

## **A LEVEL RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

### **Philosophy, Ethics and Christian Development (OCR Specification)**

For many of our students this is a new course, touching on names and ideas never experienced before. If you enjoy discussions, exploring different and unusual ideas and asking questions about the world, existence, religion and ethics, then you will enjoy R.S. This course will introduce you to the root of knowledge, exploring key thinkers' ideas throughout history. Philosophy, Ethics and Religion are interdisciplinary fields with direct relevance to the Arts, Humanities, Sciences and Social Sciences.

#### **Unit 1 – Philosophy of religion (33.3% of the A level)**

A thought provoking unit which allows students to study the ancient philosophical influences of Aristotle and Plato; the nature of the soul, mind and body; arguments for the existence or non-existence of God; the nature and impact of religious experience and the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil. Students will develop the philosophical and will consider the issues within religious language. They will also explore, and be able to debate, a variety of ideas about the very nature of God.

Unit 1 is assessed with a 2 hour examination at the end of the second year.

#### **Unit 2 - Religion and Ethics (33.3% of the A level)**

Students will examine the debates surrounding the significant ideas of conscience (including Freud's psychological approach) and apply a variety of theories to consider sexual ethics. Students have the opportunity to study a range of ethical theories including Aquinas' natural law, which leads us to ask far reaching questions such as whether the doctrine of double effect can be used to justify an action, such as killing someone as an act of self-defence. Fletcher's idea of Situation Ethics will also be explored and students are asked to consider whether following 'the most loving action' is ideal for guiding life's ethical dilemmas. The ethical theories covered are then applied to contemporary and controversial issues of Business, Ethics and Euthanasia.

Unit 3 is assessed with a 2 hour examination at the end of the second year.

#### **Unit 3 – Developments in Christian Thought (33.3% of the A level)**

A very interesting and topical unit allowing students to study the social and historical development in theology, with particular reference to gender, secularism and the associations between Karl Marx and Liberation Theology, a controversial branch of Christianity. The unit links in with both the Philosophy and Ethics topics, allowing students to develop their understanding in the light of Christianity. Areas studied include Death and the Afterlife, The Person of Jesus Christ and Christian Moral Action where students will consider the case study of Bonhoeffer, a Christian priest who abandoned his pacifist stance to play a part in the bomb plot to assassinate Hitler.

Unit 3 is assessed with a 2 hour examination at the end of the second year.

*GCSE requirements:-*

*Religious Studies – grade 5 (if taken)*

*English Language – grade 4*

*In total, at least grade 5 in **two** literate subjects*