Special*** — Christian claims about Jesus' identity.

KS3 progression: Year 8 returns to Jesus with more demanding questions about sacrifice, resurrection and the evidence for this.

GCSE Link: Direct foundation: Component 2 Christianity, beliefs about Jesus, incarnation and salvation.

Hinduism

What pupils learn: Hindu understandings of divinity, worship, sacred stories and religious expression, explored across two half terms.

Why this matters: Broadens pupils' understanding of religion beyond the Abrahamic traditions and prevents the assumption that all faiths understand God in the same way.

Living Difference IV: ***Special*** different understandings and expressions of the divine; **Belonging** — worship and identity.

KS3 progression: Supports more nuanced comparison with Sikhism in Year 8 and Buddhism in Year 9, while respecting differences between these traditions.

GCSE Link: Wider religious literacy and comparative vocabulary.

Religion and Art

What pupils learn: How belief is communicated through images, symbols, buildings and creative work; how religious art can be interpreted differently.

Why this matters: Teaches pupils to read religious expressions as evidence of belief rather than treating art as decoration.

Living Difference IV: *Special* representation of what communities' regard as sacred or meaningful.

KS3 progression: Supports Year 8 Islamic art and Year 9 enquiry into religion in public and contemporary life.

GCSE Link: Supports interpretation of religious symbolism and practices in Christianity and Islam.

Human Rights

What pupils learn: Human dignity, equality, fairness, rights and responsibilities, including religious responses to injustice.

Why this matters: Moves pupils from describing belief to asking what people owe one another and why rights matter.

Living Difference IV: Love care and dignity in action; ***Community*** — balancing individual rights and social responsibilities.

KS3 progression: Provides the ethical language later applied to punishment, conflict, the value of life and modern society.

GCSE Link: Direct conceptual foundation: Component 1 Issues of Human Rights.

Year 8

Does God Exist?

What pupils learn: Theism, atheism and agnosticism; faith and evidence; religious experience; creation; free will; Pascal's Wager.

Why this matters: Pupils learn that claims about God can be questioned and justified in different ways, rather than simply accepted or rejected.

Living Difference IV: *Special* investigating whether and why the divine has significance, and what counts as evidence.

KS3 progression: Develops Year 7 ideas about divinity; prepares for Year 9 Humanism and non-religious reasoning.

GCSE Link: Direct conceptual foundation: Component 1 Issues of Life and Death (origins and non-religious perspectives), plus Christian beliefs about God.

Islam: Seven Dimensions of Religion

What pupils learn: Islam as a lived tradition through worship and ritual (including salah and zakat), material expression and art, dietary guidance, and the Prophet Muhammad.

Why this matters: Shows that religious belief affects time, space, giving, food and collective life; pupils compare practice without assuming every Muslim lives identically.

Living Difference IV: *Community* — prayer and giving; ***Belonging*** — religious practices and identity; ***Special*** — worship and sacred expression.

KS3 progression: Deepens Year 7 Judaism and art; informs Year 9 discussion of religion in contemporary society.

GCSE Link: Direct foundation: Component 3 Islam, especially practices such as salah and zakat; other dimensions provide wider context.

Ethics

What pupils learn: Absolute and relative morality; crime and punishment; prisons; forgiveness; moral dilemmas; animal rights; the value of life.

Why this matters: Introduces tools for reasoned judgement: pupils must explain not only what they think, but which principles and consequences support it.

Living Difference IV: ***Love*** — forgiveness and concern for people and animals; ***Community*** — justice, punishment and shared rules.

KS3 progression: Builds on Year 7 Human Rights; prepares for Year 9 War and Peace and Sanctity of Life.

GCSE Link: Direct foundations: Component 1 Issues of Good and Evil and Issues of Life and Death; some animal-rights content is broader enrichment.

Christianity: Death and Resurrection

What pupils learn: Sacrifice and resurrection; investigation of the evidence and significance of these claims.

Why this matters: Pupils distinguish historical questions from theological claims and consider why resurrection is central to Christian belief.

Living Difference IV: ***Special*** — resurrection and the significance of Jesus; ***Love*** — sacrifice and salvation.

KS3 progression: Returns to Year 7 Life of Jesus at greater depth and supplies a Christian lens for Year 9 sanctity of life.

GCSE Link: Direct foundation: Component 2 Christianity, Jesus' death, resurrection and salvation.

Sikhism

What pupils learn: Sikh beliefs, identity, equality, service and community practices.

Why this matters: Offers a distinctive tradition through which pupils examine how belief is translated into practical service and inclusive community life.

Living Difference IV: ***Belonging*** — Sikh identity; ***Community*** — sangat and shared practice; ***Love*** — seva and care for others.

KS3 progression: Extends comparisons with Year 7 Judaism and Year 8 Islam; supports Year 9 peace, responsibility and pluralism.

GCSE Link: Broader comparative and ethical preparation.

Year 9 Core RE

War and Peace

What pupils learn: Reasons for war; Christian responses; Just War thinking; pacifism; terrorism; protest; forgiveness and peace.

Why this matters: Pupils test whether the duty to protect others can conflict with the duty to avoid harm and assess arguments rather than memorising positions.

Living Difference IV: ***Love*** — forgiveness, non-violence and care for enemies; ***Community*** — duties in conflict and peacemaking.

KS3 progression: Applies Year 7 rights and Year 8 ethics to real disputes, requiring more careful weighing of competing principles.

GCSE Link: Indirect but useful foundation for Component 1 Issues of Good and Evil (morality, forgiveness); warfare itself is not a separate Route A theme.

Buddhism

What pupils learn: The Buddha, happiness, dukkha, karma and Buddhist responses to suffering and conduct.

Why this matters: Pupils encounter a framework for living well that differs from theistic approaches studied earlier.

Living Difference IV: ***Love*** — compassion and responses to suffering; ***Special*** — what is ultimately valuable in human life.

KS3 progression: Deepens Year 9 peace and ethical reasoning.

GCSE Link: Wider worldview literacy and comparison.

Sanctity of Life

What pupils learn: Religious and non-religious reasons for valuing human life, applied to ethical questions about life and death.

Why this matters: Moves from the assertion that life matters to analysis of why it matters and what happens when moral duties conflict.

Living Difference IV: ***Special*** — sacredness and intrinsic value of life; ***Love*** — protection, care and difficult moral choices.

KS3 progression: Draws together Year 7 Human Rights, Year 8 moral dilemmas and Christian resurrection.

GCSE Link: Direct foundation: Component 1 Issues of Life and Death.

Religion in the Modern World

What pupils learn: How religion and non-religion are expressed and debated in contemporary society; identity, visibility and public life.

Why this matters: Helps pupils challenge and understand that religion is not just something from the past, but continues to influence individuals, communities and societies today.

Living Difference IV: ***Belonging*** — negotiating identity in plural society; ***Community*** — participation and disagreement in public life.

KS3 progression: Uses prior knowledge of worship, sacred expression and ethical reasoning to interpret contemporary cases.

GCSE Link: Supports application of Christian, Islamic and non-religious perspectives across Component 1 themes.

Humanism

What pupils learn: Humanist perspectives on God, meaning, symbols, ethics and imagining a better world.

Why this matters: Makes explicit that ethical commitments and ideas of a good life can be grounded in non-religious worldviews.

Living Difference IV: ***Love*** — responsibility and human flourishing without religious authority; ***Community*** — shared values and cooperation.

KS3 progression: Revisits Year 8 atheism/agnosticism and ethics, now asking pupils to compare coherent worldviews rather than isolated opinions.

GCSE Link: Direct conceptual foundation: non-religious views required within Component 1 ethical themes.

Other Faiths

What pupils learn: What makes a religion? Case studies including Jediism, Latter-day Saint tradition (Mormonism), Scientology and Amish.

Why this matters: Challenges simple definitions of religion and asks pupils to distinguish self-identification, belief, practice and public perception.

Living Difference IV: ***Belonging*** — how groups form and maintain identity; ***Special*** — what adherents consider authoritative or meaningful.

KS3 progression: A culminating enquiry drawing on the range of religious and non-religious traditions encountered since Year 7.

GCSE Link: Transferable comparison, analysis and careful use of religious vocabulary.

Progression of the Golden Threads across KS3

Thread	Year 7: encounter	Year 8: explain and compare	Year 9: apply and evaluate

Community	Identify shared worship and rights.	Explain collective practice, service and justice.	Evaluate competing duties in conflict and public life.
Belonging	Recognise religious identity and tradition.	Compare how identity is lived through practice.	Question boundaries of religion and identity in plural society.
Special	Identify sacred people, objects and ideas.	Explore evidence, religious claims and sacrifice.	Evaluate what makes life and worldviews meaningful.
Love	Describe teachings about care and dignity.	Reason through forgiveness and ethical dilemmas.	Weigh compassion against other obligations in complex issues.

Curriculum Intent and Progression:

Our KS3 Religious Education curriculum is not designed to be a GCSE course taught early. Instead, it provides a broad, engaging and academically challenging foundation in religious and non-religious world views, while progressively developing the knowledge, understanding and disciplinary skills pupils will need for success at GCSE and beyond.

Throughout Years 7-9, pupils encounter a diverse range of religions, beliefs and ethical issues. Students are encouraged to question ideas, consider different perspectives and develop increasingly sophisticated responses to challenging questions. The emphasis is on developing confident, independent and critical thinkers. This is achieved through purposeful discussions, debate and questioning, development of oracy skills, learning to articulate ideas clearly, listening respectfully to alternative viewpoints, challenge assumptions and justify opinions using evidence. This approach encourages students to think deeply, communicate effectively and confidently, and construct reasoned arguments; establishing the foundations for analytical and evaluative skills.

Developing disciplinary skills across KS3:

Throughout KS3, pupils develop the skills needed to explore religious and non-religious worldviews, communicate their understanding and think critically about challenging questions. These skills are embedded throughout the curriculum and become increasingly sophisticated as pupils progress.

Skill	**How do we develop it?**
Describe	Students accurately identify and describe religious beliefs, practices, traditions and concepts using appropriate vocabulary.
Explain	Students move beyond stating facts to explaining why people hold particular beliefs and how these influence behaviour.
Discuss	Students explore religious and ethical questions through structured discussion, considering different interpretations and perspectives.
Analyse	Students examine the relationship between beliefs, teachings and actions, identifying similarities, differences and underlying reasons.
Justify	Students develop reasoned arguments, supporting their views with examples, religious teachings and evidence.
Evaluate	Students consider the strengths and limitations of different arguments, reach informed judgements and explain why one argument may be more convincing than another.

How skills progress across KS3

Year 7

Building foundations

Pupils develop confidence in describing religious beliefs, explaining key concepts, asking questions and expressing opinions supported by simple reasons.

Year 8

Developing understanding

Pupils increasingly compare perspectives, explain the relationship between beliefs and actions, construct arguments and justify their responses using evidence.

Year 9

Deepening critical thinking

Pupils analyse complex religious and ethical issues, evaluate competing arguments, challenge assumptions and reach balanced, justified conclusions.

Assessment and Progression:

Assessment within KS3 RE is designed to establish pupils' understanding of religious knowledge and concepts, whilst supporting the progressive development of explanation, analysis, justification and evaluation.

Year 7 & 8:

Pupils complete formal assessments which combine knowledge recall with increasingly demanding written responses. In Year 7, the emphasis is on accurate religious knowledge, specialist vocabulary, description and structured explanation. Assessments provide scaffolding through sentence starters, key terminology and guided questions to support students in developing confidence.

In Year 8, students continue to build on these foundations through more complex explanations and evaluative questions. They are increasingly expected to consider different religious and non-religious perspectives, use evidence to support arguments and reach justified conclusions.

Assessments include opportunities for feedback and reflection, allowing students to identify strengths and areas for improvement in their religious knowledge and written communication.

Year 9 Core RE:

Year 9 Core RE does not include formal written assessments. Instead, the curriculum places greater emphasis on applying prior knowledge, exploring contemporary religious and ethical issues, developing oracy and engaging in critical discussion.

Through questioning, debating and classroom activities, students are encouraged to articulate informed opinions, challenge assumptions, consider alternative perspectives and justify their reasoning.

This approach allows Year 9 to build up the knowledge and skills developed in Year 7 & 8, whilst maintaining a broad, inclusive and engaging curriculum.